

# County of Santa Clara

## Office of Supportive Housing

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July 20, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Ky Le, Director, Office of Supportive Housing 

SUBJECT: Isolation & Quarantine Support Program

Under advisement from the May 26, 2020, Board of Supervisors meeting (Item No. 6) and the June 26, 2020, Special Health and Hospital Committee meeting (Item No. 3), this memorandum provides an update from Administration on a program to help COVID-19 positive persons (“cases”) isolate and to help persons who have been in close contact with cases (“contacts”) quarantine.

1. May 26, 2020, President Chavez requested that Administration develop a workflow chart that illustrates protocols followed when contact tracing identifies an individual requiring isolation or quarantine, and the process used to route that individual to County or City services.
2. June 26, 2020, Supervisor Ellenberg requested that Administration provide an off-agenda report on isolation and quarantine support.

The County has been expanding and refining the “Isolation and Quarantine Support Program” (Program) as the countywide response to the pandemic has evolved. The Program has three primary components.

### ***Motel Component***

The first component consists of a motel with supportive services for cases and contacts who cannot safely isolate or quarantine at home or who do not have a home. In addition to typical motel management staff and services, the motel is staffed by a combination of personnel from the County, a community-based organization, and a private security company. At this hotel, the County offers limited case management services, three meals per day and laundry services. Medical and behavioral health staff perform wellness checks weekly and connect individuals to social services, medical and behavioral health services based on their needs. Transportation to and from the motel to initiate or conclude isolation or quarantine can be provided. Once the isolation

or quarantine period is complete, the Program staff assist participants to return to their homes or transition to appropriate and available congregate and non-congregate shelter settings.

As of July 17, 2020, the County has placed 140 households (cases and contacts) in a motel. As of July 17, 2020, 45 rooms out of 67 are in use with seven placements pending. The County is preparing to utilize a second hotel to use as isolation and quarantine due to the increase in the requests for out-of-home assistance. On June 26, 2020, half of all households using the motel component had some form of permanent housing. Since then, the proportion of households with some form stable housing using the motel component has steadily increased to about 71%.

In addition to the motel used for cases and contacts, the County has reserved 11 other motels with a total of 653 rooms. Of these rooms, all were occupied, except for 54 that are in the process of being filled and another 16 that are temporarily unavailable to the County.

### ***At-Home Support***

Since mid-June, the second component of the Program has been available to Santa Clara County residents. The second component provides support services for persons who can isolate and quarantine at home, but who need some assistance. The supportive services are similar to what is provided at the motel. Thus far, most participating households need help buying groceries and cleaning supplies. Since June 17, 2020, the Program has provided some level of assistance to help 64 households isolate or quarantine at home.

Thus far, neither assistance with childcare nor eldercare has been identified as a need. Typically, cases or contacts with minor children will isolate or quarantine together. The County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has alerted the Department of Family and Children's Services to the potential need for help with an emergency placement of minors if a parent or guardian is incapacitated or hospitalized because of COVID-19. In the event that elder care services are needed, those services could be provided through the Institute on Aging's Community Living Connection program which is partially funded by the County.

### ***Rental & Financial Support***

The third component of the Program is rental and financial assistance specifically for individuals and families participating in this Program. Each household may be eligible for up to \$5,000. This service is available to households who need to use a hotel and to households who can isolate or quarantine at home. The rental and financial support component began on June 15, 2020, when the County executed an agreement with Sacred Heart Community Service (SHCS, Attachment B). On June 17, 2020, the County assisted the first family with rental assistance. As of July 17, 2020, the County has referred 24 households to SHCS to provide rental and financial assistance.

SHCS determines eligibility, verifies need, issues the financial assistance. The financial assistance is paid directly to the vendor (i.e., landlord, utility company). Households must have household income of less than 80% Area Median Income to be eligible for rental assistance (e.g. a family of four with an annual income of \$112,150 or lower). In addition, households must provide documentation that verifies the need and amount needed. For example, for rental assistance, the household may have to provide a copy of the lease and notice to pay rent or quit.

These requirements are necessary because the County (and perhaps cities) will use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the rental and financial assistance. Except for verification and documentation requirements related to rental and financial assistance, the Program's two other requirements are that cases are properly documented and that County medical personnel screen cases and contacts for appropriate placements.

The Administration explored incorporating an income-replacement component, but staff determined that the income replacement model was incompatible with CDBG funds. Moreover, the County's proposed Program provides significantly more benefits to residents. In San Francisco, the income replacement program offers up to 80 hours of pay, but at the city's minimum wage.

### ***Other Key Services***

In addition to the services described above, the Program prioritizes connecting individuals to safety-net services, including services which were expanded in response to the pandemic.

