

COVID-19 Update From EKA – April 21, 2020

If you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance, please reach out to EKA, and we will be happy to assist you. Please feel free to share our daily email updates. If you would like to see previous EKA COVID-19 updates, click [here](#).

Stay At Home Order Day 35

Today is day 34 of the [statewide "Stay-at-Home" Order](#). 43 Days ago, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

Reopening California

The Governor indicated he would not allow local officials to take any action that would loosen the statewide restrictions that he put in place more than a month ago. The state is receiving calls from various counties about how they can start making adjustments to stay-at-home restrictions. The Governor said that different areas have different timelines. The Governor is telling elected officials that practicing physical distancing has worked to keep COVID-19 numbers relatively modest in terms of growth and that if the state pulls back too quickly, those numbers will go through the roof.

The Governor said local areas have the option to lift restrictions as long as those jurisdictions don't conflict with the state's stay-at-home orders. The Governor is expected to give an update today, but has said that before making any decision on reopening, he'd continue to evaluate the state's progress on six criteria he previously spelled out. To read more on the criteria, click [here](#).

Insurer Sues Law Firm Over COVID-19 Coverage Question

Lawyers for Travelers Insurance [filed suit](#) in U.S. District Court seeking a declaratory judgment regarding two policies purchased by Mark Geragos' law firm, Geragos & Geragos, cover business losses stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the complaint, the two policies in question specifically exclude coverage for losses or damages "caused by or resulting from any virus, bacterium or other microorganism that induces or is capable of inducing physical distress, illness or disease." The insurance company claims the policies make clear that the exclusion applies to business income, rental value and government actions. Geragos [took to Twitter](#) to air his thoughts on the insurer's lawsuit.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Kathryn Barger Talks Stay-Home Restrictions

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors chair Kathryn Barger spoke to KABC- TV Eyewitness Newsmakers about when the county might be able to loosen stay-at-home restrictions. She talked about a phased-in reopening contingent on testing and cases and said "The more testing we get up and running, the better equipped we are going to be to see if May 15 is a time we can begin to do a soft opening, both for our economy and for individuals that are wanting to go on hiking trails, golf courses." Supervisor Barger said county health will examine the two

weeks leading up to May 15 and will err on the side of caution whether to open. "We try to do what's right, not only for the community but for the businesses out there that are really anxious to get back to work. And so May 15 is the date. I'm hoping it doesn't go beyond May 15." Supervisor Barger said it is too soon to set a date to reopen sports venues. She acknowledged competing opinions from Mayor Garcetti who would wait until next year to bring back crowds, and Inglewood Mayor James Butts who wants it sooner at SoFi Stadium in his city. The supervisor also addressed COVID-19 cases in the homeless community and in encampments, where there is little physical distancing.

To watch the entire 21-minute interview, click [here](#).

Office's Strategic Integration Branch

Tiana Murillo, head of the Chief Executive Office's Strategic Integration Branch, was named by County CEO Sachi Hamai to oversee and coordinate the efforts underway to temporarily house people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 crisis. Murillo was selected by to coordinate and lead County departments and the Homeless Initiative and coordinate among partners to put urgently-needed solutions into place in real-time. Initiatives under her direct supervision include:

- Medical sheltering for people, including those experiencing homelessness, who have been exposed to the virus and need a place to self-isolate or quarantine
- Project Roomkey, which makes it possible for vulnerable people in high-risk groups to come inside and be "Safer at Home" during the crisis

Murillo's assignment as Temporary Supervisory Administrator is effective immediately and is expected to last 120 days. To view a short video featuring TSA Tiana Murillo and Supervisor Barger discussing the work ahead, click [here](#).

