




MEMORANDUM

Date: March 12, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **COVID-19 Pandemic Update for the March 16, 2021 Board of Supervisors Meeting**

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Testing Plans Submitted to the State and Revised

We submitted our original COVID-19 testing plan to the State covering the period of December 21, 2020 through the end of this fiscal year and requested \$30,260,329. The State responded and requested that we revise our plan to eliminate the period from December 21, 2020 through January 15, 2021, which covered \$7.6 million in COVID-19 testing for 51,174 tests. They asked our plan to be revised to \$14.3 million. We have done so but continue to indicate in our submittal with another letter to Arizona Department of Health Services Director Dr. Cara Christ that the County would be requesting reimbursement for the cost of COVID-19 testing between December 21, 2020 and January 15, 2021, which happened to be the height of the pandemic based on the number of COVID-19 infections that occurred on a daily basis.

We also will now pursue an appeal with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the COVID-19 testing that the State has indicated that they will not cover, from their receipt of \$416 million from the federal government for Coronavirus testing, our testing during this critical infection period.

COVID-19 Testing Volumes Reduced

During the height of the pandemic, we were performing as many as 3,000 COVID-19 tests each day. As of this past week, the number of tests per day being administered at our facilities has decreased to approximately 375 each day in March and is expected to reduce even further.

In addition, the City of Tucson has recently substituted the Arizona State University (ASU) saliva testing program for their El Pueblo location, which the State is funding. Further, to prepare the Udall facility for vaccinations, COVID-19 testing performed at Udall is now being transferred to 6009 E. Grant Road, two miles away from Udall. This facility is operated by Paradigm and the State will be billed for this testing in accordance with their agreement with the State to provide an initial \$1 million in free COVID-19 testing.

Free COVID-19 testing remains a priority in Pima County and will continue to support our Kino Site. Additional free testing funded by the state will be provided at the ASU operated sites, including Ellie Towne Center, various Pima Community College locations, in the near future El Pueblo Center, as well as the Paradigm operated locations at the Tucson International Airport and at 6009 E. Grant Road. We see no need to reduce any of the free COVID-19 testing at these sites as testing continues to be a need in this community, and we will pursue an appeal with the CDC for the costs of our testing from December 21, 2020 to January 15, 2021.

County Regional Vaccination Centers

The County continues to operate three regional vaccination centers and Banner North has been consolidated to Banner/Kino; the State now operates the University of Arizona (UA) facility.

For the last two to three days, the amount of vaccinations occurring at our regional centers, including the State point of distribution (POD) is now over 7,000 vaccines each day. The table below shows the vaccinations from March 1, 2021 through March 11, 2021.

DATE	TMC	Banner North	Banner Kino	TCC	UA (combined)	Green Valley/PMG
March 1, 2021	1,068	637	765	1,162	1,815	-
March 2, 2021	1,112	567	654	1,585	2,072	-
March 3, 2021	1,092	405	876	1,574	1,957	-
March 4, 2021	942	Closed	890	1,571	1,986	-
March 5, 2021	929	Closed	1,166	1,552	1,988	-
March 6, 2021	660	Closed	1,228	Closed	2,529	-
March 7, 2021	Closed	Closed	1,030	Closed	2,414	-
March 8, 2021	966	Closed	2,010	1,419	2,138	869
March 9, 2021	982	Closed	1,874	1,372	2,258	700
March 10, 2021	926	Closed	1,651	1,459	2,270	739
March 11, 2021	932	Closed	1,714	1,481	2,253	587

As you can see the total for this period is 65,326 vaccinations at the regional facilities as well as Green Valley. Should vaccine supply increase, these facilities have the capability of significantly increasing the daily vaccination rates. Added to this total should also be those mobile clinics managed and initiated by the County. These mobile clinics add significantly to the vaccines being administered to disadvantaged communities

County Mobile Clinics

The County began operating a number of mobile clinics on February 20, 2021, which has continued through March 12, 2021.

