

**COVID-19 Teleconference with LA County Public Health
For Colleges and Universities
November 12, 2020 – 4 p.m.**

SPEAKERS

- Barbara Ferrer, PHD, MPH, MEd, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
- Robert Gilchick, MD, MPH, Child and Adolescent Health Section Chief, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
- Dawn Terashita, MD, Associate Director, Acute Communicable Disease Control Program

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

- Dr. Ferrer reported that more transmissions are occurring, which leads to more cases and a significant increase in hospitalizations
- In October, there were below 700 cases on average of hospitalization compared to 950 today (11/12/2020)
- Third day with over 900 cases
- One metric that remains low is deaths
- Population infected continues to be those who are younger and healthier, and less likely to be hospitalized; when they are hospitalized, they will have a shorter length of stay
- Los Angeles County remains in Tier One, with a case rate of 7.6/100,000

NEXT STEPS FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Dr. Ferrer said that if the case numbers do not decrease and stabilize, any additional changes in protocols for colleges and universities will be unlikely. The county cannot stay at 2,500 cases per day and think about additional reopening or allowing more opportunities for intermingling.

Colleges and universities need to be prepared for the reality that in January, more restrictions will be back in place and residents will be asked to stay home, with the exception of essential services workers.

The virus is going to be harder to contain in the winter months and the holidays do not bode well for decreasing spread.

Should rates decrease and stabilize over the next few months, the county could anticipate making some accommodations and lifting some of the restrictions to allow for some flexibility for fine arts instruction (i.e. individual studio space time).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: How many people can we pack into the board room for the swearing in of new board members?

Answer: None. They should not be together. Unless there is a legal mandate, swearing in should be done virtually. If it must be done in person, the ceremony should only include the new board members and the person swearing them in. It should be done outside and participants should be six feet apart.

Question: Can you offer any guidance for testing best practices for faculty, staff and students?

Answer: County is trying to align with the state. No recommendations at this point but we do know that some colleges/universities are already testing students. Testing is changing, particularly with antigen tests, but those are for people who are symptomatic and not designed for asymptomatic people or mass testing. We do not recommend antigen tests for screening. Better yet, focus on what prevents transmission (washing hands, face coverings, physical distancing).