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Hospitality Employee Recall Rule

Today the Los Angeles City Council will consider a Right to Recall ordinance for businesses in the hospitality industry. The recall ordinance, hotel, janitorial, stadium, airport service and event center employees discharged during the COVID-19 pandemic would be offered their positions back based on seniority. As written, the ordinance would be in effect indefinitely. Businesses would be required to offer employment in writing by mail, email and text message; former employees would have 10 days to respond. Employers that decide to hire a new employee based on better qualifications must send a written notice to the discharged worker within 30 days of the new hire. An employer could be sued by a former employee for alleged noncompliance. A similar ordinance covering all businesses in the city was proposed at an 11-hour virtual meeting on March 27, but it was tabled for discussion at a later date. For more detail, see [20-0147-S15](#), [20-0147-S35](#), [20-0147-S42](#). The item is number 10 on the [Council Agenda](#). The Council meeting will be broadcast live on Channel 35, the City's website [here](#), or on the LA CityView [Facebook page](#).

Expanded COVID-19 Testing

The City, in partnership with the County and the nonprofit [CORE](#) (Community Organized Relief Effort), has continued to expand COVID-19 testing throughout the county. If anyone has symptoms like cough, fever, or shortness of breath, click [here](#) to schedule a same-day or next-day test, which remains by appointment only.

Disputes Between Renters and Landlords

The LAPD has seen a roughly 300% increase in reports of landlord-tenant disputes compared to two months ago, before stay-at-home orders took effect, according to the [report by Crosstown](#), which is based out of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. The average number of daily calls to the LAPD about renter-landlord disputes during the first 10 days of April was 56, compared to 22 in March and 19 in February, according to Crosstown.

LONG BEACH

Long Beach Economic Recovery Advisory Group

Mayor Garcia has formed the [Economic Recovery Advisory Group](#) that will begin to prepare recommendations for safely and responsibly reopening the local economy. This Advisory Group will be led by former Mayor Bob Foster and will include several local business leaders representing different sectors of the economy and community. Read the Press-Telegram [article](#) for opportunities on how to contribute your area of business and expertise. The City is working on an online platform to collect input. More information to come soon.

SACRAMENTO

New State Website

The state launched a new website Tuesday to organize a deliberate volunteer corps. The Governor asked everyone who is able to log onto the newly launched website and volunteer. Some examples include volunteering at food banks, delivering meals, online tutoring, donating blood and volunteering at shelters. He added people who want to stay at home for safety and health reasons can find ways to contribute, such as handling resource phone lines or even checking on neighbors. When you log on to the new website, you can fill out a form with contact information, tasks they may be interested in volunteering to do, languages they speak and any special skills they may have (accounting, tax preparation, translation, etc.). State organizers will then reach out to people when there are volunteer opportunities in their area. To view the new website, click [here](#).

AG Coordination with States

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra joined a coalition of 20 attorneys general in sending a letter to Michael Roman, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of 3M, a principal manufacturer of N95 respirators and other personal protective equipment (PPE). In the letter, the attorneys general acknowledge the initial steps 3M has taken to increase production of these vital masks for healthcare providers and counter price gouging by those seeking to take advantage of the COVID-19 outbreak. However, the attorneys general urge 3M to take enhanced measures to help fight price gouging in order to get these critical medical supplies to

those who need them most. The attorneys general asked 3M to take the following actions to help eliminate predatory practices and get these important medical supplies to the people who need them:

- Continue to publish policies prohibiting price gouging by their distributors and cease doing business with those distributors that violate them;
- Create a database of 3M's inventory of N95 respirators for government officials and healthcare providers; and
- Make transparent how inventory is being distributed and orders are being filled to help states plan how to best allocate resources and respond to the needs of our healthcare systems.

In sending the letter, Attorney General Becerra joined the attorneys general of Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia. A copy of the letter is available [here](#).

NATIONAL

Senate Votes To Increase Funding For Small Businesses

The Senate approved a measure yesterday to revive the Paycheck Protection Program, which was halted last week after it ran out of money. The \$484 billion bill would inject the program, which provides loans to small businesses, with more than \$320 billion. Of that, \$60 billion would be set aside for community-based lenders, smaller banks and credit unions to assist smaller businesses that don't have established relationships with big banks and had a harder time accessing the funds in the first round of loans.

