

Governor Press Conference – March 17

Extend a deep appreciation for people's understanding and capacity to absorb this moment in a very rational way; no greater way than practicing common sense. Be safe, stay indoors, especially our seniors.

Home isolation is no longer just limited to 6 counties. A number of other counties will adopt similar strategies in the upcoming hours and days.

Now is time to absorb and recognize that we need to change our behaviors in a way that meets this moment and allows a recognition that this moment will pass. We will work through this in the next weeks and months, and we will get back to the life we have lived.

This is a moment in time. A challenging moment. And many moments in the foreseeable future. We will work through this together and we will triumph over fear, anxiety and over this disease.

Yesterday evening, I laid out new guidance and directives to begin to flood the zone. We are taking a huge workforce to really focus in on older Californians to make sure needs are met. I have laid out detailed guidance to begin this process.

Regarding evictions for both individuals and businesses. We waived the California Code for local municipalities to adopt what's appropriate for moratoriums. I applaud San Francisco, San Jose, and Los Angeles for their actions, and looking forward to seeing more jurisdictions adopt moratoriums. However, I reserve the right to go farther if we do not think local efforts are not enough.

Also the Public Utilities Commission needed to do more in oversight and management of utilities to make sure people aren't facing their gas, water, internet being shut off because they cannot pay their bill. Applaud the utilities for acknowledging this moment and advancing their volunteer efforts. We just want to make sure from a consumer protection perspective that this does happen.

With DMV, we are waiving for a minimum for 60 days license renewal and vehicle registration.

We are prioritizing homelessness. In Oakland, there are 393 rooms available. We negotiated and procured the lease for two hotels. This allows us to get people off the streets and into appropriate shelter. Acknowledge that 393 rooms is not a lot.

Negotiating with 901 identified hotels right now. Tens of thousands of rooms may come into a portfolio that we can advance quickly. We can advance this with help of the Legislature passing emergency legislation for \$1.1 billion for procurement of facilities, and additional support of cities and counties. Took enormous amount of trust for legislative leaders to work together and support the Governor. Will use wisely and with a sense of urgency.

We need to prepare for capacity that will transpire. If our projections materialize as it relates to a surge in our hospital system and we are looking at current inventory assets. We have 416 hospitals that has over 74,000 licensed beds, 78,000 staffed beds, and a 10,000 bed surge capacity. Total capacity is approximately 88,000 to 90,000 beds. We are running every conceivable model 30 to 40 percent up to 60 percent plus. We have a benefit of knowledge of what is going on worldwide. Able to determine percentage of hospitalization, and provides an estimate. Hospitals running their own models, and planning and strategies and resources.

Good news is that our state is that we anticipated much of these needs and have been running plans to address them. California should have two large hospitals in its possession by Friday that we can convert in real time with the emergency appropriation so we can secure as a lease and can move to operationalize (one in northern California and southern California). The 901 hotels also creates capacity opportunities. Difference between Santa Clara County and Alpine County (that has medical facilities challenges).

Information about the testing kits. California has a lot of tests, but does not have the appropriate other components to complete testing. Working with the federal government and they have been very responsive to State. As we move to greater throughput and greater automation of testing protocols, that in the next week or two, we will see an exponential testing increase of our capacity. We are moving from diagnostic testing to the specimen collection and some of the swabs can be an impediment. Discussed with the President an hour ago, and he assured about swab procurement that they are working to secure and distribute. We need to move to mobile testing to get people out of acute medical facilities.

With Verily, increased tests from 30 yesterday to 321 today. We are scaling up our mobile testing, and want to expand across the state. We have a request in with FEMA to make this happen.

We have 21 state labs doing tests, 4 private institutions doing tests along with additional 3 next week. Our testing is improving in real time.

We are focused on treatment. We are not discussing enough. In California, we pride ourselves on being the center of innovation. We have all UCs in clinical trials with treatments. Not here to overpromise but it is a mitigation strategy. Trying to avoid hospitalization.

Pleased to hear the President support this morning about telehealth for Medicare and Medicaid. We have requested a waiver from the federal government. This should increase capacity. Have confidence the Medicaid support will happen quickly like Medicare.

For Small Business Administration loans, we were first state to request and get the declaration. This [website](#) has information about it. We encourage businesses under 500 employees to seek these loans.

Regarding schools, 98.8 percent of schools have closed down. 6.1 million children no longer in school. The rest will likely shut down soon. Diving deep into getting capacity to deliver homeschooling children. [Detailed guidelines](#) were provided today. Will update these weekly every Friday.

