



News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (4/23/21)

National Coronavirus Hotline Goes Live with Launch to the Public in California

[PRNewswire reports](#) the National Coronavirus Hotline (NCH), an online information resource and treatment center for COVID-19 coronavirus built and managed by Pandemics Projects Inc., is launching in California after concluding its beta testing.

Public health departments and stakeholder groups want to quickly deploy healthcare services to large populations during health emergencies and NCH automates and simplifies this mass delivery of healthcare services.

NCH is unique as it enables cities, counties, states, non-profits, foundations, and for-profit companies to launch targeted healthcare campaigns to deliver healthcare-related services in real-time. NCH makes it possible, with the click of a button, to buy and distribute healthcare-related services – like any other online service – in less than 15 minutes.

NCH is starting off with coronavirus, flu, and respiratory medical issues with more services to be added in the future. NCH is following the new trend of consumerization of healthcare services. Eligible users can apply for access to the following free services:

Telemedicine, video calls with participating physicians and other medical professionals; mental health services, to help with stress, worry, and anxiety during uncertain times; and, disinfection services, where eligible California users can have their homes or facilities professionally disinfected.

To learn more about the three types of services first being offered and NCH as a whole, please visit the National Coronavirus Hotline's website, [linked here](#).

California Reaches Another Milestone: 1 in 4 Adults Fully Vaccinated

[Patch reports](#) Governor Newsom announced Monday that one in four Californians are fully vaccinated just days after the state crossed the benchmark of administering at least one shot to 50 percent of Californians 16 and older.

However, this doesn't necessarily mean that a quarter of Californians have achieved the maximum immunity that the vaccines offer. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after a second dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or a single dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease and Prevention.

The first shot of the two-dose vaccines is considered to have up to 80 percent effectiveness in preventing illness, but that number is "somewhat tenuous," Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious disease doctor, said last week. It isn't known how long that protection lasts, which is why experts urge Californians not to skip their second shot or to take too many risks between doses or immediately after their second shot.

California has weathered a particularly embattled vaccine rollout over the last few months, but it appears that the state is picking up its inoculation speed, even with the halt placed on Johnson & Johnson vaccines, which Fauci said could resume distribution as early as Friday.

Last week, the state began receiving its highly anticipated boost in vaccine supply, further allowing counties to accelerate distribution to all Californians 16 and older.

To date, the state has administered 25,790,401 vaccine shots, with around 10 million Californians fully vaccinated, according to state data.

The state was able to sustain a lower than ever positivity rate: 1.4 percent. Hospitalizations have plummeted. Officials said that the state is on track to reopen this summer even with the temporary pause of the J&J product and the presence of highly contagious variants.

California Encourages Venues to Require Vaccine ‘Passports’ – Just Don’t Call Them That

[*The Los Angeles Times* reports](#) California health officials have repeatedly said they have no plans to institute COVID-19 vaccine “passport” – digital or paper passes that allow vaccinated residents or those who’ve tested negative into concerts, baseball games, and other sports arenas.

This month, the state announced reopening rules for indoor live events that give businesses an incentive to demand such proof from ticket holders. Businesses can hold larger events when they verify either of the safeguards.

Dr. John Swartzberg, a UC Berkeley infectious-disease expert, said “what is happening to vaccine passports is the same thing that happened with masks, it has become politicized, and that is really just unfortunate.”

As the pandemic continues, vaccination requirements by California employers, colleges, and others will probably grow, particularly once the vaccines can be easily obtained and win formal federal government approval. Private companies and medical and education institutions are already working to produce a pass, akin to an airline boarding pass, that could be used digitally or printed out.

“The idea of vaccine verification is very old,” explained Dr. Christopher A. Longhurst, a professor of pediatrics and chief information officer for UC San Diego Health. Scores of countries require that travelers carry “yellow cards” to verify inoculation against yellow fever or other diseases. In the U.S., children have long been required to be vaccinated to attend schools and camps.

“What is new and different and what is scaring some people is the idea of the vaccine verification not for employment or school registration but for daily activities,” according to Longhurst. “You need to show it more frequently.”

