



Napa County Public Health's Guidance on COVID-19 for Homeless Services and Farmworker Center Providers

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Public Health Division
Napa County Health & Human Services Agency

This document provides guidance specific for Homeless Services and Farmworker Center providers (including overnight emergency shelters, day shelters, meal service providers and municipal entities in the County) during the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

1. Plan and be aware of guidance and resources
2. Provide education for staff and residents
3. Provide hygiene and prevention materials
4. Screen residents and clients for symptoms
5. Isolate symptomatic persons from the general population as much as possible
6. Provide care for symptomatic persons, contact health providers for testing or treatment
7. Provide shelter and program sanitation services

1. Plan and be aware of COVID-19 guidance and resources

- a. Napa County Public Health updates and guidance at:
<https://www.countyofnapa.org/2739/Coronavirus>
- b. Napa County Health Care for the Homeless guidance and resources at
<https://www.countyofnapa.org/2739/Coronavirus>
- c. Review HUD's 2020 infectious Disease Toolkit for CoC's
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5985/infectious-disease-toolkit-for-cocs/>

2. Provide Education for staff and residents

- a. Post flyers and have credible educational information clearly visible and available to staff and clients.
 - i. Napa County Public Health recommends at least the following posters/resources:
 1. Symptoms of COVID-19 ([english](#), [español](#))
 2. Cover Your Cough ([english](#), [español](#))
 3. Wash Your Hands ([english](#) and [español](#))
 4. Stop the Spread of Germs ([english](#), [español](#))
 5. Facts About COVID-19 ([english](#), [español](#))
 - ii. Train staff on handwashing, cough, and other hygiene techniques.
Train staff on procedures around disease identification and control.
 - iii. Ensure that staff that are sick do not come to work.
 - iv. Maintain program point persons in contact with the Napa County Housing and Homeless program or Public Health.

3. Provide hygiene and prevention materials

- a. Give all residents easy access to soap, water and hand-drying resources.

- Provide mobile hand-washing stations and restroom facilities in public spaces where residents experiencing homelessness reside.
- Encourage all residents and staff to wash their hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds.
- Make hand sanitizer available for general use, and offer personal-sized hand sanitizer for clients to take and outreach teams to have with them.
- Remind residents to cover a cough or sneeze.
- Staff should stay home if they are sick.

4. Screen residents and clients for symptoms

- a. Provide Health Screening at intake and on a daily basis:

Screening questions: Are you currently experiencing any of the following:

- i. Fever (temperature over 101 degrees)
- ii. Cough
- iii. Shortness of breath, respiratory difficulties

Napa County Public Health Recommends: *Staff should have a temporal thermometer scan to help screen residents and clients for fever.*

5. Contact health providers for testing or treatment of symptomatic persons

- a. If a person develops symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, cough or shortness of breath, *and has reason to believe they may have been exposed*, they should call their health care provider before seeking care, unless they are in a medical emergency. Contacting them in advance will make sure that people can get the care they need without putting others at risk.
- b. Ensure that all clients have access to a primary care provider.

6. Provide care for symptomatic persons

- a. Identify spaces for symptomatic persons: Designate a space for people who may become sick. If possible, designate a nearby separate bathroom just for sick people. Develop a plan for cleaning the room daily.
- b. What to do if a Client has flu symptoms:
 - i. Gather information from the client. Help the client sort through how they are feeling to see if they are mildly ill or in need of medical evaluation. Clients should not be told to seek medical care if they are not ill or have mild symptoms for which they would not ordinarily seek medical care.
 - ii. Ask what symptoms they are having.
 - iii. Have client gauge the severity of symptoms by using a 1-10 scale, with 10 being worse.
 - iv. If you can take their temperature, do so. A temporal temperature reading of 100.4 F constitutes a fever. If they complain of sweats or chills, they probably have a fever.
 - v. **Refer client to their primary care provider via telephone for evaluation.**

- vi. Mild symptoms without fever without complaint of feeling very sick and without complaint or evidence of extreme fatigue probably do not represent flu-like symptoms.

c. Mild and moderately ill clients should stay in one spot as much as possible, pending transport to the Respite Care Shelter. Please do your best to accommodate your clients' needs at your site.

