

**Dan Bernal**  
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**Laurie Green, M.D.**  
Vice President

**Edward A. Chow, M.D.**  
Commissioner

**Susan Belinda Christian, J.D.**  
Commissioner

**Cecilia Chung**  
Commissioner

**Suzanne Giraud ED.D**  
Commissioner

**Tessie M. Guillermo**  
Commissioner

**HEALTH COMMISSION  
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN  
FRANCISCO**

**London N. Breed Mayor  
Department of Public Health**



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**MINUTES**

**HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**

**Tuesday July 20, 2021 4:00 p.m.**

**Remote Meeting via Webex Event**

**1) CALL TO ORDER**

Present: Commissioner Dan Bernal President  
Commissioner Laurie Green, MD, Vice President  
Commissioner Edward A. Chow M.D.  
Commissioner Susan Belinda Christian, J.D.  
Commissioner Suzanne Giraud, Ph.D  
Commissioner Tessie Guillermo

Excused: Commissioner Cecilia Chung

The meeting was called to order at 4:03pm.

**2) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING OF JULY 6, 2021.**

Mr. Morewitz noted that on page 9, last paragraph, the following correction has been made:

“Commissioner Giraud asked for more information regarding the plan for ~~implanting~~ implementing vaccine distribution to individuals who are 12 years old and younger.

Action Taken: The Health Commission unanimously approved the July 6, 2021 minutes with the revision noted above..

**3) DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Naveena Bobba, MD, Deputy Director of Health, presented the item.

**Mayor encourages residents to get vaccinated to combat COVID-19 variants**

On July 15, Mayor London N. Breed and DPH encouraged residents to get vaccinated as the delta variant of COVID-19 is now the dominant strain in the United States and California. This variant spreads more easily than the original virus and poses new risks to our communities. Our current vaccines continue to be highly effective at preventing severe illness and death. Over the last three weeks, all Bay Area counties have seen at least a doubling of new COVID-19 cases, causing concern that unvaccinated people are more at risk than ever.

San Francisco's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in low case rates and hospitalizations, and relatively high vaccination rates, with 83% of the eligible population with at least one dose and 76% of the eligible population fully vaccinated as of July 13. Over the week ending July 7, for which there is full data, average daily new cases have increased four-fold to 42 new cases/day from a low of 9.9 cases/day on June 19. Forward looking data through July 12 indicates that new cases will increase to at least 73 cases/day, a seven-fold increase since June 19.

Those who are not yet vaccinated should continue to follow the health precautions that we know work to help curtail the spread of COVID-19 and to prevent new variants from emerging: wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth when you have to go outside, stay at least 6 feet away from others, when able choose outdoor settings versus indoor, and wash your hands frequently after touching your face or touching shared objects. People who develop or show any symptoms should get tested, even if they are fully vaccinated.

San Francisco continues to make vaccines accessible to all residents through sites located in neighborhoods and through mobile vaccine efforts. In the Bayview, the Southeast Health Center (2401 Keith Street) is offering vaccines – no appointment needed – Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00am to 7:00pm, and Saturdays from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Vaccines are also available at 1800 Oakdale, with drop-ins available on Fridays and Saturday from 9:30am to 3:00pm. For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, visit [sf.gov/getvaccinated](https://sf.gov/getvaccinated).

### **San Francisco Health Officer on school reopening for full time in-person instruction this fall as CDC issues new guidance**

On July 9, San Francisco Health Officer, Dr. Susan Philip, issued the following statement regarding the Center for Disease Control and Prevention announcement of new school reopening guidelines for fall:

"I agree with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) strong focus on getting children back in school safely when the school year begins this fall. Given the proven health and educational benefits of in-person learning, our priority must be to continue to work together to ensure a smooth transition back to school for all grades at full capacity. [Health Officers](#) throughout the Bay Area agree and the evidence clearly shows that schools are safe environments for teachers, staff, and students when appropriate COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures are followed.

As we have done from the beginning of the pandemic, we are following the data, science, and facts to guide our public health measures and they have worked. In San Francisco, there were less than five cases of COVID transmission in schools with in-person learning among 48,000 students and teachers during the last school year, including during the height of our winter surge.

