



News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (4/9/21)

Kamala Harris: Oakland Coliseum Vaccination Site Will Remain Open

[*The San Francisco Chronicle* reports](#) Vice President Kamala Harris said the federal government plans to keep a mass vaccination site at the Oakland Coliseum open beyond its scheduled closure Sunday, after local officials expressed concern about the planned shutdown just as demand for inoculations is about to explode.

However, there was no immediate clarity on how it would run, given that FEMA has said it will stop providing vaccine doses after this week. FEMA has offered its support to keep the site open and is in discussions with the state about how to proceed, according to a letter that the federal agency's acting administrator sent the state last week.

FEMA did not respond to requests for comment on Harris' promise. The agency had previously said the eight-week program meant to target hard-hit communities would end Sunday and that it could not keep giving vaccine doses to the Coliseum operation or a second mass vaccination site at California State University Los Angeles.

Last week, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and Collen Chawla, director of Alameda County's Health Care Services Agency, each sent letters to acting FEMA Administrator, Robert Fenton, asking the agency to extend the program.

The Coliseum site administers 42,000 shots per week, and local officials are concerned about the effects of closing it just as vaccine demand is increasing. Demand is expected to skyrocket on April 15 when the state opens immunizations to anyone who wants them.

A FEMA spokesperson said last week that the closure was appropriate because the state should be getting a huge boost in vaccine supply soon. However, local officials say they can't count on that increase.

California Plans to Lift Most COVID Restrictions June 15, Keep Mask Mandate

[*CNBC News* reports](#) California plans to reopen its economy by June 15 as long as there are enough COVID-19 vaccine shots for everyone who wants them and hospitalizations remain stable, Governor Newsom said Tuesday.

The state is also slated to end its four-tiered, color-coded system, which has been used to determine risk levels.

“With more than 20 million vaccines administered across the state, it is time to turn the page on our tier system and begin looking to fully reopen California’s economy,” Newsom said in a statement. “We can now begin planning for our lives post-pandemic. We will need to remain vigilant and continue the practices that got us here – wearing masks and getting vaccinated – but the light at the end of this tunnel has never been brighter,” he added.

‘Double Mutant’ Coronavirus Variant is Found in California

[*The Los Angeles Times* reports](#) a possibly worrisome variant of the coronavirus, first identified in India, has been found in California by scientists of Stanford University.

The new strain is so new that it is not been given an official name yet but has been nicknamed the “double mutant” variant by the BBC and others. The variant is sparking concern among some scientists because it contains not just one, but two worrisome mutations in its genetic composition that have been identified among other variants of concern being tracked by the CDC.

The existence of the newly discovered variant was first disclosed by India’s government on March 24 after a surge of coronavirus cases was detected in the nation’s second-most populous state, Maharashtra, according to Benjamin Pinsky, director of the Clinical Virology Laboratory at Stanford in an interview Monday. The new variant is responsible for roughly 15-20% of new coronavirus cases in Maharashtra.

Only a day later, March 25, the Stanford lab identified the same variant in a coronavirus sample taken from a patient in the Bay Area.

None of the other variants being monitored by federal officials have the same combination of these two mutations, known as L452R and E484Q, the latter of which is closely related to a more well-known mutation known as E484K.

The L452R mutation became well known in California as one found in the California variant (B.1.427/B.1.429), resulting in a strain that is believed to make the virus more infectious and might cause reduced immunity in people who have been vaccinated.

The E484Q mutation is closely related to the E484K mutation, which has been found in variants first identified in South Africa (B.1.351); Brazil (P.1 and P.2) and New York (B.1.526). The E484K mutation is also concerning because it might give the virus the ability to partly evade the immune system’s protective response among inoculated people or those who have survived a conventional COVID-19 illness.

The Stanford lab routinely performs genetic analysis for coronavirus specimens among COVID-19 patients in the Bay Area. They screen for three worrisome mutations: L452R, E484K, and N501Y. The N501Y mutation — thought to increase the transmissibility of the coronavirus — is found in the U.K. variant (B.1.1.7), as well as the South African variant and one of the Brazilian variants (P.1).