Do not anticipate schools will not open before summer break. As a consequence, working with the guidance of our educational leaders – we do not think it is appropriate for children to come back and be tested (AP, ACT, SAT, etc.). We are requesting a formal federal waiver for this.

Important we all work and collaborate together in real tie.

The State puts out guidelines with broad strokes where we think we should go or anticipate where will go. It is adaptable by what is going on day by day. As a consequence, these guidelines will change day by day. For example, gathering guidelines changing over a course of days. We must adapt to the moment. For the shelter in place, you can still have a BBQ with your family, go for walk (with intention), get in a car with two people. Just use common sense. People you are used to being with, you should be with. We do not want activities independent of your cohort interacting with other cohorts.

People's security is top of mind. We are taking more formal action and guidance for our national guard to lean on the logistics side for a humanitarian effort, and formally supporting our cities and counties. We are leaning in more aggressively on this. Deeply appreciate everybody's patience through this.

Questions

Given the projections the Administration has, can you anticipate the peak and estimated fatalities?

We run worst case and moderate case scenarios. What is the attack rate? Hospitalization rate? These all are different scenarios and different needs. I would rather not alarm people with estimates, but we have had 11 deaths, and 472 tested positive as of last night. That is a 17 percent increase from the previous day. More reports of deaths today, and we are getting that information compiled. Working on these scenarios over the next 8 weeks. We are not victims of fate, but victims of bad decisions. We are can create situations that are more advantageous.

Economic question – the future and trajectory of the disease is uncertain. UCLA forecasters saying we are likely in a recession. Do you think the budget reserve will be able to weather this or will we have to make budget cuts?

The State has never had reserves like we have. Our bond rating went up twice last year. Forthrightly, we do not know. We need to do everything we can to meet this moment, and not be small about this. We are better off than we have been at any time in the past, but the magnitude of this moment that made be larger than our reserves.

State worker guidance – who is essential or non-essential? Anything about telework and family leave?

As we speak, Cabinet Secretary is meeting with Agency leaders about this. People have a different sense of what is essential and non-essential, so we are curating that in real time. We are also working with our public unions as well. We will make that public very soon, either tonight or tomorrow.

Regarding schools, it might be a shock to parents that schools will not open until summer. Can you speak to that and what you based that on, and what about schools still open?

Small percentage of school districts still open. This is a nation-state – we have hundreds of school districts. We provided guidelines today for all school districts that will help those districts. About schools not opening until summer, I am saying this to be transparent and need to be honest with you. I told my daughter this last night, and if I am telling my daughter that, I should be telling you that too. I hope I am wrong, but based on the work we have to do and the new directives that will be coming. My conversation with the President was favorable – we will need support from the federal government like that occurred around Hurricane Katrina. Repurpose some of our manufacturing sector and formalized that request to the federal government.

What about daycare centers that many are still open – can you speak to that?

Put out guidelines out about this today. The Legislature made available 100 million to focus on the stresses on childcare related to school closures and making sure we have protective gear and that our child care facilities are clean and practicing social distancing. Based on the magnitude on this, we have a lot of work to do in this space in recognizing that the daycare burden and stress is real. We have a taskforce about this. We are supporting daycare centers with appropriate protocols. We need our

childcare facilities to operate to absorb the magnitude of these school closures. The guidelines just put out is also about care. We are not calling for all daycare centers to shut down. Working to absorb this moment in real time.

About the guidance for evictions and foreclosures, authorizing cities creates another step and many cities may not do this so there could be different protections around the statewide? Why was it not important to create a uniform statewide order on this?

One size fits all is not the right approach. San Jose, Los Angeles, and San Francisco moved forward on this but there was some legal ambiguity that the waiver clears up. Other municipalities want to customize their own solutions. I made this crystal clear and will say this again – I reserve the right in real time to substantially adjust that directive based on what happens or does not happen in real time statewide in California. We will lean in if the additional steps are not happening quickly enough.

You said you reserve the right to adjust your guidance, on this and other items. Can you discuss what that would look like if you went further? And why not go all the way there right away? Are you looking at having soldiers in the street to keep people at home?

