




## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council Members  
**FROM:** Stephanie Y. Hayden, Director   
**DATE:** September 28, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Staff Response to Resolution 20200521-38

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On May 21, 2020, Council approved Resolution #20200521-38, directing the City Manager to establish a strategy for high-risk workers to prevent hospitalizations and fatalities related to COVID-19.

Austin Public Health (APH), in collaboration with Homeland Security and Emergency Management, is leading response efforts in Austin and Travis County to achieve the primary incident objective: to ensure continuity of Austin-Travis County community essential functions throughout the incident; mitigating the threat and impacts of COVID-19 on our community in a fiscally responsible manner using conventional and innovative efforts.

Those efforts include the development and implementation of a focused strategy designed to minimize spread and protect community resiliency. It centers on equitable access to community resources, testing, outreach, and community preparedness and education.

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

APH is pursuing agreements with Austin Area Urban League, Austin Voices for Education and Youth, and Worker's Defense Project to provide guidance, assistance support to high-risk workers.

Austin Area Urban League will conduct community outreach to encourage high-risk workers and other priority populations to get tested for COVID-19 in community locations. This outreach will include help with signing up for COVID-19 testing and providing financial assistance to the priority populations identified in the resolution.

Austin Voices for Education and Youth will administer a High-Risk Worker call center to provide a central line for workers to call with questions

Worker's Defense Project will provide high-risk workers:

- Information, advice, and legal case management to access unemployment insurance benefits
- Direct financial assistance to those experiencing economic distress
- Information, advice, and help with filing formal 3-1-1 complaints or other safety-related complaints about employer violations/non-compliance of COVID-19 workplace health and safety requirements





## TESTING

In addition to operating and expanding static testing sites, APH is expanding culturally relevant testing services for high-risk workers and other priority populations at-risk for disparate outcomes related to COVID-19. APH is currently pursuing an agreement with Central Texas Allied Health Institute to:

- Standup testing sites in accessible community locations that align with APH testing protocols and process, and seamlessly connect clients needing assistance with basic needs, and other financial supports
- Utilize students from Central Texas Allied Health Patient Care Technicians and Medical Assistants who are reflective of priority populations to administer COVID-19 testing

## OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

These efforts include pushing key messages via various news outlets and social media platforms and in-person outreach that provides for flyer distribution and in person, including the following.

- Improved access to accurate information and correcting misinformation
  - Meaningful access to information and services for individuals who have limited English proficiency
  - Communicate across multiple social media platforms and print in languages spoken by prioritized communities
  - Provide language interpretation services for critical, time-sensitive information related to the COVID-19 response
  - Communicate that testing is safe for undocumented individuals or families with mixed immigration status
  - Review multilingual capacity and adherence to Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards (CLAS) of gateway systems such as testing enrollment tool or medical hotline
  - Improve bilingual staffing to assist with investigating, contact tracing, and medical hotline
  - Development of culturally relevant messaging, using Spanish language radio and Facebook groups
- Distributed multilingual COVID-19 health updates and resource information to target zip codes
  - Small, regionally specialized groceries, aka “ethnic” markets
  - Places of worship
  - Multi-family complexes/apartments
  - Parent Support Specialists at Austin, Del Valle, Manor, and Pflugerville Independent School Districts
- Use paid and earned media, Social Media, including leveraging partner sites that reach priority populations
  - WhatsApp and other social media platforms amenable to mobile devices
  - Facebook groups
  - Community radio, TV, and print media
  - Flyers with culturally relevant images and translations





## **COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND EDUCATION**

APH is working with community partners to provide education, emphasizing proper mask use and care, and the importance of hygiene. These are the only effective mitigation measures until a vaccine is readily available.

- Community PPE Distribution events
  - Six-week campaign targeting City and County facilities, as well as Community Care Clinics in zip codes with high positivity rates and increased Social Vulnerability levels;
  - Support distribution of PPE by grassroots organizations that have established connections within the community

Staff will continue to work internally and with community partners and contracted agencies to design interventions and solutions that are data-driven and solve for the most vulnerable.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 512.972.5010 or [Stephanie.Hayden@austintexas.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Hayden@austintexas.gov)

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager  
Christopher Shorter, Assistant City Manager