Program staff can assist (eligible) cases or contacts access or sign up for General Assistance, CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, CalFresh, or other benefit programs administered by the County. While Program staff cannot authorize these benefits directly, the County's Department of Employment and Benefit Services has assigned an Eligibility Supervisor to: a) receive referrals directly from Program staff; b) immediately contact the case or contact to help them apply for the appropriate program; and, c) when appropriate, approve applications for assistance.

For workers who need additional assistance understanding or accessing resources provided through the California Employment Development Department (EDD), such as unemployment insurance, Program staff facilitate a connection to the County's COVID-19 Assistance Navigation Hotline (CAN-19 Hotline). The CAN-19 Hotline assists in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Mandarin.

Having SHCS administer an important component of the Program also helps participating households access other rental and financial assistance programs through SHCS or other Emergency Assistance Network (EAN) agencies. SHCS coordinates the countywide Homelessness Prevention System, which is also partially funded by the County. In addition, SHCS and the other EAN agencies may be able to provide the households with other types of assistance, like food, when their isolation or quarantine periods end.

### ***Access and Coordination with Case Investigation and Contact Tracing (CiCT Group)***

Referrals or requests for assistance can be made by calling the Housing Joint Departmental Operations Center (JDOC) or the Housing and Human Services Unit (HHSU) at the County's EOC. The Housing JDOC's hotline is staffed Monday through Friday. The Housing JDOC also handles all requests for temporary shelter. Staff from the HHSB are available seven days a week. Individuals, community-based organizations, County Departments, family members or medical providers may contact the Housing JDOC or HHSB directly for assistance. Staff from CiCT or the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) may also contact the Housing JDOC or HHSU to make referrals. Finally, HHSU staff have access to CalCONNECT, the management information system used by CiCT, and can pull referrals directly from the system to complete assessments and connect individuals Program resources.

### ***Santa Clara County COVID-19 Support Team and Next Steps***

While programs to provide ongoing services are not typically managed from an EOC, the Program is temporarily managed through the County's EOC to achieve certain goals. First, the Program must develop in close coordination with CiCT, which is also under development to deploy a large and varied workforce, and utilize a new statewide management information system, known as CalCONNECT.

The second goal is to ensure that the services are sufficient and that the Program design is adequate. For example, staff are determining whether to merge Program operations with the Housing JDOC or CiCT.

Relatedly, the third goal is to assess staffing levels based on the level of need. Over the last four weeks, with increasing case counts, the number of requests for assistance have increased from about four a week to at least 20 a week and growing. The Program will have to expand the number of staff who are receiving referrals and who are able to interface directly with CalCONNECT. Administration is assessing the merger of Program operations with the Housing JDOC's "call center," to minimize the need to increase staffing.

The fourth goal is to develop effective messaging. The Program is being rebranded to be a part of the "Santa Clara County COVID-19 Support Team" which includes countywide efforts to expand testing, contact tracing, and community outreach. The rebranding is necessary to integrate the Program with a broad and ongoing public health campaign. Moreover, the rebranding is intended to improve residents' access to supportive services and willingness to assist with contact tracing efforts (i.e., provide information) by alleviating the fears and dispelling the misconceptions that may have arisen in some communities.

The final goal is to determine if modifications are needed based on cities' willingness to participate in a countywide program. In June, County staff reached out to cities through their city managers, housing departments or emergency management staff to describe the Program and a concept for how the County and cities could collaborate on a countywide program. On July 8, the City Managers' Association received a presentation from the Office of Supportive Housing (OSH). Office of the County Counsel is drafting an agreement for cities' review.

The OSH estimates that over a 16-week period, about 320 persons would need assistance from the Program, and that total costs for the Program could be approximately \$3,000,000 if every participant utilized every service (e.g. stayed in a motel and needed \$5,000 in rental and financial assistance). Only about \$220,000 would be associated with maintaining the referral line and administrative expenses.

Approximately 83% of participants would come from the City of San José. The OSH proposed that the County would manage a countywide program and each jurisdiction would commit to funding a share of the Program's fixed costs based on their share of the countywide population. Each jurisdiction would also set aside funding to cover the costs of their residents' participation in the Program; however, those costs would only be incurred by a city if their resident participated in the Program. Similarly, the County would incur additional costs if a resident of an unincorporated area participated in the Program.

Attachments:

- A. (Draft) Program Infographic
- B. Sacred Heart Community Service Agreement
- C. IQ Flowchart

Cc: Chief Board Aides  
Miguel Márquez, Chief Operating Officer  
James Williams, County Counsel  
Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board  
Director, Social Services Agency Director  
Director, Department of Employment and Benefit Services  
Consuelo Hernandez, Deputy Director, Office of Supportive Housing  
Director, County Emergency Operations Center  
Chief, Operations Section, County Emergency Operations Center  
Testing, Housing and Human Services Branch, County Emergency Operations Center