

# COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers

Friday June 12, 2020 9:00 AM

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## Meeting Recording:

Topic: COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers (April 8-June 30 invite)

Date: June 12, 2020 09:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/7PR1NZrK815LTavX2hrQUJ17Hq\\_rX6a82nNP-vpfz073zlFincee\\_wY-JtCFWh5M](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/7PR1NZrK815LTavX2hrQUJ17Hq_rX6a82nNP-vpfz073zlFincee_wY-JtCFWh5M)

Password: 90=@u!15

# Meeting Agenda

Austin/Travis County

COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers  
June 12<sup>th</sup> Agenda



City of Austin / Austin Public Health



Implementation Team Updates



Agency Updates



Wrap Up – Next Call: Wednesday, June 17th @ 9:00am

## Meeting Notes:

COA – Laura Foss

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/austins-homeless-strategy-covid-19-support>

- 4238 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Travis County; 3316 recovered; and 101 deaths
  - 3 days of 3 digit increases in COVID19; over 100 people have contracted it over 3 days
- Demographic information on cases available at <http://www.austintexas.gov/covid19>
  - Do not have the number of those who are experiencing homelessness that have COVID19-last known estimate was 48 individuals
    - They are reworking how said data is being calculated
    - Hopefully will have an update Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup>
  - However, at least 48 individuals experiencing homelessness have tested positive, including 26 that have recovered
    - The count of cases among people experiencing homelessness is likely an undercount due to private labs and providers not necessarily recording each person's housing status when they test.
- City has extended stay at home orders till **June 15<sup>th</sup>** to be in line with Travis County
  - City and County will release new orders Monday
  - They can be found at [Austintexas.gov/Covid19](http://Austintexas.gov/Covid19)

- Austin/Travis County Health Authority stating **masks when outside the home or in public are recommended**
  - Physical distancing of at least 6 feet between individuals is still recommended
- Quarantine and Alternate Facilities
  - Pro-Lodges 1-4 are operational with some rooms available
    - All ProLodges are secure and not open to the public
    - If any agency is interested in learning more about the Pro-lodge operations and services please contact Robert at [Robert.Kingham@austintexas.gov](mailto:Robert.Kingham@austintexas.gov)
  - If other programs have capacity to work with people staying at Pro-Lodge sites, please contact Vella Karmen, [vella.karmen@austintexas.gov](mailto:vella.karmen@austintexas.gov)
- Eating Apart Together (EAT); Food access for people experiencing homelessness
  - Anticipates 6 more weeks of shelf stable food from Central Texas Food Bank
    - This round will begin June 18<sup>th</sup> with no disruptions in services
  - City's contract with Revolution Food for prepared meals will end June 21<sup>st</sup>
    - Continuing to look into potential options for prepared meal services
  - EAT Initiative will continue to investigate food access needs for those experiencing homelessness
    - To determine the scope and length of need as a response to COVID19
  - The EAT 123 survey
    - Include information on encampment trash pickup needs
      - EAT has the hopes of providing or increasing trash pickup in the identified locations
    - Or send information to [Michelle.miles@austintexas.gov](mailto:Michelle.miles@austintexas.gov)
  - If you want to participate in any aspect of Eating Apart Together Initiative Zach Shlachter at [zack.shlachter@austintexas.gov](mailto:zack.shlachter@austintexas.gov)
  - City of Austin is launching a new hub for opportunities for Austin community members to help during COVID19
    - If your organization has opportunities for people to help with COVID19 related activities i.e. donations or volunteer opportunities
      - Please sign up on the Hub
    - We are using Gif Polls as the platform
      - If you sign up your organization Gif Poll is offering a free Silver Account to post your opportunities
    - Will launch that program to the public next Monday June the 15<sup>th</sup>
      - Will be promoted by City leaders, elected officials, newsletter, press releases, social media, email marketing, and more
    - You can access the website here <http://austintexas.gov/department/covid-19-how-help-austin>
  - Saturday June 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM Austin Public Health and community leaders will host an interactive Facebook Live Conversation
    - To identify actionable steps and resources to improve the COVID19 related health outcomes for the Latinx community

