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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: November 2, 2021

To: The Honorable Steve Christy, Member  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner   
Chief Deputy County Administrator

Re: **Response to Your Questions Regarding Asylum Seekers**

Per your request, please see attached information regarding asylum seekers and the potential to spread COVID-19 to the general community. Information was formulated between Grants Management and Innovation (GMI) and Health Department. As an overview, the information provides:

1. Total arrivals of Asylum Seekers to Casa Alitas Welcome Center (CAWC) over the span of three years and Average Length of Stay. The operation is much different than 2019 with not only surge, but extending much longer and complicated by COVID. This has led the Health Department to work with CAWC to coordinate COVID testing, vaccination, and medical care for the Asylum Seekers for the length of time necessary until they are safe to travel.
2. Locations where Asylum Seekers are provided lodging (extended stay for those testing positive), food, amenities, medical care as needed, and coordination of transportation. Unlike 2019 when multiple locations were coordinated by many humanitarian organizations, COVID forced the County and its major nonprofit partner, Catholic Community Services, to select specific locations to optimize operations, staffing, logistics, and support.
3. Total numbers of Asylum Seekers lodged at the Red Roof which became operational on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Information provided will show far more occupants than those that tested positive for COVID. This location not only allows for isolation and quarantine, but also allows family units to stay together and allows for medical care and continued testing until Asylum Seekers are safe to travel to their sponsor families and final destinations elsewhere in the United States. Please note that COVID positivity has continued to drop within the Asylum Seeker population served by the Casa Alitas initiative; the rate is currently at 1.87% for October.
4. Provides information on the Public Health Response Timeline that covers when testing, vaccination, medical care, and vaccine education were instituted.
5. Provides percentages of those vaccinated (84%) and the rationale why vaccination was not provided.

If you require further information, please contact me.

#### Attachment

- c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors  
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works  
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,  
Health and Community Services  
Shane Clark, Director, Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

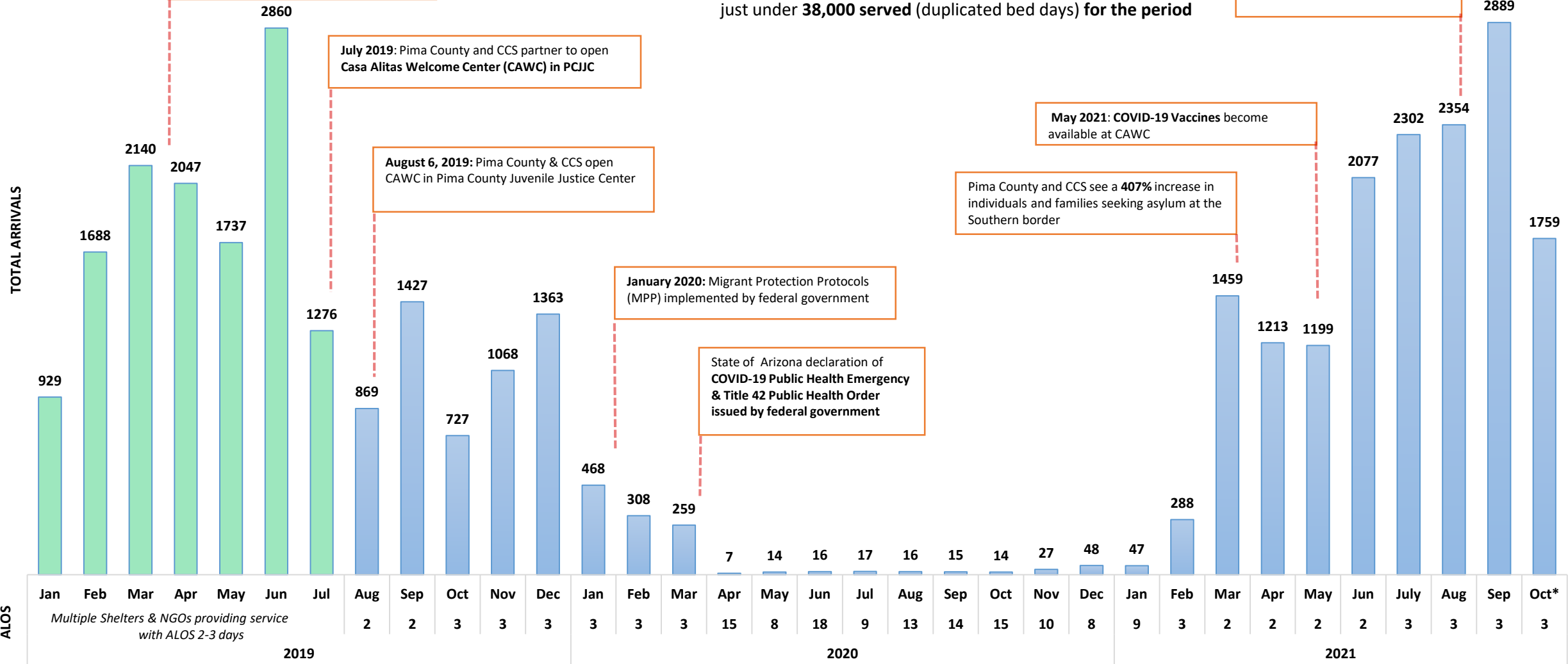
# Asylum Seekers in Pima County - Total Arrivals at Casa Alitas Welcome Center & Overall Average Length of Stay (ALOS)