To view the full article with further quotes and opinions from a variety of medical professionals, [please click here.](#)

Five California Counties Move to Orange COVID-19 Restrictions, Sacramento Stays Red

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) health officials on Tuesday updated tier assignments in California's reopening framework, promoting five counties to looser levels of coronavirus restrictions as the state sees some of the lowest transmission numbers in the U.S.

Calaveras, Fresno, Kings, Mono, and Santa Barbara counties have all advanced from the red tier to orange, according to the California Department of Public Health.

Another five counties that entered this week eligible to move to a less restrictive tier did not promote due to their COVID-19 case rates spiking too high. Counties that failed to join the orange tier include Madera, San Luis Obispo, and Shasta. Counties that fell short of moving into the loosest tier, yellow, include Colusa and Marin counties.

In the red tier, indoor businesses including restaurant dining rooms, gyms and movie theaters are allowed open with modifications. The orange tier allows for looser capacity limits at those establishments and lets a few other entertainment businesses such as bowling alleys open back up. The yellow tier relaxes capacity limits even further.

The tier levels also dictate maximum crowd sizes — with and without vaccine or testing requirements — at both indoor and outdoor sporting events and live performance venues.

Five orange-tier counties — Mariposa, Mendocino, Plumas, Santa Cruz and Tuolumne — recorded one week of progress toward the yellow tier and could advance next week if their test positivity rates and cases per 100,000 residents remain sufficiently low, according to CDPH. Amador, Glenn and Sutter counties could also move from red to orange as early as next week.

In the capital region, Sacramento and Placer remain among the 14 counties still in the red tier, with neither notching a week of progress toward orange.

The main thresholds between red and orange are a test positivity rate below 4% and a daily case rate below six per 100,000 residents. Sacramento had a positivity rate of 3.5% and Placer was at 3.4%, but each recorded a daily average of nine cases per 100,000.

Neighboring El Dorado and Yolo are among the 41 orange-tier counties, but neither made progress toward the yellow tier.

No counties remain in the tightest tier, purple, after Merced County moved out of those restrictions through an adjudication process with the state last week.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Proposes Nearly \$1B to Battle LA's Homeless Crisis

[CBS Los Angeles reports](#) Mayor Garcetti of Los Angeles proposed a nearly \$1 billion budgetary plan in the next fiscal year during his annual state of the city address, Monday night. The plan would go towards battling the ongoing homelessness crisis. To watch the state of the city address, [please click here](#).

A Lurking Earthquake Fault Has Blocked Hollywood's Building. Will it Ever Rise?

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) When developers announced a decade ago that they intended to build Hollywood's first skyscrapers along an aging, fading block of the famed boulevard, boosters saw it as a transformational moment.

Gentrification was already remaking Hollywood with a series of big high-end developments, but this project was different. The complex would alter the L.A. skyline and add more than 1 million square feet of office, retail and residential space. Some neighboring residents and others protested, saying the soaring towers would block views, invite horrific traffic and irrevocably alter Hollywood's character.

But those concerns ended up taking a back seat to a much larger question: What was lurking under the land.

For eight years, there has been a high-profile argument over whether active earthquake faults run directly under the site of the proposed development, making it too dangerous to build there. The California Geological Survey — the state's scientific authority on the location of earthquake faults — suggested in 2013 and concluded in 2014 that an active fault capable of generating a magnitude 7 earthquake runs through the site.

These concerns have raised serious questions about what would become Hollywood's biggest development and pose a major test for City Hall. To view the full story, [please view the *Time's* full article.](#)

Brush Fire Erupts in Lincoln Heights, Burning Two Homes

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) a brush fire that broke out Tuesday afternoon in Lincoln Heights spread to at least two homes and prompted evacuations before fire crews got it under control.

The fire erupted in the 2800 block of north Sierra Street shortly before 1:30 pm and grew to about 5 acres in medium to heavy brush, officials said. At its height, it was threatening at least 10 homes.

Nearly 150 firefighters battled the flames from the ground, and helicopters conducted water drops, according to the Fire Department.

With winds under 15 mph, the spread was slow, and firefighters made "good progress" containing the flames, according to LAFD spokeswoman Margaret Stewart. By 2:35 p.m., the fire was contained, and evacuation orders were lifted.

