

# COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers

Friday May 15, 2020 9:00 AM

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## Meeting Recording:

Topic: COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers (April 8-June 30 invite)

Date: May 15, 2020 09:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/uJJTbJ\\_3rVxJRdL11xzmC6ECRMf0eaa8hyUZ8\\_Bcz0rt-qkvZ4aLR\\_ggmCeFPd-1](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/uJJTbJ_3rVxJRdL11xzmC6ECRMf0eaa8hyUZ8_Bcz0rt-qkvZ4aLR_ggmCeFPd-1)

Password: 0Q!0kR26

# Meeting Agenda

Austin/Travis County

COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers  
May 15<sup>th</sup> Agenda



City of Austin / Austin Public Health



Implementation Team Updates



Agency Updates



Wrap Up – Next Call: Monday, May 18th @ 9:00am

## Meeting Notes:

COA – Laura Voss

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/austins-homeless-strategy-covid-19-support>

- 2345 confirmed COVID-29 cases in Travis County; 826 recovered; and 74 deaths
- Demographic information on cases available at <http://www.austintexas.gov/covid19>
  - At least 43 individuals experiencing homelessness have tested positive, including 24 that have recovered.
    - The count of cases among people experiencing homelessness is likely an undercount due to private labs and providers not necessarily recording each person's housing status when they test.
  - Austin Public Health launched an online enrollment form for COVID-19 testing
    - Form will allow people to take self-assessment to determine eligibility and schedule a test without a medical provider referral
    - <http://www.austintexas.gov/covid19>
      - Click “self-assessment” button to create an account and complete the questionnaire listing your symptoms
- Austin Public Health published a Color-Coded Chart
  - To help residents understand the stages of risk during pandemic, and
  - To provide recommendations on what people should do to stay safe
  - New Risk based guidelines

- 5 distinct stages of risk
      - 1=Lowest threat stage to
      - 5=Most serious threat stage
    - With recommended behaviors for each stage of risk
    - Access it here <https://austintexas.gov/news/new-risk-based-guidelines-help-community-stay-safe-during-covid-19-pandemic>
- Order from Austin/Travis County Health Authority stating **masks when outside the home or in public are recommended**
  - Physical distancing of at least 6 feet between individuals is still recommended
- Quarantine and Alternate Facilities
  - ProLodges 1-3 are operational and at full capacity,
  - City has identified a location for 4<sup>th</sup> ProLodge and will be operational next week
  - Integral Care behavioral health teams are providing services at IsoFac and ProLodge 1, 2, and 3
    - Will support guests at the 4<sup>th</sup> ProLodge
  - Starting this week Front Steps staff are providing on site case management at all 3 ProLodges
  - If other programs have capacity to work with people staying at ProLodge sites, please contact Vella Karmen, [vella.karmen@austintexas.gov](mailto:vella.karmen@austintexas.gov)
- Central Texas Food Bank utilizing City of Austin RAISE funds to provide 4 additional weeks of shelf stable meal bags
  - These remaining shipments are May 21<sup>st</sup>, May 28<sup>th</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>, and June 11<sup>th</sup>
- Eating Apart Together (EAT); Food access for people experiencing homelessness
  - Continuing to investigate food access needs for those experiencing homelessness
    - To determine the scope and length of need as a response to COVID19
  - Austin Resource Recover
    - Increased trash picking to every day at the bag location to accommodate trash needs
  - The EAT 123 survey
    - Include information on encampment trash pickup needs
      - EAT has the hopes of providing or increasing trash pickup in the identified locations
    - Or send information to [Michelle.miles@austintexas.gov](mailto:Michelle.miles@austintexas.gov)
    - If you want to participate in any aspect of Eating Apart Together Initiative Zach Shlachter at [zack.shlachter@austintexas.gov](mailto:zack.shlachter@austintexas.gov)
- Hygiene Update
  - The additional shower trailers are now operational
    - Locations reflected on the interactive resource map
      - Access it here <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/resource-sites-map-covid-19-response>