About \$10 billion of that would also be allocated for administration fees. The measure would also bolster the Small Business Administration's disaster loan and grant programs, which dried up during the coronavirus crisis. The legislation includes \$75 billion to help overwhelmed hospitals and \$25 billion for a new coronavirus testing program; two provisions Democrats pushed for in negotiations. The legislation will now head to the House, where it's scheduled to be taken up Thursday. If approved, it will head to President for his signature. Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer issued this statement after an agreement was reached with the Administration. To read the statement, click [here](#).

SBA Excludes Some Businesses And Workers From SBA Loans

Anyone who has served time in prison, sex workers and anyone whose professional activities involve "prurient" products or content are ineligible for COVID-19-related SBA loans. On the Small Business Administration (SBA) [website](#), U.S. business owners employing fewer than 500 people, sole proprietors, and independent contractors "that are impacted by the Coronavirus" can now apply for the SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. The SBA adopted [an April 3 rule](#) that prevents people who have been convicted of a felony in the last five years, as well as those who are currently incarcerated, on probation or parole, or under criminal indictment,

from obtaining a forgivable SBA loan. We should note that strip clubs in Las Vegas and Flint Michigan are suing the SBA calling regulations in the federal Paycheck Protection Program discriminatory and in violation of worker amendment rights.

Coronavirus-Credit Reports

The three national credit reporting agencies are offering free weekly credit reports from now until April 2021 to help protect consumers financial health during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the three reporting agencies, credit vigilance is critical during these uncertain times. To obtain a free credit report, click [here](#).

WHAT WE'RE READING

Governor, Actions Speak Louder than Words

Governor Gavin Newsom expressed strong support for the state small businesses that are greatly suffering during the pandemic but when he had the chance to show that support to produce needed masks, he turned not to small businesses in California but a large conglomerate overseas. To read the full article, click [here](#).

President Claims He Is Suspending Immigration

President Donald Trump is suspending immigration to the United States in response to COVID-19 and the "need to protect jobs." [In a tweet](#), the President attributed the suspension to an "attack from the Invisible Enemy" and the "need to protect the jobs of our GREAT American Citizens." To read the full article, click [here](#).

Newsom Resists Pressure To Ease California's Coronavirus Stay-At-Home Order

A bipartisan group of elected officials from San Luis Obispo County on Monday asked Newsom to grant them the "authority to implement a phased reopening of our local economy." ... Newsom said he expects many more requests similar to the one from San Luis Obispo County. He promised that his administration will discuss each with local officials "to make sure it's a health-based decision. Not any other type of decision-making. Health first, science and data. Everything else follows from that." To read the full article, click [here](#).

Workers' Comp Insurer To Quadruple Payments

Leaders of one of California's largest workers' compensation insurers, the State Compensation Insurance Fund, announced Monday that it will pay COVID-19 medical costs and income losses for employees at essential businesses that it covers, whether they contracted the illness at work or not. The agency estimated that [it will spend \\$215 million, more than four times what it announced last week](#), to expand this benefit and others to assist policyholders and their employees in overcoming challenges posed by COVID-19. Public health officials require infected people to quarantine themselves, meaning many will lose out on income from work. To read the full article, click [here](#).

Lobbyists See Influx Of New Clients Amid Coronavirus Outbreak

While Main Street reels from the [coronavirus](#) outbreak, K Street isn't letting the crisis go to waste, as federal lobbyists reel in hundreds of new — and often nontraditional — clients amid an unprecedented wave of fresh government funds. The sheer breadth of the crisis has fueled a rush for cash, and for lobbyists, across a wide range of industries. Nearly 200 new clients interested in issues related to the coronavirus were registered by lobbyists in the last few weeks, according to federal filings. Most of these clients have never hired a federal lobbying firm before, or have not done so in years. To read the full article, click [here](#).

Predicting A Pandemic's Path: What Models Can And Can't Do

Every day, while we're all stuck at home, politicians and health officials and news anchors point to graphics showing the latest statistics on the coronavirus pandemic to indicate what might happen next, in your region and around the world. Underlying those visuals are disease forecasting models — complex mathematical algorithms that predict disease spread and severity based on different scenarios. Because they can help predict the effects of different interventions, including our social distancing, coronavirus pandemic models significantly influence how governments are responding. To read the full article, click [here](#).

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