The Stanford lab was able to detect the new variant’s E484Q mutation, even though the lab is designed to detect only the closely related E484K mutation. “So, it’s kind of fortuitous that we were able to identify this,” Pinsky said.

The emergence of the new variant underscores how important it will be to quickly vaccinate as many people as possible.

To find more information on this new variant and updates on previously found variants, with quotes from medical experts, [please view the full article](#).

California's Emergency Preparedness Campaign is a Blueprint for Government and Startup Collaboration

[Grit Daily reports](#) that Arist, a platform for training people via text message, has been working with Governor Gavin Newsom's Listos California campaign, demonstrating that startup-government relations can in fact happen.

In May of 2020, Listos California reached out to Arist with an urgent request: since in-person classes were not an option, Listos needed a way to deliver disaster preparedness training to residents who lacked internet access. The requirements were significant: the course needed to be taught in multiple languages using multiple messaging platforms, with the capacity to train tens of thousands of residents at a time.

As a small startup, their team was initially very hesitant about what working with such a large government would be like. Team members asked how many hoops they would need to jump through. They prepared themselves for months of red tape and delays, but the reality couldn't have been more different than our expectations.

Within just a few weeks of their first meeting, Listos California worked with them to launch a text-based disaster preparedness course in 11 languages. The course trained residents on the steps necessary to get prepared in just a text a day. The course itself was built and deployed in seven days, and now serves thousands of disconnected residents every month with an average satisfaction rating of over 90% (you can try it for yourself by texting LISTOSCA to 72345). The state went as far as optimizing their mobile alert sign-up process for the course, showing a remarkable level of agility for an organization of its size.

Their team was impressed by the state of California's efforts to meet the needs of its residents. Their partnership with the state of California is an indication that startups and governments can work together to rapidly innovate for the greater good.

Governments bring detailed knowledge and careful consideration of the needs of their residents. Startups bring technical expertise, cutting-edge innovations, and a can-do approach. Similarly, startups are built from day one to solve problems as they arise, while governments are engineered to make sure that the needs of everyone are met. The two working in tandem yield great results. Although compromises are always necessary, there has never been a time when positive government-startup collaborations are more necessary.

Last year demonstrated clearly that governments often face problems that grow faster than existing solutions. But, from finding their team via Twitter to adjusting to new last-minute technical requirements, California's leaders worked with the agility of a startup. Arist's team is now optimistic about how innovative government leaders can be. Governments have a reputation of being difficult to work with sometimes. The Listos California campaign showed what is possible when public servants are at their best. They were remarkably accessible and open to

innovation. That's why Arist believes that Listos California is a blueprint for future startup and government partnerships.

Elderly Asian Woman Stabbed to Death in California by Woman Out on 'Emergency Bail'

[Yahoo! News reports](#) an Asian-American senior was fatally stabbed while walking her dogs in Riverside on Saturday morning. The incident, which police claim appeared to be "completely random," occurred in the area of Golden Avenue in the neighborhood of La Sierra just after 7 am.

Ke Chieh Meng, 64, was found bleeding from stab wounds in her abdomen. She was then rushed to the Riverside Community Hospital and was pronounced dead.

After the incident, residents in the area reported a suspicious-looking woman. Soon, police located and arrested Darlene Stephanie Montoya, 23, of Monterey Park. A preliminary investigation revealed that Meng was "randomly confronted and attacked by the transient woman," who then fled the scene. Montoya has been charged with murder, a weapons violation and potentially being under the influence of an illegal substance. She is being held at the Robert Presley Detention Center without bail.

Just days before this incident, Montoya was arrested for assault with a deadly weapon. However, due to the emergency bail schedule brought about by COVID-19, she was released on a "Notice to Appear" citation.