- Contracting with Family Elder Care and The Other Ones Foundation to operate at different locations in Austin

### ECHO Updates:

- All of the work and information from the implementation teams comes from the sub-implementation teams
  - With the hopes that the communications and problem solving is fed up to the Implementation Teams and then the Projects Management Teams
- Project Management Team
  - Task: to provide leadership and oversight of implementation of the entire Response Plan, including setting priorities and helping address challenges and obstacles faced by Implementation Teams
  - Recently talked about how to engage and seek input from people with lived expertise across the teams
    - Despite engagement challenges
    - If you have ideas an engagement or who to engage please comment in the chat
  - Team Decisions/Approvals
    - Approved cost and funding estimates expectations for modeling team
    - Approved assumptions for modeling
      - The assumption that unsheltered count ins Austin, Travis County is an undercount of 40%
        - Took unsheltered data from PIT Count from 2020 and increased it by 40% for modeling purposes to determine need
    - Changed Emergency Shelter 2020 Housing Inventory Count data to align better with necessary COVID19 social distancing measures
      - Because congregant settings are not ideal for COVID19 response
    - Assumed through modeling that everyone who wants a resource can get one
  - Next Steps
    - Showing budget needs for those who are experiencing homelessness and households that need prevention help due to COVID19 to the City Mangers Office
      - City Manger's Office has been working with team on modeling efforts
      - Data will be used to inform funding associated with COVID19 relief funds and other federal, state, or local funding
      - Looking to receive funding approval from City Council May 21<sup>st</sup>
- 2020 Point in Time (PIT) Data
  - ECHO will present and officially release the data at the Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> work session
  - Through email to broad email list and

- Will also be released on ECHO's website
- Hotel/Motel Implementation Team
  - Prolodge 4 will be operational Monday
    - For Individuals who meet the highest level of risk criteria
    - City of Austin still looking to connect with providers to build out capacity and services at Prolodges
    - Again, let Vela Karmen know if you know if providers who can build out capacity
    - Current challenge is need for Prolodge units
      - Since they are at capacity and there is a wait list
        - Even for Prolodge 4
      - Discussed possible discharge strategies for people who may not need Prolodge assistance because they meet the low risk criteria for having complications with COVID19
        - City is committed to not exiting people into un-sheltered homelessness
        - Working on exit strategies to create flow
    - Housing navigation and diversion training will be provided to case managers who are working with Prolodge clients to
      - Help people move into permanent housing solutions from Prolodges
      - For Front Steps, Salvation Army, DACC, and Integral Care case managers
      - Put on by ECHO, either next week or the following week
    - Team Discussions
      - Analyzing data in order to learn more about who we should prioritize for the limited Prolodge units available and to narrow that group down
        - 72 people have been identified that don't fall into the high-risk criteria category
        - Said information has been given to the rehousing implementation team to help with exit strategies for these 72 individuals
    - Next Steps
      - 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the week was canceled, therefore information may not be up to date
        - Are going to meet Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup>
      - DACC and Integral Care are collecting surveys from current Prolodge participants
        - To learn more about their experience in Prolodges
        - And therefore, how to better provide services in the future and
        - How to then implement in Prolodge 4