Date	Location	Vaccines Administered	2 nd Vaccines
2/6/2021 & 3/6/2021	St. John's Church	511	494
2/20/2021	City of South Tucson Housing Authority	72	-
02/26/2021	Rising Star Baptist Church	792	-
02/27/2021	Christ Community Church	387	-
2/27/2021	Greyhound Park	492	-
2/28/2021	Peaks Retirement Community	80	-
3/6/2021	Flowing Wells High School	805	-
3/7/2021	Catalina Point Shopping Center Plaza	696	-

In addition, the ethnicity and age associated with these clinics are shown in the following table.

Location	Hispanic	American Indian	African American	Asian	White	Middle Eastern	Pacific Islander	Decline/No Answer	Blank	75+	65-74	60-64	59 & Under	50-59	49 & Younger	Blank or Illegible
South Tucson Housing Authority	49	1	6	0	8	0	0	8	0	8	43	19	2	0	0	0
Rising Star Baptist Church	101	1	99	4	69	0	0	5	9	12	112	53	0	37	71	3
Christ Community Church	54	5	13	6	265	0	1	4	0	70	218	22	0	18	19	2
Tucson Greyhound Park	162	4	8	2	45	1	0	0	17	25	84	32	0	27	69	2
Peaks & Santa Rita Retirement	9	0	0	2	66	0	1	1	1	52	17	3	0	5	3	0
Flowing Wells High School	382	1	8	8	352	0	0	17	31	136	147	66	0	103	308	0
Catalina Point Shopping Center	129	1	0	7	501	0	3	5	14	207	249	74	0	55	76	0
TOTALS	886	13	134	29	1306	1	5	40	72	510	870	269	2	245	546	7

These mobile clinics will continue to increase in the future. Yesterday, March 11, 2021 a mobile clinic was held at the Tucson House where all residents of this housing center had the opportunity to be vaccinated with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Today, additional mobile vaccine clinics were held at El Camino Baptist Church (Speedway and Pantano), Summit Elementary School and Tucson Estates.

These mobile vaccination clinics directed toward disadvantaged communities as well as seniors that have been unable to get vaccinated have proven to be very positive and have, through March 7, provided 4,329 vaccinations to vulnerable communities.

The additional mobile clinics under planning for implementation are currently in planning stages.

Notable efforts have also focused on the provision of vaccination to populations living the more rural periphery of Pima County. The table below summarizes these efforts which have been led by community health center partners or by our contractors Premier Medical Group and Green Valley Fire District. A comprehensive map of all mobile pop-up vaccination sites and retail pharmacy vaccination sites is included as Attachment 1.

SPONSOR	NAME OF FACILITY	FIRST DOSE POP-UP
United Community Health	Sopori Elementary	January 22, 29 / February 3
	Old Vail Middle School	January 8, 21 / February 5, 12 / March 5, 12, 19
	Sahuarita High School	January 21 / February 2, 10
	Robles Elementary	January 20 / February 4, 17/ March 19
	La Posada	January 15 / February 15
	Anamax Park	February 19, 26 / March 3, 10
Marana Health Center	Arivaca Action Center	March 16, 2021
	Pima County Fairgrounds	March 17, 2021
	Oro Valley Aquatic Center	February 4, 11
	MHC Parking Lot	March 3, 2021
	Oro Valley - James D. Kriegh Park	March 4, 11, 18
Desert Senita	Marana Health Center	March 9 - 10, 12, 16 -17, 19
	Desert Winds Elementary School	March 15, 2021
	Ajo High School Parking Lot	January 31/March 1 - 4, 10 -13, 15 - 19
	Desert Senita Parking Lot	February 13, 2021
GVFD/Premier	Performing Arts Center	February 3 - 5
	Santa Cruz Valley Regional Hospital	February 3 - 5
Caremore	7091 E. Speedway, Tucson	Week of March 8th
	191 W. Esperanza, Green Valley	
	4821 N. Stone Ave., Tucson	
	4705 S. Landing Way, Tucson	
Pima County Health/Premier	St. John's the Evangelist Catholic Church	February 6/ March 6
	City of South Tucson Housing Authority	February 20
	Rising Star Baptist Church	February 26
	Grey Hound Park	February 27
	Christ Community Church	February 27

Peaks Retirement Community	February 28
Flowing Wells High School	March 6
Catalina Point Shopping Center Plaza	March 7
Tucson House	March 11
Tucson Estates	March 12

The impact of these types of targeted vaccination strategies are becoming increasingly apparent in our geospatial analysis. Our efforts are successfully delivering vaccine in the most vulnerable census tracts and in so doing improving the coverage for all of Pima County.

