

City Council Special Called Meeting Transcript (Joint Meeting with Travis County Commissioners Court) – 09/14/2021

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[9:03:41 AM]

>> Judge Brown: The commissioners court meeting for today, it's September 14, 2021. It's 9:03 A.M. And we're meeting here at 700 Lavaca Street and we have commissioners Gómez, Shea and myself. And Mayor Adler, I'll hand it off to you to start this meeting. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you for the joint meeting portion of it, the city's portion here -- >> Judge Brown: Mayor, I think that you are muted. Yeah. >> Mayor Adler: Am I muted? >> Or city hall is muted. >> Judge Brown: See on your thing, the little red -- the microphone -- >> Mayor Adler: Can you hear me now? >> Judge Brown: Yes. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Calling to order the city portion of the joint meeting here today on September 14th, 2021. Time is 9:04. I'm present and councilmember Alter is present and we're not

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taking actions so we don't need a quorum yet. I think we see other people, but they haven't signed in. But we're ready to proceed, judge. >> Judge Brown: Thank you. So I call the Travis County Commissioners Court and Austin City Council to order. And joined now by commissioner Howard. We'll take up item 1, to receive briefings on COVID-19 related matters and we'll go to the Travis County public comment portion. I believe that we have one caller for that. >> Yes, judge, Janice is on the line. Janice? >> Judge Brown: Thanks. Go ahead, Janice. >> Good morning, good morning, everyone. I will keep my comments short this morning. And, again, thank you everybody for your work. Later today I'll be sending you all an update, including summaries of recent research by topic as well as some new numbers regarding the

gap in vaccine acceptance. Currently the average provider is delivering 500 doses per week. Many of those doses in the eastern crescent have occurred

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through grassroots organizations, efforts from a variety of organizations. Each with their own unique and trusted reach into the community. Last week I ran numbers to see how close we were to reaching 70% in eastern crescent zip code by December 31st. There are currently 181 federal and state-approved providers in the eastern crescent. At the current rate we'd need 25 more providers in eastern crescent to get to 75% of vaccinated every zip code. We're unlikely to see these waves of covid stop until we're at least 90%. In some cases adding providers is the answer and in others it's committing more money into clear and updated communications and incentives like businesses offering paid timeoff. At least 20 organizations active in the eastern crescent are working hard to fill some of this gap but they need to be supported on their own terms and expanding their efforts, and we need to be able to pay people

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fairly, in many cases volunteers are burning out. It's time for groups like south by southwest and atl that are offering opportunities to gather in person to also offer financial support to these organizations. It's time for corporations to continue to support way more in this effort. We will not get there the way we're going, but we can if we shift the trajectory. I thank you all so much for your time. >> Judge Brown: Thank you, Janice. >> Gómez: Thanks, Janice. >> Judge Brown: Any other callers? >> No, judge. >> Judge Brown: Okay, great. So we'll start the briefing portion, and turn it over to Dr. Walkes or if Dr. Walkes is not here over to director Sturup. I see Dr. Walkes, there you go. >> Good morning. >> Judge Brown: Good morning. >> We'll start with our first slide, please.

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So this is the curve that we're familiar with that shows our hospitalizations and icu admissions. And our ventilator use, etc. Our icu admissions, and for the last 24 hours we had 412 new cases reported to aph. Our seven-day moving average had decreased to 55, and has slowly been decreasing. We had 509 patients total admitted for covid-related illness. 217 in icu. 143 on ventilators, with 57 admissions, and 39 discharges. The next slide, please. And this next slide we see that according to the UT consortium modeling projections, our curve

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continues to decline as far as our seven-day moving average of hospitalizations. Next slide, please. When we look at the predominant variant that's in our community at this point, it continues to be the delta variant, b1617.2. At 99%. There's been questions about the new variant of interest, that is present in our community at .1%, and has been continuing to decline and does not show that it's going to be prevalent in our community at this point in time. Next slide, please. >> Excuse me, did you just say that the delta variant is declining and would not be

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prevalent? I'm not sure that I heard you properly. >> The mu variant, sorry, mu -- >> Sorry, it's hard to hear that one. >> Yeah, and I also want to point out that vaccines continue to protect against severe disease and hospitalizations and death, and in the recent September 10th article, our vaccines are doing what we want them to do, which is providing that protection. Next slide, please. When we look at our school cases in our area since the beginning of school when the staff returned in early August, there was a slow climb in the number of cases and that -- there's been a slight decline in the week of labor day. That was a shorter week. The total number of reported student cases is at 1,447.