- Emergency Shelter and Unsheltered Implementation Team
  - Objections
    - Deploying comprehensive screening process for shelter and unsheltered people
    - Ensuring appropriate social distancing, safety, and hygiene protocols are in place at existing shelters, and
    - Addressing the needs of people who are unsheltered, including people living in encampments
  - Recent Discussion Items
    - One team member is providing technical assistance and support to all shelters around implementation of CDC COVID19 guidelines
      - In order to collect information on additional costs outside of normal operations due to COVID19 that then goes to Project Management team and
      - Ensuring shelters have supports needed to continue to implement the guidelines and taking new clients
    - Discussing tracking emergency shelter vacancies
      - And placing individuals who are low risk and who want shelter into those shelters
  - Expanded referral process to Protective Lodging
    - Is really a referral to the waitlist
      - 100 individuals on said waitlist
      - Started Wait list staffing on Monday with
        - Community health medics and Health Care for the Homeless Providers
        - Staffing priority for the next Prolodge vacancies which will be Monday
  - Training shelters next week on HMIS high risk COVID19 assessment
    - Outreach teams and other health care system have already taken training
    - This is a referral to a medical provider for determination of waitlist placement based on high risk criteria
  - Training additional health care medics on referral process
    - To increase access to medical providers for other populations that may be released into homelessness
  - Morning Staffing will continue with medical providers and bed management team
    - As Prolodge 4 comes on line and vacancies continue due to exits to permanent housing or into shelters
  - If you have questions reach out to [nikikozak@austinecho.org](mailto:nikikozak@austinecho.org) or [katierose@austinecho.org](mailto:katierose@austinecho.org)
    - Katie Rose working on increasing street outreach coordination and schedules other daily locations
      - If you have changes or are planning to start going out,

- Want to know who is where doing outreach, and
  - To make sure we are meeting all of the basic needs for our unsheltered community members
    - contact Katie Rose
- COVID19 Spreading in Doubled Up/Multigenerational Households Question in Chat
  - “with covid-19 spreading in multigenerational households, are doubled-up families within the scope of homelessness resources?”
    - From modeling talks overall increases in likely rates of poverty are increased with that
      - We have taken that into consideration in a way in the projected models
      - An increase in doubled up families specifically may not have been addressed but maybe yes
      - Matt Mollica-Homeless prevention is in the scope of our work and doubled up families as it relates to prevention strategies and housing insecurities were accounted for and brought in to the larger conversation in the modeling but not specific to a particular population
        - This question can also be better addressed offline
- Funding Strategies Implementation Team
  - Made up of individuals from ECHO and The City
  - Develop plans and recommendations for the most strategic use of existing and new funding resources in support of the Response Plan
  - Discussing
    - Different costs and different funding sources
      - Trying to collect a comprehensive document of
        - Current system capacity
        - Current funds and where they are allocated
        - Possible fund re-deployment more directly to better impact the COVID19 initiatives
          - If funds aren’t being used in the most strategic way to support COVID19
    - Working on collecting feedback on funding priorities from CoC and homeless service providers with city of Austin
      - For Cares Act funding
      - Will be sent out by the end of next week
    - Looking for input from people with lived experience
      - Through AHAC and
      - Surveys from Prolodge cites
    - Finalizing the cost per client of various implementation methods
      - In order to have a clear ask when we know what our modeling needs are

- Decisions
  - Decided to use ECHO funding estimate on intervention types rather than national
    - Because we can speak to the project variation issues here in Austin and
    - Direct providers can input their findings on serving clients
- Next Steps
  - City of Austin and ECHO will collect feedback from providers on funding priorities, through
    - Focus groups with agency leaders, stakeholders, and more wide-ranging surveys
  - Deciding on how to compete funds and how that will be operationalized
- Rehousing Strategies Implementation team
  - Looking at current resource inventory
    - Identifying intervention resource gaps for unsheltered population and those in the Prolodges
  - Small intervention subgroups were created
    - To define and create recommendations for diversion, community-based housing options, Rapid Rehousing, and Permanent Supportive Housing
  - Next week
    - Defining program recommendation for COVID19 response,
    - Will finalize definitions and program recommendations,
    - Will finalize intervention designs for COVID19 response, and
    - Will discuss further prevention needs
      - More info from rehousing group next week as they are meeting during this meeting

## Agency Updates

### Dylan Shuberst Housing Authority of the City Austin (HACA)

- HACA voucher program staff dedicated to working on the RENT program this weekend and most of next week
  - Regular operations are put on back burner-general customer service is not at the same level; things will go back to normal and the normal level of service will resume after the RENT program is over
    - Inspections are still taking place for move ins and still requesting inspections when tenancy approval request are made,
    - Still receiving emails but may not respond as quickly
    - Working on urgent items related to move ins especially

### Communities for Recovery (Darrin)-From Chat

- Starting peer recovery coaching services in Prolodges starting Monday
  - On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 2-4 PM



- Will have a flyer for residents this afternoon
- Coaches will be available by phone Monday-Friday 9 AM-5 PM

## Chat Box

### **From Emily Seales to Everyone: 09:06 AM**

I realize this will be addressed this week, but can someone speak any harm reduction work being done at the Pro-lodges and ISOFAC hotels- access to methadone, Suboxone, alcohol withdrawal, etc. Thank you!