Since then, San Francisco has made incredible progress in the fight against COVID-19, thanks to the actions of everyone in our city. We now have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country, leading to low case rates. As a result, DPH anticipates that schools will have to implement fewer of the COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures used successfully last school year. While DPH carefully tracks and responds to the much more infectious delta variant, research shows that current vaccines are highly effective in preventing infections and transmission even against this strain. In San Francisco, the vast majority of school-age children with COVID-19 contracted it from an unvaccinated adult in their household. When the adults in their lives are fully vaccinated, children are less likely to get COVID-19.

*What does a safer school environment include for the 2021-2022 school year in San Francisco?*

- All eligible students, staff, and families in our school communities should get vaccinated; schools should continue their good work to support this.
- Masks will continue to be required indoors, but not outdoors
- Hand hygiene either by washing hands or using hand sanitizer;

- Opening windows, adjusting HVAC systems, or using portable air cleaners to increase ventilation;
- Screen for symptoms of COVID-19 at home, not at schools;
- Test anyone with symptoms or who are considered unvaccinated close contacts; and
- DPH will continue robust case investigation and contact tracing.

Schools in San Francisco should prioritize full in-person enrollment given the low community transmission at this time. Physical distancing will not be required in San Francisco, given low case rates and high vaccination rates. According to the CDC, “when it is not possible to maintain physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as indoor masking.” For this reason, as Health Officer, I am prioritizing indoor masking over physical distancing to ensure a safe return to school for all our children.

I urge school administrators, teachers, staff, and families in San Francisco to work together to prepare for full classrooms for all grades next school year. We look forward to seeing students, teachers and staff fully return to school in August.”

### **Update to Safer Return Together Health Order - Acceleration of Vaccination Requirement for High-Risk Settings**

On July 8, Dr. Susan Philip, issued an update to the Safer Return Together Order (C19-07y). The main change to the Order is the acceleration of the vaccination requirement for personnel at designated high-risk settings. Previously the Order required that personnel at those high-risk settings get fully vaccinated within 10 weeks after the FDA grants full approval of at least one COVID-19 vaccine. Now the vaccination requirement becomes operative on September 15 2021 (i.e., about 10 weeks from issuance of the Order), and is not conditioned on the FDA’s grant of full approval, though full approval (as opposed to emergency use authorization) of at least one vaccine is anticipated before then. The Health Officer made this change in light of the increasing prevalence of the delta variant of the virus in the region and risk the delta variant poses particularly to people who remain unvaccinated.

The changes to the Order also include the addition of a provision strongly urging personnel who are in clinical settings other than high-risk settings and provide services to any patient population that is vulnerable to COVID-19, to get fully vaccinated consistent with the requirement for high-risk settings.

### **San Francisco’s Public Health Laboratory Director elected as Secretary-Treasurer for the Association of Public Health Laboratories**

In June, Dr. Godfred Masinde, Director of the San Francisco Public Health Laboratories was elected as the new Secretary-Treasurer for the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL). He currently serves on three APHL committees—Finance, Global Health and Nominations committees—which has allowed him to understand the critical services APHL provides both locally and internationally and its finances. He is also serving as the President of California Association of Public Health Laboratory Directors that brings together all the 29 local Public Health Laboratories in California to speak with one voice.

As APHL Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Masinde will represent both state and local Public Health Laboratories in the entire country. He will be responsible for keeping an accurate account of the proceedings of the meetings of the Board of Directors and the Members, authenticating the records of the Corporation, and the proper maintenance of the books of the Corporation, in addition to many other obligations.

APHL works to strengthen laboratory systems serving the public’s health in the United States and globally. APHL represents state and local governmental health laboratories in the United States. Its members, known as “public health laboratories,” monitor, detect and respond to health threats.

## **San Francisco awarded for excellence in government programming**

On June 24, the States of California and Nevada National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (SCAN NATOA) hosted the [24<sup>th</sup> annual Star Awards Show](#), and recognized excellence in government programming in California and Nevada. DPH, in partnership with the City's COVID Command Center and SFGovTV, created videos to promote COVID-19 vaccines which targeted different communities. Of the vaccine videos that were created, the following earned a STAR award:

### *Promotion Award*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: The Time is Now - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV\\_ijm8fhB4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV_ijm8fhB4)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Join the VaccINATION! PSA - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4efc5ljl0s>

### *Public Health Award*

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: COVID Vaccines Black Community - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8b4poYq9k>

### *Specialize Audience Award*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Chinese Community – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2z6pvCJ240>
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Latino Community - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-ysVRjhtHY>

