

Homeless Street Outreach Guidance Update for COVID-19:

March 31, 2020

Thank you outreach providers for your contribution in our fight to slow the spread of Covid disease and to protect the most vulnerable among our county residents.

The Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless Program hopes that you have already read and learned key points from our [3/18/20 guidance](#) for street outreach providers. Please review [here](#).

Anyone providing ongoing outreach services to encampment or street settings should do so in coordination with County or City homeless outreach leads. Each city has Homeless Outreach Leads who coordinate with the Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless. If you are unsure of who you should coordinate with, please send your contact information and details to Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless Program at achch@acgov.org.

Protective Personal Equipment and Social Distancing:

Outreach providers are carrying out limited essential services to people in encampment and street settings. **It is of utmost importance to carry out services using a Social Distancing and infection control processes. We must take close care to prevent any transmission of disease between providers and the people they serve.**

- **Protective Personal Equipment (PPE):** Providers should carry and use hand sanitizer, wear rubber gloves and have N95 masks available to use in the event that they are in closer contact with a symptomatic person. Providers should reach out to City or County leads if they have PPE supply needs. If staff are using protective face masks, please review [CDC recommendations](#) around extending use of scarce masks.
- **Social Distancing:** Providers should **always** maintain 6' distance from all other persons, including co-workers.
- **Hygiene:** Providers should wash hands thoroughly before, during and after visiting an encampment or street site.

Outreach Provider Guidance:

Outreach providers are primarily providing Education & Outreach work. They carry out the following essential services:

1. Assess Personal and Site Health and Needs
2. Provide Information and Communication
3. Provide Supplies
4. Refer People to Isolation Housing

1. Assessment

Outreach providers should assess, and report on services, conditions and needs at encampment and street sites on a daily basis. City and contracted providers should report to their City lead through a google doc specified by your lead. Community providers can upload reports to this [shared google doc](#). Reach out to achch@acgov.org if you will be using this google doc to report. NO personal identifying information is to be reported on this document.

- **Site:** Please note how many people are sleeping at a site, how is the cleanliness at a site. Are there washing/restroom facilities? To what degree is food/water/supply delivery happening? Are residents aware of Covid and precautions to take?
- **Individual Health:** Are there residents with symptoms of Covid (fever, cough). Please note how many people may be symptomatic and need transfer to Isolation Housing. Are there people who would be at high-risk of serious illness (60+, chronic disease, immune compromise)?
 - A person suspected of having COVID **may** be referred to isolation housing by certain outreach providers. This process is rolling out day to day.
 - Hospitals and clinics are also referring suspected cases.
 - Anyone with symptoms should shelter in place, isolating themselves as much as possible while still maintaining contact with others and having a plan to call 911 for hospital transport if their condition becomes serious.

Outreach providers are filing daily reports on the sites they are serving to City and County leads. These reports are used to coordinate countywide street/encampment services and report needs.

2. Information, Education and Communication

- Provide updated information to residents around Covid symptoms. Post flyers.
- Testing: Widespread testing is still not available, nor is portable or mobile testing for unsheltered people.
- Sanitation and Safety:
 - **Hygiene:** Provide information about importance of handwashing, covering coughs.
 - **Social Distancing.** Encourage people to set up tents with at least 12x12 feet of space per individual.

3. Supplies:

- Provide the following supplies as possible:
 - Hand Sanitizer
 - Disposable Surgical Face Masks (for symptomatic persons)
 - Disinfectant wipes
 - Other items as needed
- Accessing outreach supplies: Please contact your City/County Lead for ordering supplies. If you have questions about how to access supplies contact achch@acgov.org

4. Referral to Isolation Housing for People with Confirmed or Suspected Covid Infection

- [Specified referral agencies](#) are now able to assess and refer people who are symptomatic, confirmed Covid cases, or contacts with a confirmed Covid case into Isolation Housing. They will be supplied and trained in screening procedure, referral and transportation procedures. Information flyer [here](#). Also see [ACHCH Isolation Housing](#) web page.
- If you are working with a specific person who is suspected as having Covid, and have concerns to get them connected to Isolation Housing (and they are not seriously ill enough to require hospitalization), please email COVIDACHCH@acgov.org or call 510-891-8950 8:30-4:30pm MF for specific follow up from the ACHCH program.
- Resources are continuing to expand. The county will soon stand up Safer Ground hotel isolation housing for high-risk and vulnerable people experiencing homelessness. Please keep in touch with the ACHCH program via www.achch.org/coronavirus for new information.

Other Important Resources:

[International Street Medicine COVID Guide \(3/20/2020\)](#)

[Harm Reduction Coalition COVID guidance for working with people who use drugs \(3/20/2020\)](#)

[Seattle King County Sanitation and Hygiene Guide](#)

[National Health Care for the Homeless Council COVID Resources](#)