All Sites 2019-2021 (\*Through Oct 15, 2021)

Between February and October 2021 (month-to-date) **15,540 unique individuals arrived** (unduplicated) at CAWC, resulting in just under **38,000 served** (duplicated bed days) for the period

In addition to the Catholic Community Services (CCS) operations at the Benedictine Monastery, Pima County opens temporary shelter on **April 19 Kino Event Center** to help respond to the Humanitarian Aid Crisis

To comply with public health & safety protocols, a **separate hotel (Red Roof Inn)** is identified for **COVID +** and Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) to adequately house a larger population - **opens August 25th**



**July 2019:** Pima County and CCS partner to open Casa Alitas Welcome Center (CAWC) in PCJC

**August 6, 2019:** Pima County & CCS open CAWC in Pima County Juvenile Justice Center

**January 2020:** Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) implemented by federal government

State of Arizona declaration of **COVID-19 Public Health Emergency & Title 42 Public Health Order** issued by federal government

Pima County and CCS see a **407%** increase in individuals and families seeking asylum at the Southern border

**May 2021:** COVID-19 Vaccines become available at CAWC

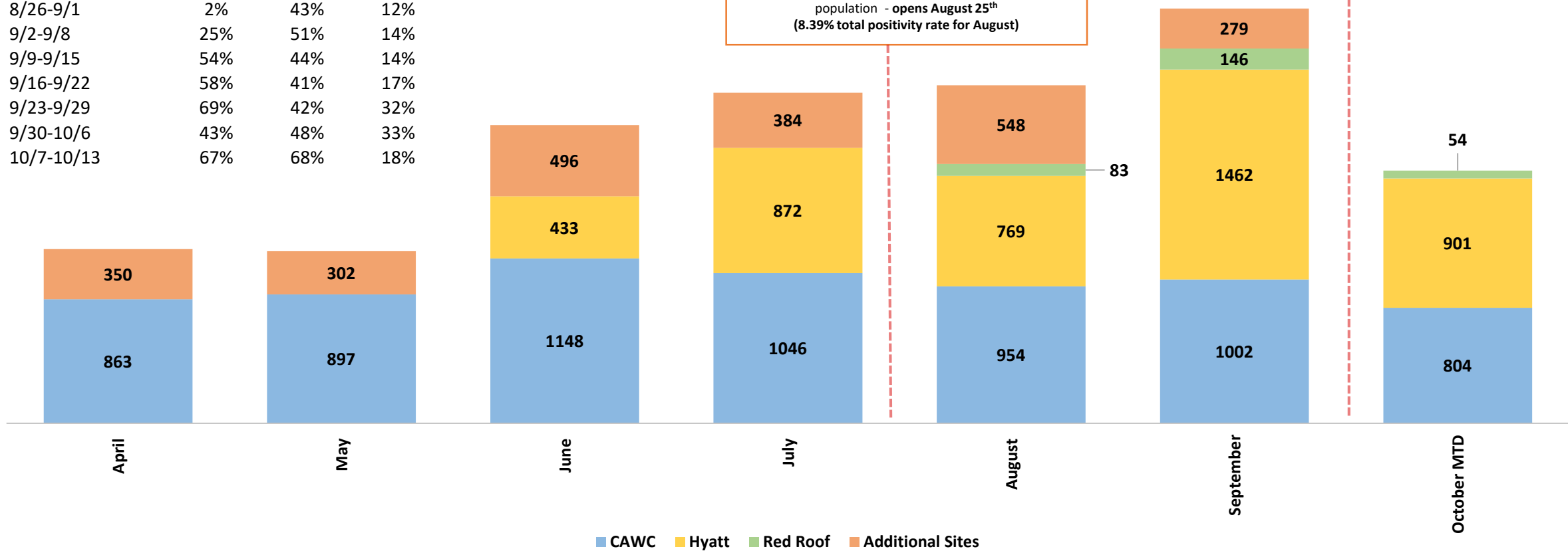
## Asylum Seekers in Pima County - Total Arrivals at Casa Alitas Welcome Center & Hotel Partners (April 2021 – through October 15, 2021, month-to-date\*)