Meng's death remains under investigation. "The suspect is homeless from LA County and is obviously experiencing mental health and substance abuse issues," said Officer Railsback of Riverside Police Department, adding that "the attack could have happened to anyone."

Meng's son Yi Bai, however, is demanding answers. "Why was it her? Was it because she is elderly, and she can't fight back? Was it that she was an easy target? Was it that she was Asian?" he asked KNBC. "I don't really know why she was attacked."

More Than 80 Aftershocks from Monday's L.A. Earthquake, but 'It Doesn't Raise a Red Flag'

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) Monday's swarm of earthquakes, which included a magnitude 4.0 near Inglewood, didn't do much to soothe nerves. Experts say panic isn't necessary, but preparation never hurts.

According to *The Los Angeles Times*, the earthquakes came in a cluster. The first rattles started at 4:15 am, when three foreshocks struck near Inglewood: a magnitude 2.1, a magnitude 2.4, and a magnitude 3.0, all within about three miles of each other, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

The biggest quake, a magnitude 4.0, hit near Inglewood at 4:44 am, and was felt across Southern California. Nearby residents described strong jolts, with some reporting books and picture frames falling from shelves.

Within 24 hours, more than 80 aftershocks had rattled the Inglewood and Lennox area, according to the USGS. Although that seems like a lot, it is not cause for alarm, explained Don Blakeman, geophysicist of the USGS National Earthquake Information Center in Colorado.

The larger the earthquake is, the longer the aftershocks last, Blakeman stated. The magnitude 7.1 Ridgecrest earthquake of 2019 still produces the occasional aftershock. The majority of aftershocks in the Inglewood area have had a magnitude less than 2.0 thus far.

The main shock of the strain of earthquakes was that it was “pretty deep for California,” at about 12 miles down, according to Paul Caruso, a geophysicist at the USGS National Earthquake Information Center.

Caruso explained earthquakes in the Los Angeles area are typically around three miles deep, although 12 miles is far from the deepest. Earthquakes in Fiji and other locations can be as deep as 300 miles.

Shortly after the shaking, earthquake expert Lucy Jones said on Twitter that the 4.0 quake was probably not on a mapped fault because it had a thrust mechanism.

Robert Graves, a research geophysicist with the USGS’s Earthquake Science Center, based in Pasadena, explained: The Newport-Inglewood fault, the closest one to Monday’s earthquake, is a strike-slip fault, which means the two sides move laterally during an earthquake. This quake had a thrusting mechanism, which occurs when one side of a fault slides up over another.

Even if you didn’t feel this small earthquake, you never know when the Big One is going to strike.

To begin preparing, *The Los Angeles Times* has created [a five-step earthquake preparedness guide](#). Building an emergency kit is also a great way to prepare.

Graves cautioned, “take this as a reminder that there are active faults, and large earthquakes will occur. Be prepared.”

How to House People and Achieve California’s Climate Goals

[CalMatters reports](#) California doesn’t build enough housing, so we drive too frequently and too far in cars that generate most of California’s greenhouse gases – leading to the housing crisis and climate emergency that we are simultaneously facing.

CalMatters explains that the solution is simple and quite obvious: build more housing in cities where people work so we don’t have to drive as much. They expand by stating that local governments need to partner with the state and private developers to reduce building costs, which reduces housing prices. Start with making it easy to build compactly in cities where housing should go. Compact housing not only reduces vehicle miles traveled, it is less expensive because it lowers land costs per unit and improves “economies of scale” in construction.

Lowering housing costs starts with increasing housing supply. California is now 49th in the country in housing production per capita. We build fewer homes annually than we did in the 1960s.

How did we get here? The root causes are old infrastructure, conflicting laws and misaligned incentives that drive up both housing costs and emissions. Proposition 13 incentivizes local zoning less for homes and more for commercial to generate taxes. California local governments have virtual free reign over zoning, putting the interests of current residents before those of future ones.

Consequently, housing in California is costly and financially risky to build, so developers can't and don't – and private developers build essentially all of California's housing.