Crews are evaluating structures in the burn zone to determine the level of damage and will stay at the site to ensure no hot spots remain, officials said. No injuries were reported.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Clean Energy Can Help California Fight Climate Change and Prepare for Wildfire Season

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) preparations for the fire season have included a rapid expansion of California's massive fleet of fossil fuel-powered backup power generators. Thousands of megawatts of new diesel power generation have been installed in the last two years, adding to the large statewide capacity that already existed prior to PG&E cutting power to millions of Northern Californians during wildfires in 2019 and 2020.

Diesel generators are notorious for emitting large amounts of soot that poisons our air and dramatically contribute to the climate crisis fueling the biggest, most destructive wildfires in state history.

There is a better way to ensure public health and safety and build energy resilience during wildfires and other emergencies. Flexible and equitable community-based solutions are available due to rapidly declining costs for integrated, decentralized, locally produced clean energy.

On-site solar power generation coupled with battery storage technology is more cost-effective than fossil fuel backup generators over the life of the generators. This approach can provide a new revenue source when customers sell surplus power back to the power grid. It can also help curb energy demand at peak hours to prevent blackouts without air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Building upon California's history of energy policy innovation, California should initiate a new state policy framework — grounded in local community empowerment — to secure a clean, resilient and equitable power grid. Communities should be engaged at the beginning, not the end, of the energy resilience planning process.

In order to achieve this vision for energy equity and resilience, state Sen. Bill Dodd has authored SB 99, the Community Energy Resilience Act. It calls for the creation of a technical assistance and grant program to enable local governments to develop community energy resilience plans, prioritizing vulnerable communities.

Plans are a necessary precondition to attracting private and public investments in community energy resilience projects, which is particularly important as federal lawmakers contemplate a new trillion-dollar infrastructure package. Therefore, this legislation could leverage the millions of dollars that ratepayers have already invested in clean energy micro-grids.

Climate change is already here, hitting California harder and faster than expected. Wildfires cost the state hundreds of billions of dollars in damages to our health from breathing toxic air and in damages our property and our economy. Just last week, Gov. Gavin Newsom and state lawmakers cut a \$536 million deal to brace for this year's fire season. We need to address the source of the problem: climate change.

First of its Kind Study Links Wildfire Smoke to Skin Disease

[Eureka Alert! reports](#) a new study suggests that the dangers posed by wildfire smoke may also extend to the largest organ in the human body, and our first line of defense against outside threat: the skin.

During the two weeks in November 2018 when wildfire smoke from the Camp Fire choked the San Francisco Bay Area, health clinics in San Francisco saw an uptick in the number of patients visiting with concerns of eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, and general itch, compared to the same time of the year in 2015 and 2016, the study found.

The findings suggest that even short-term exposure to hazardous air quality from wildfire smoke can be damaging to skin health. The report, which was carried out by physician researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, in collaboration with researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, appears on April 21 in the journal JAMA Dermatology.

"Existing research on air pollution and health outcomes has focused primarily on cardiac and respiratory health outcomes, and understandably so. But there is a gap in the research connecting air pollution and skin health," said study lead author Raj Fadadu, a student in the UC Berkeley-UCSF Joint Medical Program. "Skin is the largest organ of the human body, and it's in constant

interaction with the external environment. So, it makes sense that changes in the external environment, such as increases or decreases in air pollution, could affect our skin health."

Air pollution from wildfires, which consists of fine particulate matter (PM2.5), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and gases, can impact both normal and eczema-prone skin in a variety of ways. These pollutants often contain chemical compounds that act like keys, allowing them to slip past the skin's outer barrier and penetrate into cells, where they can disrupt gene transcription, trigger oxidative stress or cause inflammation.

Eczema, or atopic dermatitis, is a chronic condition which affects the skin's ability to serve as an effective barrier against environmental factors. Because the skin's barrier has been compromised, people with this condition are prone to flare-ups of red, itchy skin in response to irritants, and may be even more prone to harm from air pollution.