**Occupancy Rates August through October  
month-to-date, by site**

Week	CAWC	Hyatt	RRI
8/12-8/18	60%	57%	0%
8/19-8/25	56%	38%	2%
8/26-9/1	2%	43%	12%
9/2-9/8	25%	51%	14%
9/9-9/15	54%	44%	14%
9/16-9/22	58%	41%	17%
9/23-9/29	69%	42%	32%
9/30-10/6	43%	48%	33%
10/7-10/13	67%	68%	18%

In the first week of August, there was a **18.4% COVID-19 positivity rate**. To comply with public health & safety protocols, a separate hotel (Red Roof Inn) is identified for COVID + and PUIs to adequately house a larger population - **opens August 25<sup>th</sup>** (**8.39% total positivity rate for August**)

Subsequent months, saw increased volumes but the COVID-19 positivity rate began to drop, **3.33% and 1.87%, respectively for September and October 15, 2021**



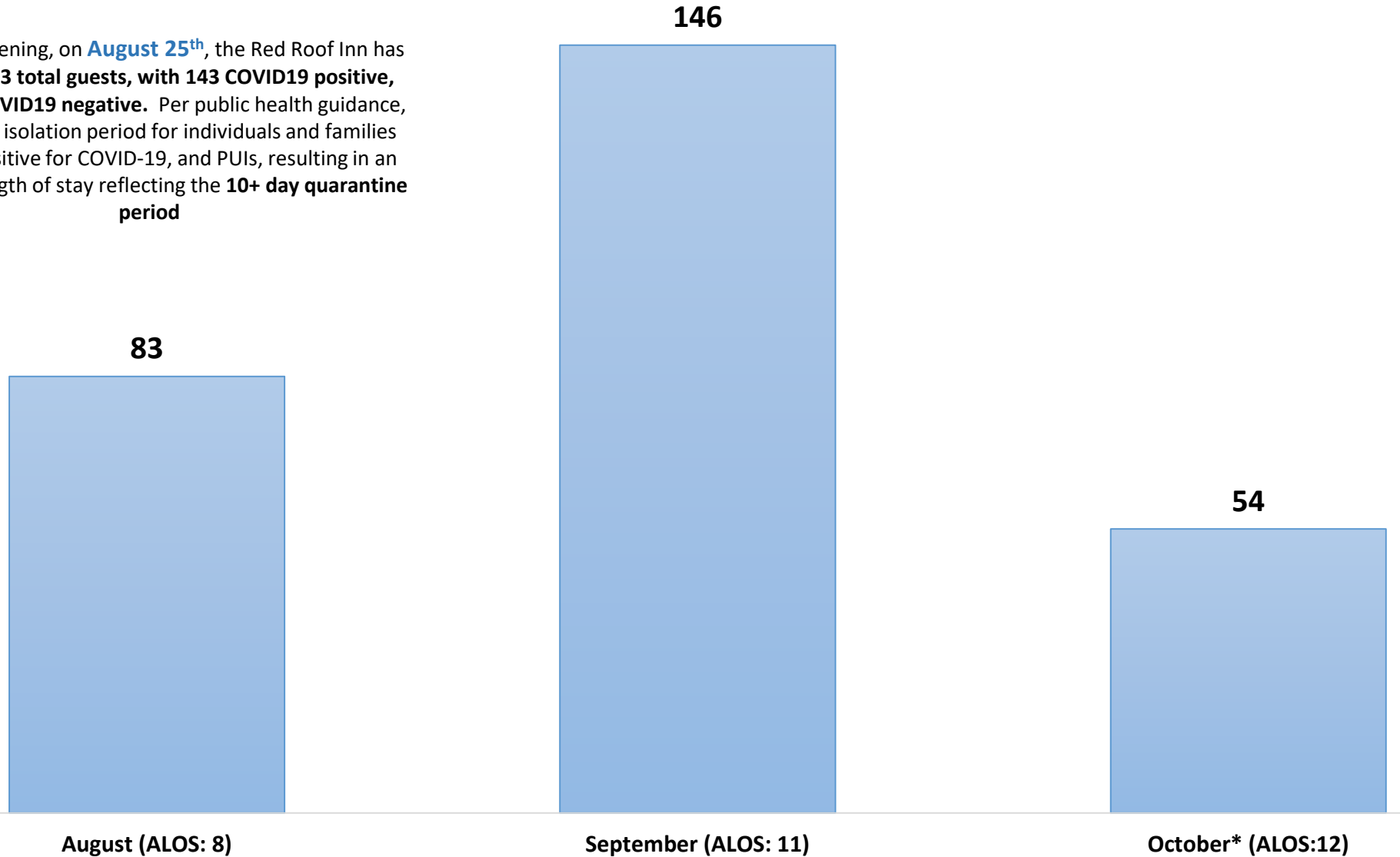
■ CAWC ■ Hyatt ■ Red Roof ■ Additional Sites