With limited housing production, housing prices have soared, making it virtually impossible for average wage earners and young people to enter the housing market. Low wage earners end up sharing homes or moving.

Competing interests restrict supply and drive-up housing costs to unprecedented levels. Local governments fiercely protect control over zoning. Neighborhood groups protect status quo zoning. Construction unions want set wages, regardless of regional markets. Social justice groups, too long excluded from the housing market, understandably argue that market rate housing must subsidize affordable housing and not displace low-income residents.

California can increase housing supply within the boundaries of our 482 cities. There's no need for sprawl in unincorporated areas. And housing needs to be reimagined to be "affordable by design" – more units in larger buildings, especially for-rent apartments and for-purchase condominiums and townhomes. The state should require local governments to approve and build more housing, use land more efficiently and simplify permitting.

To view the full article, including details on legislation in the Senate aimed toward combatting this issue, [please visit CalMatter's website.](#)

University of California Warns Students, Staff of Risk After Cyberattack

[NBC Bay Area reports](#) staff and students at UC Berkeley and other UC campuses statewide are being advised to take immediate steps to protect their personal information, including credit and identity theft monitoring, in the wake of a national cyberattack announced last Wednesday.

The entire University of California system was included in those victimized in the breach, and emails soon started arriving at university-related accounts threatening to release information.

This was part of a national cyberattack involving several hundred institutions across the United States," the university's Office of Emergency Management said in an advisory Tuesday, noting that Social Security numbers and bank account information "may be at risk."

The data breach involves the technology company Accellion, contracted by UC and others to transfer information.

"Accellion was the target of an international cyberattack where the perpetrators exploited a vulnerability in Accellion's program and attacked roughly 100 organizations," the university said. "The attackers are now attempting to get money from organizations and individuals" by threatening to publish the information on the dark web.

"We are working with local and federal law enforcement and third-party vendors to investigate this incident, to assess the information that has been compromised, to enforce the law, and to limit the release of stolen information," the university said.

"To help you protect your identity, we are offering the entire UC community complimentary credit monitoring and identity theft protection for one year through Experian IdentityWorksSM," officials said.

Anyone in the university community receiving suspicious emails is asked to report them to campus IT staff and not to click on any links or reply to the sender.

Funding Opportunities

Fisheries Restoration Grant Program

[The California Department of Fish and Wildlife \(CDFW\)](#) has announced funding opportunities under the 2021 Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP) Proposal Solicitation Notice for projects that lead to process-based restoration, enhancement, or protection of anadromous salmonid habitat.

2.0 Project Types Proposal applications will be accepted for the types of projects listed below, subject to the funding program criteria. Eligible project types are listed below within the NOAA PCSRF Funding Priorities. CDFW has developed a two-letter coding system for project types (see FRGP Guidelines, Part IV for detailed descriptions).

2.1 Priority 1 Project Types Projects that restore, enhance, or protect salmonid habitat in anadromous watersheds through implementation or design projects that lead to implementation. Approximately 65% of the PCSRF grant award will fund Priority One Projects.

- FP Fish Passage at Stream Crossings
- HB Instream Barrier Modification for Fish Passage
- HI Instream Habitat Restoration
- HR Riparian Restoration
- HS Instream Bank Stabilization
- HU Watershed Restoration (Upslope)
- PD Project Design (100% design)
- RE Cooperative Rearing
- SC Fish Screening of Diversions
- WC Water Conservation Measures

2.2 Priority 2 Project Types Projects that monitor status and trends and directly contribute to population viability assessments for ESA-listed anadromous salmonids will be administered through a separate solicitation process outside of this 2021 FRGP Solicitation. Approximately 25% of the PCSRF grant award will fund Priority Two Projects.

2.3 Priority 3 Project Types Projects that support implementation projects through planning, outreach, and/or education. Approximately 10% of the PCSRF grant award will fund Priority Three Projects. Proposals for FRGP programmatic permit required effectiveness monitoring are ineligible.

