

CORONAVIRUS & HOMELESSNESS

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: March 12, 2020

How is the County addressing the Coronavirus (COVID-19) with the homeless population?

The County Health Services Department (CCHS) has been extensively planning with our Public Health and Health, Housing, and Homeless Services divisions. Here are some of the things we are already doing:

- Contra Costa Health Services Department Operations Center has been activated and is coordinating the public health response efforts across the county.
- CCHS is participating in a Bay Area Coronavirus Regional Coordination Effort with our Bay Area Regional homeless continuum of care (CoC) partners.
- CCHS is working with homeless service agencies throughout the County to provide education and resources around COVID-19 and homeless populations.

What is the County doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in homeless shelters?

- Contra Costa Health Services has developed and implemented preliminary guidance for homeless service providers operating congregate living facilities on how to identify and respond to ill residents.
- The County is working with shelters to identify rooms that are appropriate for isolation for suspect cases.
- Information and education on hand hygiene and cough etiquette is being provided to shelter residents and staff.

What is the County doing for homeless persons not residing in shelters?

- Contra Costa Health Services has developed guidance for street outreach staff who visit encampments, and for individuals living in encampment, vehicles, and RV's.
- CORE street outreach teams are distributing hygiene supplies, including hand sanitizer and advice flyers to vehicle and encampment residents.
- Healthcare for the Homeless street health teams are evaluating and advising clients in the encampment or street settings that they outreach.



What if homeless individuals display symptoms?

- Currently, it is not necessary to remove symptomatic people from shelters or encampments unless the severity of their symptoms requires medical attention. However, shelter providers should follow Contra Costa Health Service guidance regarding care of symptomatic persons.

What about testing homeless individuals?

- Testing for Coronavirus is only recommended if people are ill with fever and cough and meet CDC guidelines. Contra Costa Healthcare for the Homeless team can do field-based testing at shelters or in encampments should the need arise.

Where can I go for the latest information on the County's response?

- Contra Costa Health Services has the latest updates at <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/>