\*Prior to April, 2021, only CAWC and additional support sites were utilized, Hyatt Place and Red Roof Inn were contracted starting in June and August, respectively

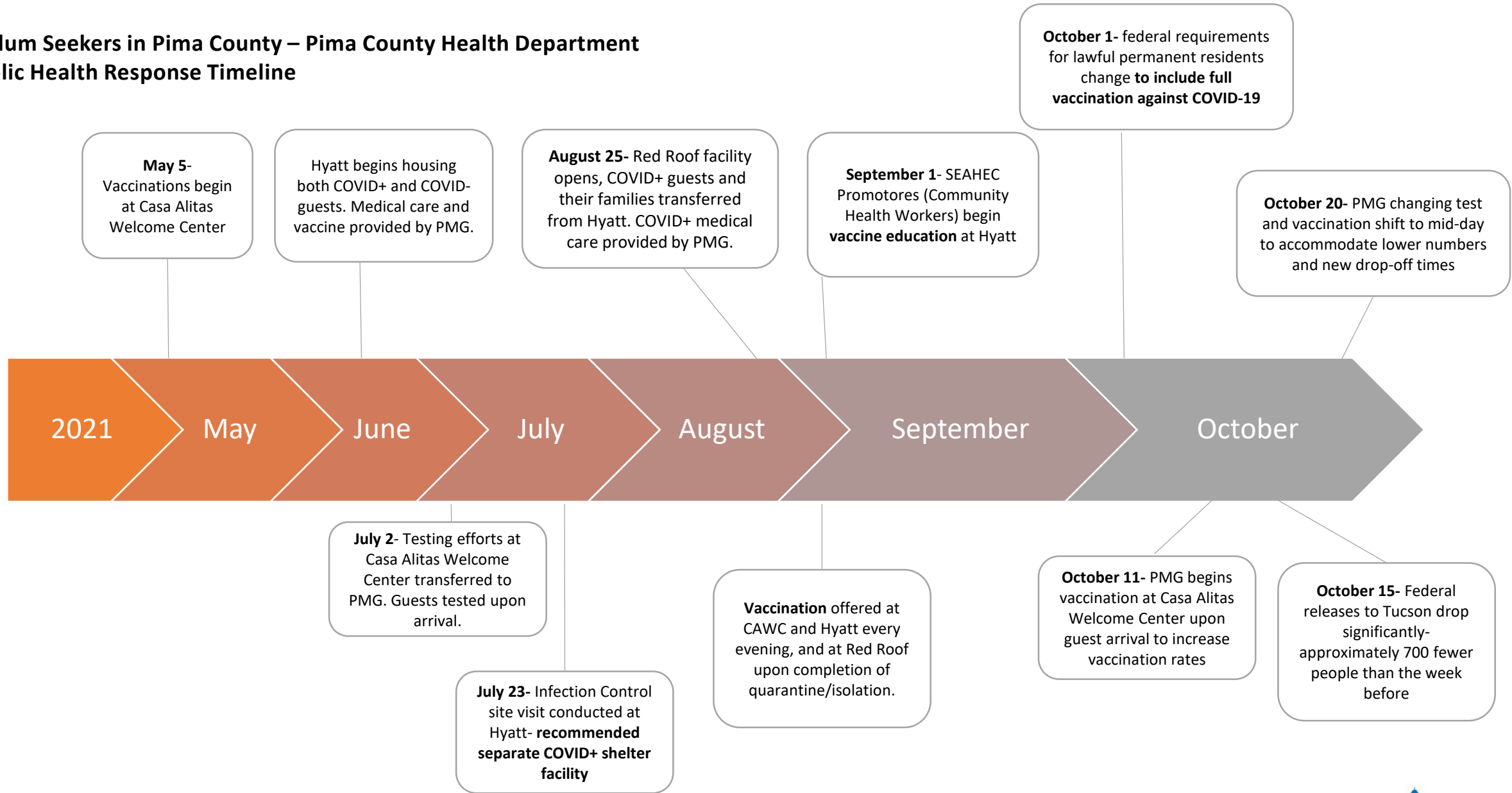


## Asylum Seekers in Pima County - Total Arrivals at Red Roof Inn August 25, 2021 – through October 15, 2021\*

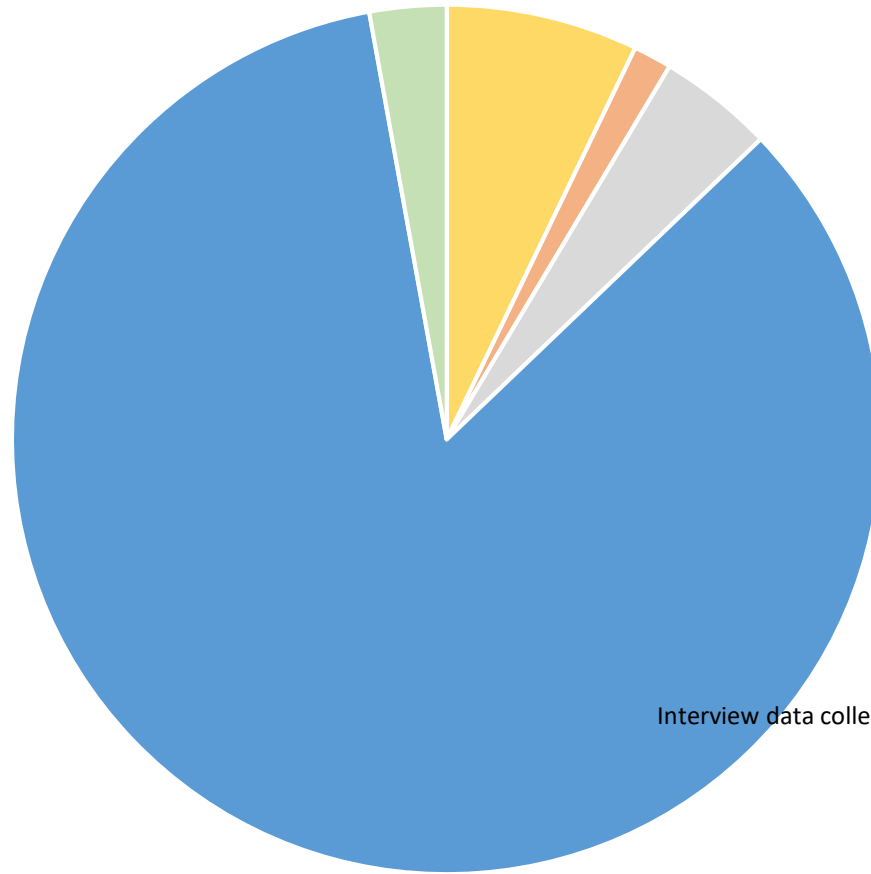
Since its opening, on **August 25<sup>th</sup>**, the Red Roof Inn has housed **283 total guests, with 143 COVID19 positive, and 140 COVID19 negative.** Per public health guidance, there is an isolation period for individuals and families testing positive for COVID-19, and PUIs, resulting in an average length of stay reflecting the **10+ day quarantine period**



# Asylum Seekers in Pima County – Pima County Health Department Public Health Response Timeline



# Asylum Seekers in Pima County – Public Health Response Timeline and COVID-19 Vaccines



Since May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
**2,457 COVID 19 vaccines** have been administered for Asylum Seekers in Pima County

**84%** of COVID-19 vaccine refusals indicated that individuals were **already vaccinated** upon arrival

Interview data collected by Southeastern Arizona Health Education Center (SEAHEC) 9/1 to 10/15

■ Delay vaccination until sponsor city arrival ■ Not interested in vaccination ■ Doesn't want vaccination during pregnancy/breastfeeding ■ Previously Vaccinated ■ Fear