Earlier studies have found a link between atopic dermatitis and air pollution in cities with high background levels of air pollution from cars and industry. However, this is the first study to examine the impacts of a very short burst of extremely hazardous air from wildfires. Despite being located 175 miles away from the Camp Fire, San Francisco saw an approximately nine-fold increase in baseline PM2.5 levels during the time of the blaze.

To conduct the study, the team examined data from more than 8,000 visits to dermatology clinics by both adults and children between October 2015, 2016 and 2018, and February of the following year. They found that, during the Camp Fire, clinic visits for atopic dermatitis and general itch increased significantly in both adult and pediatric patients.

While skin conditions like eczema and itch may not be as life-threatening as the respiratory and cardiovascular impacts of wildfire smoke, they can still severely impact people's lives, the researchers say. The study also documented increased rates of prescribed medications, such as steroids, during times of high air pollution, suggesting that patients can experience severe symptoms.

Individuals can protect their skin during wildfire season by staying indoors, wearing clothing that covers the skin if they do go outside, and using emollients, which can strengthen the skin's barrier function. A new medication to treat eczema, called Tapinarof, is now in clinical trials and could also be a useful tool during times of bad air.

Funding: The study was supported by the UCSF Summer Explore Fellowship, the Alameda-Contra Costa Medical Association Summer Fellowship, and the UC Berkeley-UCSF Joint Medical Program Thesis Grant. For more funding details, please see the paper.

911 Calls and Video from Mass Shooting Nearly Released – Until Orange Police Received a Letter from the DA

[*The Orange County Register* reports](#) Orange police on Wednesday, called a press conference to release body-camera footage, 911 calls, and other information linked to the mass shooting that left four dead last month. Instead, they told the gathered reporters that it was changing course after a request from District Attorney Todd Spitzer.

Dozens of reporters, photographers and police personnel waited at police headquarters for more than an hour for the release of information new to the public before Lt. Jennifer Amat made a

brief statement saying the district attorney had advised against releasing a video about the case for fear it would hurt court proceedings.

“We had intended on releasing body-worn camera footage from the initial officers who responded to the scene,” Amat said. “However, moments ago the Orange County district attorney, Todd Spitzer, notified our team that the release of this video may impact the successful criminal prosecution of this case.

“As you know, justice for the victims and their families is our top priority,” she said.

In a Wednesday letter to Orange Police Chief Thomas Kisela, Spitzer mentions that the law generally requires the public release of body-worn camera footage, but he wrote that there are exceptions.

“It has come to my attention that your Police Department has prepared an approximately nine-minute Critical Incident Video it intends on releasing to the public in the near future,” Spitzer said in the letter. “I am writing to respectfully implore you to not release this video at this time...”

For more details from Spitzer’s letter and the reasoning behind holding the tape and 911 calls, please view the *Orange County Register’s* full article, [linked here](#).

ICYMI: Funding Opportunities Ending Soon

- **Forest Health & Wildfire Resilience Program;** *disaster prevention & relief*
 - Deadline: Wednesday, April 28, 2021
 - Total estimated funding available: \$12 million
 - **Full grant guidelines,** [linked here](#)
- **2021 Community Development Block Grant NOFA;** *housing, community, and economic development*
 - Deadline: Friday, April 30, 2021
 - Total estimated funding available: \$30 million
 - **Full grant guidelines,** [linked here](#)
- **Rural Fire Capacity Program;** *disaster prevention & relief*
 - Deadline: Tuesday, May 4, 2021
 - Total estimated funding available: \$1 million
 - **Full grant guidelines,** [linked here](#)

Funding Opportunities

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program

[The Employment Development Department](#) has created this program to provide deaf and hard of hearing individuals with enhanced services and training in select America’s Job Center of California locations throughout the state.

The Employment Development Department Workforce Services Branch announces the availability of Wagner-Peyser 10 percent Governor’s Discretionary funds of \$2,500,000 for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Program. The purpose of these funds is to provide employment and training services to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. These funds

will also ensure that services provided to deaf and hard of hearing individuals are at least equal to services received by non-deaf and non-hard of hearing individuals.