### **From larafoss to Everyone: 09:07 AM**

Good morning everyone. Here are the links as promised:  
For demographic breakdowns and more information, you can visit the <http://austintexas.gov/covid19> web site

Risk based guidelines

<https://austintexas.gov/news/new-risk-based-guidelines-help-community-stay-safe-during-covid-19-pandemic>

If any programs have capacity to serve clients at these Pro-lodge sites, please contact Vella Karman at [Vella.Karman@austintexas.gov](mailto:Vella.Karman@austintexas.gov)

Please include information regarding trash pickup needs for encampments in the EAT Initiative 1,2,3 survey when food is distributed in the community or send this information to [michelle.myles@austintexas.gov](mailto:michelle.myles@austintexas.gov)

If you are interested in participating in any aspect of Eating Apart Together please contact Zach Shlachter ([zach.shlachter@austintexas.gov](mailto:zach.shlachter@austintexas.gov)).

Interactive resource map

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/resource-sites-map-covid-19-response>

### **From dxcaDarilynn Cardona-Beiler to Everyone: 09:08 AM**

Integral Care is providing harm reduction interventions at all facilities and connection to care

### **From Emily Seales to Everyone: 09:08 AM**

Thank you, Darilynn

### **From Yaira Robinson to Everyone: 09:12 AM**

Where can we find 2020 PIT Count data?

### **From Robert Kingham to Everyone: 09:13 AM**

PL4 Monday

**From Amber Fogarty to Everyone: 09:14 AM**

Just confirming that Matt said the PIT count data would be released on the 19th. Is that right?

**From Andrew Willard to Everyone: 09:15 AM**

That is correct. PIT count numbers will be released on the 19th.

**From Emily Seales to Everyone: 09:17 AM**

Released on a call? Or over email?

**From Dylan Shubitz to Everyone: 09:18 AM**

with covid-19 spreading in multigenerational households, are doubled-up families within the scope of homelessness resources?

**From DarrinAcker to Everyone: 09:20 AM**

Communities for Recovery will be starting Peer Recovery Coaching services in the Prolodges on Monday.

**From Katie Rose to Everyone: 09:21 AM**

Amazing news! Darrin will you post the schedule here in the chat?

Thank you Niki! :)

**From Amber Fogarty to Everyone: 09:23 AM**

I've heard there are confirmed cases at the governor's camp on 183. What's specifically being done to protect folks who are staying there?

**From Katie Rose to Everyone: 09:24 AM**

Amber, the healthcare for the homeless team with CUC has been out there almost daily doing additional testing and getting folks sent to ISOFAC who are presumed positive, and lining up at risk folks for potential prolodge placement

**From DarrinAcker to Everyone: 09:25 AM**

Coaches will be onsite at the current Prolodges MWF from 2 - 4 pm. We will have a flyer for residents by this afternoon. Coaches will also be available by phone M-F from 9 to 5.

**From Amber Fogarty to Everyone: 09:25 AM**

Thank you for the update, Katie!

**From Katie Rose to Everyone: 09:26 AM**

Of course!

**From Dylan Shubitz to Everyone: 09:26 AM**

thanks for taking the question in real time. really appreciate that. glad to hear this population hasn't been forgotten.

**From dxcaDarilynn Cardona-Beiler to Everyone: 09:32 AM**

Amber, Dr. Mercer has been amazing. He has been working with PATH at the state camp and doing great work!