- Called the “Together Against COVID19 Latinx Community Forum”
    - Held in Spanish at the Austin Public Health’s Facebook page
    - Access it here <https://www.facebook.com/austinpublichealth/>
  - Another Community Engagement Event July 11<sup>th</sup>
    - More information to come
- Hygiene Update
  - Homelessness Task force and the Parks and Recreation Department are working with the Public Works Department to gain permission for more mobile showers in South Austin
  - The United Methodist Church on Guadalupe St has given permission to have mobile showers there
  - Public Works also approved a sight on Slaughter Ln and Manchaca Rd
  - And they are finalizing permissions with TEXDOT for land use and processing the licenses and registration of 2 more shower trailers
- Downtown Austin Community Court Update (DACC)
  - Continue to offer walk-in triage case management services 8am-5pm Monday through Friday
    - Added a 2nd triage staff member due to the volume of individuals experiencing homelessness requesting assistance
    - Triage case manager provides flyers to all clients with information on COVID19 and safety planning
  - June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> DACA served 80 individuals through triage
  - And since March 16<sup>th</sup> they have served 1,389 individuals, an average of 19 individuals a day
    - Individuals accessing basic hygiene resources or client’s case managers reach remotely are not factored into this number
  - They continue to provide food kits from the Austin Convention Center to housed case-managed clients and Food and hygiene kits from First Methodist Church to triage clients
  - DACA assembled cleaning and hygiene packs to provide to their housed clients
    - Supplies to assist with maintaining a clean environment during COVID19. They include;
      - Toilet paper, tissues, body soap, laundry soap, dryer sheets, bottle of disinfectant cleaner, toothpaste, dish soap, and cleaning clothes

### ECHO Updates:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> tranche of award for ESG funding was released by HUD
  - Substantial money will be coming in to Austin
  - City of Austin received almost \$11 million in the 2<sup>nd</sup> tranche of funding for ESG
  - TDHCA tranche has more than doubled for non-entitlement areas in Texas
    - We don’t know how much of that will be coming to Austin yet
  - There will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> RFA released to look at those funds

- If you're thinking about applying the COVID19 ESG funds have substantial wavers attached to them,
        - i.e. no match requirements and more flexible administration in general
        - For those who have not typically run ESG programs it is an opportunity
- The Approved Austin COVID19 Homelessness Response Implementation Structure Plan
  - Project Management Team spearheading efforts with the joint collaboration between city and ECHO leadership
  - Underneath there is
    - Hotel/Motel Implementation Team
    - Emergency Shelter and Unsheltered Implementation Team
    - Funding Strategies Implementation Team
    - Rehousing Strategies Implementation Team
  - Each is connected to some of the different objectives of the overall plan
  - The bottom group, made up of providers and stakeholders, provide a back and forth with various levels of the Implementation team and are sought out by the implementation team for feedback and insight
- Emergency Shelter and Unsheltered Implementation Team
  - Discussion Items
    - Continuing to address the need for testing in congregate and shelter settings
      - Will provide updates when we have a testing system and policy and procedures in place
    - Continuing to gather shelter resource needs and nightly bed utilization numbers
    - Prolodge waitlist continues to be staffed
      - This week the next 15 were prioritized in order to move in to the Prolodges once room becomes available
  - Next Steps
    - CDC guidelines efforts document has been created
      - Has been sent out for feedback; reach out to Christa with that feedback
      - Or Contact Christa if you have not received it yet
        - [christasignor@austinecho.org](mailto:christasignor@austinecho.org)
    - Healthcare for the Homeless Council webinar June 26<sup>th</sup> on testing for shelters and encampments
      - [https://events-na5.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/940408314/en/events/event/shared/default\\_template/event\\_landing.html?scoid=2345047701](https://events-na5.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/940408314/en/events/event/shared/default_template/event_landing.html?scoid=2345047701)
    - Be on the look out for new CDC guidance that will be coming out soon around testing

- Christa is the go-to for our shelters for said guidance
    - Above mentioned document will be updated as CDC guidelines update
- Hotel/Motel Implementation Team
  - Discussion Items
    - Grievance policy that's being created
      - Initial draft has been created but not approved
    - Determining staffing plans for operations and essential on-site services for the different Prolodges
      - So we have staffing identified and so Prolodges run efficiently
    - Identifying funding and strategies for securing staff in order to move forward with the type of management style they would like to see at Prolodges
  - Decisions
    - Approved allowing Participants have their partners stay in the same rooms
      - To build out capacity for others with high risk needs so we can free up rooms knowing some want to stay together
  - Next Steps
    - Revise and approve the client grievance policy Tuesday or Thursday
    - Create process for site management and service coordination
      - In order to share their information and be as efficient as possible and people don't fall through the gaps
- Funding Strategies Implementation Team
  - Discussion Items
    - City of Austin has released RFA 6/10 for the award of CDBG, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) COVID19 relief funds, and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) COVID19 relief funds
      - To be used for homelessness prevention and diversion and
      - Rapid Re-housing funds
      - Access it here <https://www.austintexas.gov/article/rfa-005-covid-housing-2020-nps>
    - Made adjustments to the timeline for application submission and evaluation period
    - Reviewed the outcome performance measures in regards to those activities
    - Hosted a Pre-bid virtual conference yesterday for those materials
    - Proposed criteria and definition of "person most impacted by COVID19" and making sure we develop a focus population for the referral for those programs
      - Being done in conjunction with Rehousing Implementation group and Project Management Team

