



San Diego Community College District
Office of the Chancellor

October 12, 2020

CORONAVIRUS/COVID-19: UPDATE #15

To: SDCCD Colleagues and Friends

From: Constance M. Carroll, Chancellor

Greetings and welcome, again, to the “new normal” of online instruction, remote operations, Zoom meetings, and uncertain prognoses for returning to our former way of working together on site and in person. You all continue to do an excellent job in making this new normal work for our students. The Board of Trustees and I continue to be grateful for your efforts and dedication. I am writing to bring you up-to-date about a few matters.

GUIDANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION – UPDATED REPORT

Last week, the California Department of Public Health and Cal OSHA issued updated guidance for institutions of higher education, detailing how community colleges, universities, and four-year colleges are expected to operate with regard to any on-site instruction and operations. This guidance pertains to the current on-campus class components and limited onsite staffing, and also includes useful information for returning to onsite operations in the long term. I have attached this document for your information. However, let me share a few highlights, with which the San Diego Community College District is complying:

- Face coverings are required (along with face shields in some disciplines). Employers are responsible for supplying this equipment. Employers must also be prepared to address “exemptions to the requirement for persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering, and for persons who are hearing impaired or communicating with persons who are hearing impaired.” (p.4)
- COVID-19 Prevention Plan. All institutions must establish “written, campus-specific COVID-19 prevention plan(s).” (p. 5)
- Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation. These practices must be intensified. (pp. 7-9)
- Distancing on Campus. San Diego is currently in the Red/Tier 2 category, basically limiting lecture groups to 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer. The report includes suggested formats. (p. 10)
- Communal Spaces. There are limitations for the number and configuration of people in such spaces. (p. 11)

- Food Service. Grab-and-go, packaged items are the rule. (p. 12)
- Training Programs for Staff and Students. The report emphasizes thorough communication and training in CDC and other public health guidelines. (pp. 14-15)
- Checking for Signs and Symptoms. All people entering a campus or work site must be checked. (p. 16)
- Response to Individuals who Become Sick. Protocols are outlined for handling cases of individual illness. (p. 17)
- Establishing Communication Systems. Processes are recommended for communication with students, faculty, staff, health agencies, and the public. (p. 21)
- Special Guidance and Protocols for Athletics. The report includes extended guidance regarding athletic programs and student-athletes. (pp. 24 – 37)

This Guidance and other reports have provided a useful framework for us as we steer the District, City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges, and Continuing Education forward. We are definitely observing these protocols and will continue our efforts to ensure the health and safety of the few people who are teaching, learning, or working onsite.

SDCCD PLANS FOR THE COMING SEMESTER

As reported earlier, in the SDCCD, the Intersession and the Spring Semester 2021 classes will be online, with a few more hybrid options for students who need to complete their science lab work, clinical lab work, career-technical lab work, and first-responder classes on campus, along with a few student support functions. In the hope that the virus may have abated during the Spring, the campuses are making plans for in-person commencements in May, with the understanding that they may need to hold virtual commencements if the physical commencements are not safe. Fingers crossed.

FUTURE SDCCD PLANS FOR 2021-22

We continue to receive questions about next year (Summer, Fall, etc.) and what plans will be implemented. Right now, it is too soon to make any commitments, since we need to track the virus and also need to know what vaccine(s) may be developed and become available. We certainly do hope to return to on-campus, in-person instruction and phased-in on-site operations, but we need much more information and guidance before that can happen.

OVERVIEW OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SITUATION

As before, let me share with you the most recent update from the hospital consortium that makes regular reports to the San Diego County Regional Economic Development Corporation, of which I am a member.

National/International, State, County/City HealthCare Highlights

National/International

- Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said Thursday [the U.S. could have enough COVID-19 vaccine doses for every American as early as March](#). Azar said the U.S. is currently manufacturing doses for all six potential vaccines backed by the U.S. government across more than 23 manufacturing facilities.
- There were at least 928 new COVID-19 deaths and 56,045 new cases reported in the U.S. Thursday, Oct. 8, [according to data reported by The New York](#)

[Times](#). Over the past week, there has been an average of 47,036 cases per day, which is an increase of 12% from the average two weeks earlier.

State

- This week, state officials [introduced new guidelines](#) to measure the impact the novel coronavirus is having on the most disadvantaged communities in counties across the state. The new [health equity metric](#) is in addition to the case and positivity rate metrics. Officials say the metric will only be used to help a county move to a less restrictive tier and allow the opening of further sectors of the economy, not to move backwards to more restrictive tiers.
- On Tuesday, Oct. 6, the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#) [announced the following COVID-19 statistics](#):
 - California has 828,461 confirmed cases to date.
 - There were 1,677 newly recorded confirmed cases Monday.
 - The seven-day positivity rate is 2.6%; the 14-day positivity rate is 2.7%.
 - There have been 15,430,421 tests conducted in California, an increase of 128,740 over the prior 24-hour reporting period.

County/City

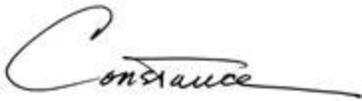
- Yesterday, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency provided the following COVID-19 data through Oct. 7:
 - Under the state monitoring metrics, San Diego County remains in tier 2, also known as the red tier.
 - San Diego's state-calculated, adjusted case rate is 6.5 per 100,000 residents, down from 6.7. The unadjusted case rate is 7.0, down from 7.2.
 - The county's [health equity testing positivity percentage](#) is 6.2 and is in the red tier.
 - On Oct. 7, 19 new community outbreaks were confirmed: six in restaurant/bar settings, six in business settings, two in grocery settings, two in restaurants, one in a food processing setting, one in a residence and one in a hair salon/barbershop setting.
 - In the past seven days (Oct. 1 through Oct. 7), 32 community outbreaks were confirmed.
 - The number of community outbreaks remains above the trigger of seven or more in seven days.
 - The 14-day rolling average percentage of positive cases is 3%. The target is less than 8%.
 - 291 new cases were confirmed among San Diego County residents Oct. 7. The region's total is now 49,446.
 - Six new COVID-19 deaths were reported in San Diego County Oct. 7. The region's total is now 819.
 - More information about community setting outbreaks, testing, cases and deaths can be found [here on the Health and Human Services Agency's website](#).

- The latest countywide data (as of Wednesday, Oct. 7) shows that the number of COVID-19 patients in San Diego County hospitals increased to 217, up from 187 the week prior. The distribution of patients with confirmed COVID-19 was as follows:
 - 79 at Sharp HealthCare
 - 68 at Scripps Health
 - 10 at UC San Diego Health
 - 19 at Kaiser Permanente
 - 16 at Palomar Health
 - 12 at Prime Healthcare Services (Alvarado Hospital Medical Center and Paradise Valley Hospital)
 - 1 at Rady Children's Hospital
 - 12 at Tri-City Healthcare District

CONCLUSION

The Board of Trustees, the Presidents, the Chancellor's Cabinet, the governance leaders, and I are continuing to monitor this situation, which is complex and volatile. I think we are doing our best to ensure that our two top priorities are met: 1) ensuring the health and safety of our students and employees; and 2) ensuring the continuity of instruction and operations. Many thanks to all of our faculty, classified professionals, administrators, student leaders, and community supporters for your understanding and advice.

Stay well!



Dr. Constance M. Carroll
Chancellor
San Diego Community College District
3375 Camino del Rio South
San Diego, CA 92108
Tel. (619) 388-6957
Fax (619) 388-6541
Email ccarroll@sdccd.edu

 [@carrollsdccd](https://twitter.com/carrollsdccd)



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