Thank you for everyone's fantastic work in showcasing, documenting, providing advice and information, and going above and beyond for the City and County of San Francisco. We celebrate their amazing achievements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **DPH graduates first cohort of Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence teachers**

DPH is honored to present the first cohort certified by Search Inside Yourself (SIY) Leadership Institute to teach mindfulness and emotional intelligence based on the latest neuroscience, with an emphasis on wellbeing, leadership, and the on-the-ground challenges of daily work. SIY was developed and tested at Google, created by thought leaders in mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and neuroscience, and emphasizes application to the complex on-the-ground challenges of daily work. It is an essential and necessary complement to DPH's trauma informed efforts as it undergirds all our trauma principles.

Trauma interferes with our health, ability to relate to others and work performance. Our intention is to amplify the agency-wide work in the Trauma Informed Systems Initiative (TIS) and train every DPH employee in the skills needed to grow our communal capacity to be well, manage the complexity of change, stay resilient, and become a mindful culture that leads and serves with compassion.

Thank you to the TIS staff, the SIY staff, SIY teachers and mentors, and the first 200 DPH employees and community partners in the Search Inside Yourself program who arrived at this remarkable milestone! DPH is fortunate to be able to train a second cohort of teachers this fiscal year. We are well on our way to being able to help our entire workforce develop the essential human competencies to transform our public health department into a healing organization.

Thank you to Jenee Johnson's leadership and the support of Dr. Ken Epstein, Dr. Ayanna Bennett, Dr. Rich Fernandez, CEO, Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute and Lisa Reyes, Director of TIS. Very special thanks to the Kataly Foundation for the funds that made this inaugural teacher training program possible.

## **Zuckerberg SF General Hospital to present at national conference**

Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital & Trauma Center Risk Management (ZSFG RM) Department submitted an abstract for a poster presentation at this year's American Society of Healthcare Risk Management (ASHRM) National Conference. The Abstract has been accepted and the poster will be prepared and presented at the conference in Texas. The title of the presentation is "Would an equity lens deepen our

risk management program's impact?". The focus of the poster is how Risk Management can better understand where unconscious personal bias and inherent systemic discrimination may be putting patient safety at risk and use this awareness to design constructive countermeasures. This work is being led by Tess Marstaller, Risk Management RN and Susan Brajkovic, Director of Risk Management.

### **Department of Public Health supports small businesses with processing permits within 30 days**

In August of 2020, the DPH Environmental Health Branch (EHB) moved into San Francisco's brand-new Permit Center located at 49 South Van Ness Avenue. The new Permit Center houses representatives from every City department involved in issuing a permit in San Francisco and allows someone to obtain all of their permits from one centralized location.

EHB processes permits for restaurants, markets, swimming pools, cell antennas and facilities that store hazardous materials, which are just some examples. The Permit Center allows for City departments to electronically track customer service times— from the time customers are met to when applications or plans are received and processed. The average customer wait time is about 3 minutes and on average EHB are able to meet the customer's needs in about 12 minutes.

In addition, last year the City passed Proposition H in response to the impact that the COVID pandemic had on small businesses. Proposition H was designed to greatly streamline the permitting process for small businesses. The initiative required the City to streamline the review and approval process for most small businesses permits to 30 days. To comply with Prop. H, the Environmental Health Branch reviewed and streamlined our existing permitting process to meet the 30 day deadline.

### **DPH in the News**

- **Jul 9 2021, Chronicle:** [California keeps school mask mandate, as CDC lifts distancing requirement to encourage reopening](#)
- **Jul 9 2021, Herald:** [CDC issues school mask guidelines but California goes its own way](#)
- **Jul 8 2021, Gate:** [Four Black health experts urge the African American community in SF to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as the delta variant spreads](#)
- **Jul 7 2021, Chronicle:** [Bay Area COVID deaths plunge to near zero, thanks to high vaccination rates](#)
- **Jul 2 2021, KRON:** [San Francisco health officials urge caution for 4th of July weekend](#)
- **Jul 2 2021, CA News:** [COVID Hospitalizations Rise 10% In Bay Area; Sonoma County Seeing About 60 New Cases Per Day Among Unvaccinated](#)
- **Jul 2 2021, Chronicle:** [Delta variant in Bay Area: 'This is not a good time to be unvaccinated'](#)
- **Jul 1 2021, KGO:** [Bay Area health officer predicts outbreaks 'will happen' following Fourth of July weekend](#)
- **Jul 1 2021, Chronicle:** [Here's how S.F. plans to tackle 'unacceptable' drug crisis in the Tenderloin](#)
- **Jul 1 2021, Chronicle:** [How does San Francisco's drug overdose crisis compare with the rest of the U.S.?](#)
- **Jun 30 2021, Univision:** [Delta variant and celebrating July 4<sup>th</sup> safely](#)
- **Jun 29 2021, Telemundo:** [Latinos reaching 70%](#)

### Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Chow congratulated the DPH and city for the new school guidance. Dr. Bobba stated that there has been a dedicated team working with the schools since the beginning of the pandemic to develop guidances, protocols, and community messages.

#### 4) COVID-19 UPDATE

Naveena Bobba, MD, Deputy Director of Health, and Lisa Pratt, MD, Director of Jail Health Services, presented the item.

##### Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Christian asked for more information regarding the current COVID-19 testing plans and options. Dr. Bobba stated that testing is still encouraged for those who are unvaccinated and for those individuals who are vaccinated and experiencing symptoms. Those who are unvaccinated are encouraged to test regularly. She added that community testing continues to be readily available for in the southeast sector of the city, where the majority of the cases continue to be. She also stated that health care systems are expected to test patients within their symptoms.

Commissioner Christian asked if there is tracking for illness severity for those who are vaccinated. Dr. Bobba stated that each case that is entered into the DPH system is tracked.

Commissioner Guillermo asked how the DPH is weighing in on a future mask mandate. She noted that while seniors, medically compromised, and southeast residents are at risk, younger people seem less willing to be vaccinated. Dr. Bobba stated that Dr. Susan Philip, the San Francisco Health Officer, joined with other Bay Area health officers in distributing the recommendations to wear masks indoors for everyone. She noted that if hospitalizations continue to rise, the DPH may make decisions about a masking requirement. She noted that although many younger people feel COVID-19 may not impact them, 25% of the current San Francisco hospitalizations are comprised of individuals who are under 35 years old.

Commissioner suggested that messages targeting a younger cohort may be more effective if distributed through social media and pop culture media. Dr. Bobba stated that Max the Vax SF is a group of teens and young adults who are working with the DPH to develop social media messages.

Commissioner Green stated that many pregnant women are afraid to get vaccinated. She also noted that it is probably that vaccinated people may transmit COVID-19. She wondered if testing options should be expanded and asked how data will be gathered on transmission from vaccinated people. Dr. Bobba noted that the state is gathering data on possible transmission by vaccinated individuals. She agreed that increased messages regarding testing resources is a valuable suggestion.

Commissioner Green asked how COVID-19 home testing data can be tracked. Dr. Bobba stated that the DPH is encouraging anyone who tests positive to contact the Department.

Commissioner Chow reminded the Commission that for the Polio vaccine, the schools were used as distribution centers, and suggested that they be used for COVID-19 vaccine distribution for those over 12 years old. Dr. Bobba stated that the DPH is working very closely with the unified school district and private schools.

Commissioner Chow asked if pre-school-aged children are required to wear masks. Dr. Bobba said that the DPH is monitoring the situation at the local, state, and federal level.

Commissioner Bernal asked how is the DPH focusing resources to further reduce cases in the Black/African American population and southeast neighborhood residents. Dr. Bobba stated that data shows that trusted people such as neighbors, family, medical providers, and faith-based leaders are effective in delivering messages about the vaccine; the DPH is supporting these efforts to provide information so everyone can make an informed decision about getting vaccinated. She acknowledged the incredible work of many community partners, who have been doing incredible work during the pandemic.

Commissioner Bernal thanked Dr. Pratt for her effective work and the incredible work of the Sheriff, to keep those incarcerated in the county jails safe.

Commissioner Christian emphasized how critical Dr. Pratt's leadership was in making the jail safer during the pandemic by advocating for a decrease in the census to protect the lives of those incarcerated. She also noted the importance of community mental health and substance use services in regard to keeping people out of jail.