- Decisions
  - Finalized the scope of work and application materials for RFA
  - Approved deadline is June 24<sup>th</sup>
  - Approved the inclusion of the Austin/Travis County Homeless Program Performance Measurement document for those funds
  - Removed short-term RRH as an eligible project type in the scope of work
  - Working with the different systems in order to finalize the focus population criteria
- Next Steps
  - Draft and present the evaluation criteria for the approval by the Project Management Team for applications submitted for the RFA
  - Work in conjunction with the to Rehousing Implementation Team and the Project Management Team to release the final approve definition of the focus population used for the projects
- Rehousing Strategies Implementation Team
  - They meet during this particular meeting time
  - Discussions
    - Review of the current coordinated entry prioritization and proposed new edits to the process
      - Looking at prioritization for CE and how it might change
    - Looking to align the rapid rehousing programs being created with the COVID specific funding
      - The focus population for the Cares Act funding is people experiencing homelessness that are most impacted by COVID19
  - Next Steps
    - Finalize focus and prioritization recommendations for the Project Management Team
      - Project Management Team will be reviewing how people will be prioritized through CE for the RFA award
- Project Management Team
  - Moved to one a week
  - Recent Discussions
    - Talked about RFA and made sure the language was aligned and the project type
  - Decisions
    - Approved Hotel/Motel recommendation allowing low risk Prolodge residents to remain at the Prolodges
      - And to work on housing plans with Prolodge and support service staff
    - Allowed Funding strategies team to have final say on RFA language
      - Decision was made Wednesday and RFA was posted that afternoon



- Next Steps
  - Will focus on synthesizing all four Implantation Team templates to ensure strategic alignment
    - Will do this next week
    - We each have project plans for those Teams
    - Pushed out the timelines and deliverables for those projects plans into July
    - Mapped out what work needs to be done from now until July
      - In order to continue to bring together a strategy for housing individuals out of the Prolodges, congregate shelter homelessness, and unsheltered homelessness
  - Continue to work to get the voices of lived expertise included in the Implementation phase of work
    - We ask all 4 Implementation Teams to Include that as a deliverable in the work they are doing going forward
      - To ensure there are areas where people with lived expertise can plug and provide the necessary feedback to ensure that the programs will meet the needs of those we are trying to serve
    - Continue to focus on racial equity lens of the response
      - Made it a requirement for the Implementation Teams to make sure it is being addressed

## Agency Updates

None

## Chat Box:

**From Andrew Willard to Everyone: 10:02 AM**

Good Morning Everyone! Happy Friday! Thank you for joining us. If you have any question or comments about the content of todays updates, please feel free to drop them in the chat.

**From Andrew Willard to Everyone: 10:09 AM**

Hey Laura are you still on? I can't hear you.

**From Iarafoss to Everyone: 10:15 AM**

Howdy! My electricity went out in my house! Not sure why... Sorry about that... I'll post the links and email addresses...

For demographic breakdowns and more information, you can visit the <http://austintexas.gov/covid19> web site

If any agency is interested in learning more about the Pro-lodge operations and services



please contact Robert at [Robert.Kingham@austintexas.gov](mailto:Robert.Kingham@austintexas.gov). All Pro-lodge facilities are secure and not open to the public.

If any programs have capacity to serve clients at these Pro-lodge sites, please contact Vella Karman at [Vella.Karman@austintexas.gov](mailto:Vella.Karman@austintexas.gov)

Please include information regarding trash pickup needs for encampments in the EAT Initiative 1,2,3 survey when food is distributed in the community or send this information to [michelle.myles@austintexas.gov](mailto:michelle.myles@austintexas.gov)

If you are interested in participating in any aspect of the Eating Apart Together Initiative please contact Zack Shlachter ([zack.shlachter@austintexas.gov](mailto:zack.shlachter@austintexas.gov)).

How to Help Campaign

<http://austintexas.gov/department/covid-19-how-help-austin>

The Together Against COVID-19 Latinx Community Forum will be held in Spanish on Austin Public Health's Facebook page. Representatives from Austin Public Health and Latinx community will discuss the impact of COVID-19 in the Latinx community, share available resources, and seek input from participants about how the City can make improvements. <https://www.facebook.com/austinpublichealth/>

**From Christa Signor to Everyone: 10:16 AM**

If interested in receiving the Emergency Shelter Guidance for Prevention and Management of COVID-19 document for prior review and feedback please email [christasignor@austinecho.org](mailto:christasignor@austinecho.org)

**From Andrew Willard to Everyone: 10:18 AM**

Link to the #005 COVID Housing 2020 NPS: <https://www.austintexas.gov/article/rfa-005-covid-housing-2020-nps>

**From Christa Signor to Everyone: 10:19 AM**

Testing for COVID-19 in Homeless Shelters & Encampments: Discussing CDC's New Health Department Guidance & NHCHC's Newest Issue Brief Confirmation Webinar information can be found here: [https://events-na5.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/940408314/en/events/event/shared/default\\_template/event\\_landing.html?sco-id=2345047701](https://events-na5.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/940408314/en/events/event/shared/default_template/event_landing.html?sco-id=2345047701)