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Placerville, CA 95667



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Placerville, CA 95667

April 20, 2020

Nancy Williams, MD
El Dorado County Health Officer
931 Spring St.
Placerville CA 95667

Dear Dr. Williams,

As you are aware, on April 14, 2020, the Governor issued a six-point framework that he plans to use in assessing whether stay at home orders and business activity could resume in some fashion. Through collaborative partnerships between County and City government, education, hospitals and nonprofits and our business leaders, our community has done an outstanding job in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Understanding our community is still at risk for high case numbers, primarily due to increased tourism activity, it is critical that we begin discussing how to allow our non-essential business community to re-open as the impacts of keeping our businesses closed will also have significant consequences.

The following summarizes how our community has addressed each of the points in the Governor's framework:

- 1) *The ability to monitor and protect communities through testing, tracking positive cases, properly isolating and supporting individuals who are positive and/or exposed to COVID-19.*

We recognize that testing is still limited in El Dorado County but it is our understanding additional testing is anticipated to be available in the next few weeks. That being said, as of April 17, 2020, of approximately 1,460 people tested, approximately 1,434 (97%) were negative, 31 people had recovered and there were only five active cases.

El Dorado County Public Health, in partnership with our local health care providers, has demonstrated the ability to track positive cases, and support residents who test positive for COVID-19.

- 2) *The ability to prevent infection in high-risk groups, including older residents, the homeless and those with underlying health conditions.*

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 to the older adult population, at the very beginning of this crisis El Dorado County discontinued all congregate meal sites, transitioned to meals on wheels, and discontinued our older adult day care programs as well as other older adult programs.

Early this week the County plans to execute agreements with hotels to house at risk homeless individuals or homeless individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. Through the efforts of our Homeless Working Group, a team of staff from Marshall Hospital, the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team, Health & Human Services, and the Tahoe Homeless Coalition, we have a very strong understanding of the needs of our homeless population. Lastly, we established an Essential Community Services team of individuals from Health & Human Services, faith-based organizations and the nonprofit community to further ensure vulnerable populations are protected and provided with the services they need.

- 3) *The ability for hospitals and health care systems to handle a potential surge in cases through adequate staffing, hospital beds and supplies including ventilators, masks and other personal protective equipment.*

- Barton Health is prepared to handle a surge of COVID-19 patients by expanding their bed capacity from 63 acute care beds to 150 beds if necessary, and have also increased their ICU and ventilator capacity from 9 to 16 beds. In addition, they have cross trained staff to function in vital roles and have developed the volunteer Barton Medical Corps program that has enrolled 132 clinical and non-clinical staff to assist with a potential surge.
- Marshall Hospital has developed a detailed surge model for El Dorado County and the surrounding areas using the number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients and estimated reduction in social contacts to determine future hospitalizations and patient volume. In addition, Marshall has delayed/canceled all non-urgent elective procedures and testing, in coordination with the Office of Emergency Services developed a plan to expand inpatient capacity by 75-100% and beyond, including facility and equipment needs.

Current Care and Treatment of Marshall Patients

- Clinics have been consolidated and staff redeployed to open clinics
- Triage tent erected in front of the emergency department to screen potentially positive COVID-19 patients and separate them from other patients
- 24/7 telephone triage line established to screen patient calls related to chronic conditions as well as COVID-19 questions and follow-up

- All open clinics are screening patients prior to entry for signs / symptoms of COVID-19
- PPE supplies are currently adequate, but we continue to adjust our PPE based on available clinical data and supply availability
- Screening staff before they start their shift
- Drive thru ED triage/testing

4) *The ability to develop therapeutics to meet the demand.*

- Barton Health has increased their supplies of PPE, IV tubing, pumps, medications, etc. in preparation of an increase in hospitalized patients.
- Marshall Hospital has confirmed PPE supplies are currently adequate and they continue to adjust PPE based on available clinical data and supply availability.
- The El Dorado County Library system is utilizing 3D printers to print face shields and ear protectors.

5) *The ability for businesses, schools and child care facilities to support physical distancing guidelines as well as provide supplies and equipment to workforces and customers to keep them safe from illness.*

All school districts in El Dorado County have transitioned to remote learning for the remainder of the 2019/20 school year. Based on discussions with the Superintendent of Schools, schools may adjust and try modified distance learning during summer school and if still needed this fall, discussions are taking place relative to how to implement social distancing on school campuses.

Through our Business Protection Working Group, which consists of staff from El Dorado County, the City of Placerville, City of South Lake Tahoe, our local business chambers and the Community Foundation, we will work with the business community to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to re-open, including physical distancing, restaurants open for sit-down dining but requiring minimum distancing measures, preventing customers from congregating in common areas of a business, asking customers to wait outside, and requiring employees and customers to wear masks, as well as having appropriate hand sanitizer available.

Through our Child Care Working Group that is being led by the Office of Education, we have systems in place to ensure child care facilities follow the same requirements described above.

6) *Develop guidelines to determine when to reinstitute certain measures, such as Safer at Home guidelines, if necessary, based on relevant data.*

In regards to this point, we request guidance from you and your staff to determine the most appropriate manner in which to determine if COVID-19 begins spreading through our

community. Our commitment is that in the event COVID-19 begins spreading and the percentage of positive tests increases faster than our health care system can accommodate, we will make every effort to reinstitute appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of our residents based on your guidance.

Based on the actions described above and the systems our community has put in place through a collaborative partnership with County government, education, hospitals, the business community and nonprofits, we believe it is time to begin discussions on how to reopen our economy in a safe manner. As a result, we are requesting the Advanced Planning division in the EOC to immediately convene a discussion with first responders, hospitals, education and county and city leadership leaders to begin identifying how to reopen our economy for non-essential businesses. Absent a well communicated plan on how non-essential businesses may return to work in a safe manner that prevents the spread of COVID-19, there is a likelihood that business will simply open which could instead exacerbate the spread of COVID-19.

Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions so that we can move forward as safely and expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely,



Brad Kilger
South Lake Tahoe Interim City Manager



Cleve Morris
Placerville City Manager



Don Ashton
Chief Administrative Officer

- c. El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
- Placerville City Council
- South Lake Tahoe City Council
- Sheriff John D'Agostini
- Clint Purvance, MD, Barton Health
- Siri Nelson, Marshall Medical Center