Commissioner Christian asked for more information regarding efforts to vaccinate unhoused people as it relates to the high percentage of incarcerated people who are unhoused. Dr. Pratt noted that the system is faster to prioritize unhoused people due to Whole Person Care and the shared priority list. She added that the system is slower to identify people for housing coming out of jail due to the impact of the pandemic on housing resources. She is waiting to see how the housing funds expected to be coming through the City may impact the unhoused population in jail. She added that having a community response with the Street Crisis Teams should have a significant impact on reducing the number of people in jail who would have been arrested for mental health and/or substance use issues. This should result in a persistently lower jail census. Dr. Bobba stated that the systems being developed as part of the Mental Health SF initiative should prevent incarceration for individuals experiencing mental health and substance use issues.

Commissioner Chow stated that Dr. Pratt deserves all the credit for her leadership.

**5) GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no general public comment.

**6) RESOLUTION: RAMAYTUSH OHLONE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Patrick Chang, MPH, Office of Policy and Planning; Mark Morewitz, Health Commission Secretary and Dr. Jonathan Cordero, Founder and Chair, Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, presented the item. The Health Commission will consider a vote on this item at its August 3, 2021 meeting.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Christian thanked the community leaders for engaging with the Health Commission and DPH on the development of the resolution. She looks forward to the Commission and DPH growing the relationship with the American Indian community and determining effective ways to better serve the Native populations in the city.

Commissioner Bernal noted that the community mourned the passing of Helen Waukazoo, former CEO of Friendship House, earlier this year.

Commissioner Guillermo thanked Mr. Chang, Mr. Morewitz, and the community leaders for the resolution. She noted that it is important to read the statement and is in support of the resolution.

Commissioner Chow noted that the draft resolution is a recognition of the humanity of the world. He suggested adding a "Resolved" statement in the resolution indicating that the DPH will continue to improve its approach to effectively meet the needs of the American Indian community. Commissioner Christian supported Commissioner Chow's desire to state a clear commitment to the American Indian community.

Mr. Morewitz reminded the Commissioners that the community leaders expressed preference to maintain the draft language in the land acknowledgement resolution, with the understanding that another resolution devoted to addressing health inequities of the American Indian communities would come before the Health Commission in 2022. Dr. Cordero stated that the community's preference is for the land acknowledgment resolution language to focus on the land acknowledgement statement, something that will not change. He requested that another policy document related to the American Indian community be developed for issues

that may shift over time. Dr. Ayanna Bennett MD, Director of the DPH Office of Health Equity, stated that the second resolution is being developed and noted the importance of keeping the land acknowledgement as a separate document to eradicate the cultural erasure of the American Indian community from the DPH and Health Commission culture.

Commissioner Chow reiterated his request to add a “Resolved” statement to the land acknowledgment resolution, which directs the DPH to work with the community to identify health inequities and develop recommendations to address these issues.

**7) EPIC UPDATE**

Eric Raffin, DPH CIO, presented the item.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Green thanked Mr. Raffin for the extraordinary work, noting that the integration of COVID-19 and social determinant information in EPIC, while unifying much of the Department through an electronic medical record system, is incredible. She added extra kudos for coming in under \$1M under budget.

**8) DPH 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

Max Gara, MPH, Office of Policy and Planning, presented the item.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Chow thanked Mr. Gara for an excellent report and noted that on page 28, the same Health Commission resolution is listed twice.

Commissioner Bernal thanked Mr. Gara and all those who contributed to the report, for the wonderful synthesis of a difficult year.

**9) COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Commissioner Giraudo, chair, stated that the committee discussed an Environment Health update; the branch has 150 staff and a \$20M budget. Many of the branch’s staff have been activated to enforce Health Orders during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Children’s Environmental Health Promotion Prevention Program was also highlighted in the presentation. The 30 year-old program focuses on lead abatement and lead prevention activities. Funds from the Lead Paint Settlement Program will be prioritized for prevention activities in homes in San Francisco built before 1950, homes with children, and homes with pregnant people.

**10) OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Giraudo, who serves as the Health Commission ex-officio board member for the SFGH Foundation, gave a brief presentation on the foundation’s plans to augment capital projects on the ZSFG campus.

**11) JOINT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Commissioner Guillermo, chair, stated that at the July 13, 2021 LHH JCC meeting, the committee reviewed a presentation on the 2019 Plans of Correction, noting that LHH was found to be in full compliance by the California Department of Public Health in 2019. The presentation was an update on activities related to ongoing improvement work. She noted that the JCC also reviewed the Regulatory Affairs and Executive Team reports. In closed session, the committee approved the Credentials Report and reviewed Medical Quality Improvement and Performance Improvement and Patient Safety reports.

**12) ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:49pm.