- MO Monitoring Watershed Restoration (Project-scale)
- OR Watershed and Regional Organization
- PD Project Design (Feasibility study)
- PI Public Involvement and Capacity Building (Includes AmeriCorps projects)
- PL Watershed Evaluation, Assessment, and Planning (Project-Scale)
- TE Private Sector Technical Training and Education
- WD Water Measuring Devices (Instream and Water Diversion)

Eligible applicants include state and local government agencies, public entities, Native American Indian Tribes, and nonprofit organizations. Proposals from private individuals or for-profit enterprises will not be accepted. See [Table 1 FRGP Focus Watersheds](#) for eligible geographics.

The deadline to apply is **Tuesday, April 13, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$14 million. The full grant guidelines [can be found here](#). The online application [can be found here](#).

Prop 1 Coastal Environmental Justice Solicitation

[The Ocean Protection Council](#) has created this grant round to advance coastal projects that directly benefit communities entitled to environmental justice and that improve water quality through restoration, habitat enhancement, and resilience to climate change.

This [solicitation](#) seeks coastal projects that directly benefit communities entitled to environmental justice (Communities), including: disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities (DACs), California Native Tribes and Tribal Governments, and communities that score above 80% on CalEnviroScreen results. Priority will be given to coastal projects in or near Communities that propose restoration, habitat enhancement, and resilience to climate change, including adaptation to sea-level rise, flooding, and shoreline erosion. Additionally, OPC seeks to advance projects that are led by community-based organizations, and that provide Community workforce employment, including employment for students. OPC is accepting letters of intent (LOIs) in response to this solicitation, using our [LOI template](#), and selected applicants will be invited back to submit full proposals.

OPC staff will be hosting a webinar on for prospective applicants on March 29 from 2:00-3:00 PM. This webinar will include going over the solicitation, the LOI template, and answering questions. To register for the webinar and get more information please complete the [Webinar Registration Form](#).

Eligible applicants include nonprofits, public agencies, and tribal governments. For this solicitation, OPC is seeking projects that are located within or near a Community, and that are no more than 4 miles from the coast, preferably within 3 miles of the coast. Please see OPC's Priority Areas Map on the [Prop 1 webpage](#) to determine if your project is within or near a Community. Please see the [solicitation](#) for geographic requirements.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, April 23**. Total estimated funding available is \$7.5 million. To see the full guidelines [please click here](#).

Division of Boating and Waterways Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Exchange (SAVE)

[The Department of Parks and Recreation](#) has created this funding to improve public and navigational safety and reduce environmental damage.

This program provides funding for abatement, removal, storage and disposal of abandoned or surrendered vessels and navigational hazards.

Eligible applicants include local government agencies, i.e., counties, cities, and/or port districts that have jurisdiction over the area. Eligible geographics include California navigable waterways. Grantees must contribute a 10 percent or in-kind match.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, April 30**. Total estimated funding available is \$2.5 million. The full grant guidelines [can be found here](#). The online application [can be found here](#).

Division of Boating and Waterways Local Assistance Statewide Ramp Repair and Modification Grant Program

[The Department of Parks and Recreation](#) has created this funding to provide resources to local agencies for repairing or renovating public boating access facilities.

The Statewide Ramp Repair and Modification Grant Program provides grant funding to public agencies to quickly restore safe and convenient public boating access by correcting public health and safety issues caused by unexpected damage due to flood, accidents, wildfires or by extending existing boat ramps as needed due to drought conditions at DBW-funded boat launching facilities. Typical grant-funded items include repairing or replacing boat ramps, boarding floats, restroom and parking facilities for vehicles with boat trailers.

Eligible applicants include public boat launching facilities that are owned/operated/maintained by local government agencies and previously funded by the Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW). Eligible geographics are waterways within California.

The deadline to apply is **February 1, 2022**. Total estimated funding available is \$1.5 million. The full grant guidelines [can be found here](#). The online application [can be found here](#).