Percent of Targeted Population Administered Vaccines

The State also produces data and information, while lagging in being up to date, that identifies the population estimates by county and the amount of the population who have been administered a vaccine in a particular category and the countywide population as a percent of that population. The data for this information, including summary information of all individuals vaccinated with an estimated population group, broken into groups, is shown in Attachment 2.

The data shows Pima County's estimated vaccine eligible population is 324,722; 223,075 have been administered a COVID-19 vaccine, which is 68.7 percent of this population. The populations shown in this total estimate are healthcare workers, first responders, educators, older adults in congregate settings, adults 65 -74 years of age and adults 75 years of age or older.

Pima County Vaccination Report – March 11, 2021

Attachment 3 is the latest vaccination report prepared by Pima County. As of March 11, 2021, a total of 343,111 residents have received the COVID-19 vaccine.

The report shows the number of vaccinations each day since inception, the gender of those vaccinated, age group distribution, the type of vaccine administered and the number of 1st and 2nd doses.

UK COVID-19 Variant Detected in Pima County

Recently, genomic testing has indicated that the UK variant is in Pima County. In addition, regional wastewater sampling has also indicated that the UK variant has now also been detected in the collaborative wastewater monitoring program. This is news that has been expected by our public health officials and emphasizes the need to continue certain protective measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In particular, the UK variant that has been found to be more infectious than the original COVID-19 virus and may be associated with greater mortality in unvaccinated populations. The County will continue to monitor variant detections and report on them as detected.

Conclusive Data Proving Mask and Other Restrictions Have Reduced COVID-19 Infection Rates

We have heard from various sources and individuals that there is a disbelief that the protection measures adopted by the Board have any effect on reducing COVID-19 infection rates. In addition, there is a concern that relaxing certain restrictions that have been imposed by the Board also had no effect on the COVID-19 infections rate.

A recent study published by the US Department of Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention MMWR proves just the opposite. (Attachment 4) The wearing of masks has produced a positive correlation between mask mandates and the reduction of COVID-19 infections and COVID related deaths in counties across the US. This study confirms that the restrictions and regulations imposed by the Board were in the best interest of public health in minimizing the spread of COVID-19.

Attachment 5 lays out Pima County's weekly infections and deaths and their temporal association with the Board of Supervisors and Health Department actions.

Scientific studies continue to provide positive evidence that these restrictions have had a positive effect in reducing infections, hospitalizations and saving lives. Asserting anything to the opposite simply unfounded, nonscientific rhetoric.

Board Action to Make County COVID-19 Restrictions Consistent with the Recent Governor's Executive Order

The Governor recently eliminated the 50 percent occupancy limits for restaurants and bars and other facilities, including gyms and pools. However, it should be noted that the Executive Order retained the physical distancing requirements and the wearing of masks.

It should be remembered that early on in the pandemic, the County adopted a standard that allowed restaurant occupancy to exceed 50 percent if the particular restaurant could meet the physical distancing standards. The Governor's present Executive Order simply returns the County to our original position regarding COVID-19 physical separation.

It is estimated that the elimination of the 50 percent occupancy rule will not have any significant effect on restaurant, bar or other facility occupation as the controlling factor relates specifically to the physical distancing requirements.

For this reason, the County's standards associated with restaurant restrictions that were modified in accordance with the Governor's original restriction of occupancy of no more than 50 percent should now be modified to reflect the original language in our regulations.

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State Funding

As of this date, Pima County has not received any funding from the State for testing or vaccination from the \$482 million the State received from the CDC for both testing and vaccination.

CHH/anc

Attachments

- c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
- Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
- Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
- Terry Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department