The program will ensure effective communication and increased service opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing individuals by providing specialized counseling, interpretive services, job placement, follow-up services and advocacy, and specialized training to assist them in becoming job-ready. The program is also designed to assist job-ready deaf and hard of hearing individuals in obtaining and retaining unsubsidized employment. The program also intends that interpretive services be provided to enable these individuals to receive other EDD-related services.

This SFP is open to public agencies and private non-profit corporations. Individuals are not eligible to apply. Applicants must clearly demonstrate their service area meets the criteria outlined in the SFP. Proposal applications must be received no later than Friday, May 14, 2021.

Proposals will be accepted from public agencies or private non-profit corporations. Individuals are not eligible to apply. Applicants must clearly demonstrate their ability to provide services to the targeted population. Applicants may submit proposals to provide services for one or multiple sites. Applicants may also submit one proposal to provide services at multiple sites within a targeted geographical area.

Services in the geographical areas listed below are funded and priority will be provided to programs and services in these areas to prevent and/or minimize disruption in services: Fresno, Los Angeles, Riverside/Rancho Cucamonga, Sacramento, San Diego/Oceanside, San Francisco/Bay Area, and Santa Ana/Garden Grove.

Proposals to serve a geographical area not listed above must clearly identify the need and why those needs are not currently being met.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, May 14, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$2.5 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#).

Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

[The Department of Transportation](#) has created the FLAP Grant program is to fund projects that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal Lands that are owned or maintained by a State, County, Local Government, or Tribe.

Priority will be given to projects accessing high-use Federal recreation sites or Federal economic generators. The program intends to supplement state and local resources for public roads, trails, transit systems, and other transportation facilities.

Type of Projects include:

- Rehabilitation/ Restoration/ Construction/ Reconstruction;
- Engineering;
- Operation and maintenance of transit facilities;
- Planning & research related to Transportation ;
- Any transportation project eligible for assistance under Title 23.

For eligibility, projects must be a public highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system; located on, is adjacent to, or provides access to Federal lands; typically, projects are located within 10 miles of the boundary; and have title or maintenance responsibility of the facility. Projects must also meet the minimum non-federal match of 11.47%, overmatch is encouraged; and be endorsed and supported by a Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA).

Projects must be located on, is adjacent to, or provides access to Federal lands; typically, within 10 miles of the boundary. Required match is 11.47%; overmatch is encouraged.

Deadline to apply is **Thursday, May 27, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$90 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#).

CalMoneySmart

[The Department of Financial Protection and Innovation](#) is hosting CalMoneySmart, a grant program created by Senate Bill 455 (Ch. 478, Stats. 2019), which established the Financial Empowerment Fund. Through this program, the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation (DFPI) offers grants of up to \$100k each to develop and deliver free financial education and empowerment programs to help unbanked and underbanked communities.

The grants may be used to:

- Design, develop, or offer free classroom or web-based financial education and empowerment content intended to help unbanked and underbanked consumers achieve, identify, and access lower-cost financial products and services, establish or improve their credit, increase their savings, or lower their debt.
- Provide individualized, free financial coaching to unbanked and underbanked consumers.
- Design, develop, or offer a free financial product or service intended to help unbanked and underbanked consumers identify and access responsible financial products and financial services, establish or improve their credit, increase their savings, or lower their debt.

Eligible applicants include nonprofit entities. Grant funded programs should focus on unbanked and underbanked households.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, May 28, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$1 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#). The online application can be [found here](#).

GFO-20-607 – Second Block Grant for Light-Duty Electric Vehicle Charger Incentive Projects

[The California Energy Commission](#) has created the Clean Transportation Program (formerly known as the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program) that is seeking block grant implementer(s) to design and implement up to \$500 million or more in grant funds for various light-duty electric vehicle (EV) charger incentive projects throughout California. This is a competitive grant solicitation.

References to the budget for this solicitation should be considered an estimate. Additional funds may become available based on state or federal actions or budget allocations.

This solicitation is open to all not-for-profit technology entities with a physical office in California. The Applicant does not need to have its company headquarters in California, but it must have at least one existing physical office within the State of California. There is no match share requirement.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, June 11, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$500 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#). The online application can be [found here](#).