- i. Situate them in a comfortable place at as much distance from the rest of the site's population as possible. Encourage the client to lie down and rest. Most will want to do this.
- ii. Prevent dehydration. Encourage client to drink plenty of water, clear soup, decaffeinated tea, juice.
- iii. Provide a blanket if possible.
- iv. Provide client with hand sanitizer, tissues and plastic bag or lined garbage bag to dispose of tissues.
- v. Encourage client to cough into their elbow area or cover their mouth with tissues or paper towels when they cough or sneeze.
- vi. Provide client with face mask.
- vii. Bring food to the client as much as possible to avoid contact with other persons.
- viii. Check in on client several times a day, until transportation to the Isolation/Quarantine Shelter can be arranged.

7. Isolate symptomatic persons from the general population as much as possible

a. Isolation Recommendations

- i. Have the sick person isolated in a room alone. If individual rooms for the sick persons are not available, please follow the guidelines below:
- ii. House sick persons in a large, well ventilated room with the fewest number of other residents.
- iii. Avoid housing the sick person in a room with people who have health conditions that increase their risk of complications from COVID-19, these include but not limited to HIV, asthma, diabetes and pregnancy.
- iv. Increase spacing between beds so that the sick person's bed is six feet from the next bed.
- v. Arrange beds so that persons lie head-to-toe or toe-to-toe to provide the greatest distance between faces.
- vi. Use sheets or curtains to create temporary barriers between beds.
- vii. Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting the area.
- viii. Make sure soap and running water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers are available for hand hygiene. Give directions on hand hygiene and cough etiquette.

8. Shelter and program sanitation recommendations:

a. Cleaning and Disinfecting Shelters and Programs

- High touch areas likely to be contaminated should be cleaned and disinfected at least daily.

- Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants. Wash surfaces with a general household cleaner to remove germs. Rinse with water, and follow with an EPA-registered disinfectant to kill germs. Read the label to make sure it states that EPA has approved the product for effectiveness against influenza A virus.
- If a surface is not visibly dirty, you can clean it with an EPA-registered product that both cleans (removes germs) and disinfects (kills germs) instead. Be sure to read the label directions carefully, as there may be a separate procedure for using the product as a cleaner or as a disinfectant. Disinfection usually requires the product to remain on the surface for a certain period of time (e.g., letting it stand for 3 to 5 minutes) with an EPA-registered disinfectant to kill germs.
- Personnel performing the cleaning and disinfecting should use disposable gloves.
- Use damp cleaning methods. Dry dusting or sweeping can cause airborne virus droplets.
- Change mop heads, rags, and similar items used for cleaning and disinfecting frequently.
- Clean, disinfect, and dry equipment used for cleaning after each use.
- Items such as dishes, linens, or eating utensils do not need to be cleaned separately, but it is important to note these items should not be shared or used by others.

All homeless assistance providers, including (CoCs), city and county homelessness officials, and their partners should make themselves familiar with the HUD publication [*Preventing and Managing the Spread of Infectious Disease for People Experiencing Homelessness*](#). This document covers preparation including planning, and training and education; mitigation activities; and response to an infectious disease outbreak.

CoCs, city and county homelessness officials, shelter operators and case workers, city and county public health officials, and local law enforcement may also wish to consult two other HUD publications: [*Preventing and Managing the Spread of Infectious Disease within Shelters*](#) and [*Preventing and Managing the Spread of Infectious Disease within Encampments*](#).

Please note that, per HUD guidance, shelter providers should consult with their local health department before turning away individuals with respiratory symptoms. If an individual requires medical attention, providers should continue to direct them to a healthcare provider.