We are working with thousand plus school boards, 58 counties, over 470 cities, and working in an environment of federalism at the state level. Localism is determinative. Realignment with county functions that extends to local health directors that have real authority to direct and enforce measures. We have been working hand in glove with the anxieties versus City of Los Angeles versus the County of Los Angeles or Modoc County. We are leaning in. We were the first about sheltering 65 and older. We encourage with local conditions to go further (i.e., Santa Clara County). Many counties adopting similar strategies to the Bay Area. If we do not think counties are doing enough, we will do more. With the National Guard, we have asked them to work with us on mutual aid and logistics as we do often in emergencies. We have ability to in real time based on changing environment conditions that we have the ability to do martial law and layer new requirements. Not wanting to be an alarmist, and we are putting plans in place. We will meet the moment.

For childcare, do schools need to be close to stop social distancing, then why does having childcare facilities open? Why not have schools open then?

Many districts believe that they cannot appropriately answer that question. The reason the Legislature provided 100 million that some schools may want to keep school sites open so schools have gear and can keep social distancing. We may repurpose school sites for congregate meals, but maybe to address these childcare needs. Your questions are the right questions, and one answer does not fit all. The state has very different conditions depending on where you are in the state.

For hospitals, you mentioned that we may need 4,000 to 20,000 surge beds? What about ICU beds? How much can be met in current structure, and what would need to be put in place?

Details are being put together in real time. We currently have 11,400 ICU beds (pediatric and adult). However, that is misleading as that is the entire system. We need to look at by county and region and their needs. This number is meaningless to conditions on the ground depending on your area. Do you need hotels or do you need hospitals? We are in process of procuring other hospitals in addition to the two coming online later this week. One recent Executive Order allows for the use of armories, fairgrounds, state buildings, and state hospitals so we can look at those facilities. We are looking at the

repurposing of existing resources – we can convert operating rooms into ICU rooms. Elective surgeries slowing down. Looking at how we can repurpose our workforce. Working with partners to provide human resources. We have those scenario plans and breaking those down in much more detail.

When can we expect waivers approved for schools? And what can working parents expect for relief?

Most significant relief will come from the federal government, which is in the Senate. We are blessed with our partnership with Speaker Pelosi and her office to make sure that federal government provides appropriate support on paid sick leave and unemployment insurance. Got waivers from the week requirement for unemployment insurance. Other requests in with the federal government. Every request has been granted and in real time, and as long as we do not overstep, those waivers will be forthcoming. In addition, looking at our own State support but will be based on what federal government does and how that will play out in the state budget and local budgets, and also what stimulus package may occur.

You mention last night in your update that there was a homeless person who passed from the disease. Do you have any further details about this? This is the first case of homeless person who contracted and passed. Was the person in a shelter?

I do not have the benefit of the individual details to this important question for this vulnerable population. We care deeply about this population.

Shouldn't there be more information about what Santa Clara County is doing about this and if it will become a bigger issue there? And can you detail about the 450 trailers deployments, and timelines for hotel procurements and priorities for the beds?

The issue with a deeper sense of urgency – my entire State of the State was dedicated to homelessness. Details of his State of the State provided. Yesterday, announced in record time that we were able to procure two hotels in Oakland and are in process of transitioning those. Negotiating another 901 hotels to help with surge capacity to meet broader needs. We do not need advocacy community to highlight those concerns as we deeply share them. As it relates to new mobile home parks (113 units), along with 100 trailers being procured. We will share more information as we get these procured.

We are prioritizing seniors on the streets and those with compromised immune systems as it relates to contracting COVID-19. Protocols delivered at the county and local level, not at the state level.

How many conventional beds and ICU beds are occupied?

California Hospital Association President and CEO: Really caution people thinking about the numbers, because as the Governor said, we have the ability to shift and shape the capacity depending on our needs. On capacity issue, hospitals deal with emergencies every day but we prepare for this every day. Our physical and human capacity and resources to care for those. We are partnered with the State team – stick to the science, stick to the facts.

Governor: We have requested federal government help. They have Navy ships off the coast of California that have medical capacity that are uniquely positioned to help California. But we do need help with our federal partners on mobile field hospitals.

HHS Secretary Dr. Ghaly: Refining our models. Continue to augment with information from counties and hospital leaders, and refined based on international experience. As we report more cases and deaths in California, we are preparing to scale up hospitals that we are planning to bring online. We are thinking about how we can use the hotels to meet this plan. We are using the models to plan for additional capacity. We need to remain flexible in how we use our resources. Certain counties and regions will be impacted earlier and deeper than other parts. We are continuing to refine these models, along with social distancing, that will help guide our decision making as we build up our response to this issue.