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Staff cases at 225, with four other cases mentioned in other areas in the school system. The school cases that occur in students most often occur in classroom settings, followed second by athletics, and then after-school activities. Last week the tea announced a roll out of testing resources for our school districts and the ISDs are planning for the use of these resources to increase testing in schools. A recent UT modeling study on the benefits of masking and testing in schools, which will be released today, confirms that testing combined with masking will help keep our schools open safely and help us have fewer cases. As we know, vaccinations provide strong protection against

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illness and hospitalizations, and masking will continue to protect those who are not able to be vaccinated at this time. We still have not gotten word on when pediatric vaccinations will be expanded for those under the age of 12, but we are prepared to deploy those vaccines when that is announced and the guidance received. Next slide, please. The -- the slide here shows the admissions by age that we've had in the last several weeks, and we see that there's been a week-on-week slow decline in the numbers of admissions in each of the age groups. And on the right side of the slide, we see the number of admissions to hospital for those under the age of 18.

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Sorry. I'm sorry? Did someone ask a question? >> Judge Brown: Nope. >> Okay. And so we see here that the pediatric admissions totaled 133 in this time frame. As of yesterday we had 15 pediatric admissions to hospital, and none of the children admitted were vaccinated. Next slide, please. This slide again looks at age group in the top left-hand corner, we see the distribution of age with the largest percentage being represented by those in the 50 to 69 year age group over the entire length of the pandemic. A fairly even split between male

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and female. 10% -- 10.9% blacks, 44% hispanics, representing a disproportionate impact of those hospitalized by race and ethnicity. And then the lower right-hand corner we see the blue line which represents people over the age of 70. And there's been a slow decline in the numbers of those admitted who are over the age of 70 since the beginning of the deployment of vaccines in January, represented by the arrow. And then that decline continues over time. And then if you look at the green line, which represents the age group of the 30 to 49-year-olds, you see that there's been a slow increase in the number of those in that age group who have been hospitalized

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over time. And particularly in this surge that we have as a result of the delta variant of sars-cov-2. Next slide, please. Again, looking at our vaccine effectiveness, we've deployed 750,000 plus vaccines from -- to fully vaccinate 750,000 plus individuals in our county. Of that number, 5,964 have had breakthrough cases. Our disease surveillance team has been able to contact and interview 1,378 of those individuals to learn that 59 were hospitalized, which represents 1% of that number, and the age groups of those hospitalized were from 19 to 96.

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They received -- 13 of them j&j and 18 modern, and 28 pfizer. There were 32 deaths in this breakthrough case cohort on ages 17 to 98. Seven were long-term care facility residents. And they received 19 of them -- pfizer. 10, modern. And three, j&j. Next slide, please. When we look at our long-term care facility numbers in the last 14 days, there has been a decrease in the number of facility -- new

facility cases. Dropping from 77 cases to 53. 11 facilities reported these positive cases, down from 16 facilities in the previous

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14-day report. Of the cases reported, 21 were resident cases, 20 of which were fully vaccinated, and 32 were staff cases, and 16 of those were vaccinated fully. The next slide, please. When we look at deaths that we've had in Travis county since the beginning of the year, we've had a total of 447 from January 1st to September 10th. During the entire pandemic to today's date there's been 1,035 deaths, but I showed this slide to show that the covid vaccine has helped to reduce the number of deaths and through this last

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portion of July and August of the pandemic, there have been some increases in death related to those who are unvaccinated primarily. 50% of the individuals who passed were hispanic, and 58% were male. 7.3% of those who have died from January 1st to September 10th, were fully vaccinated. There were more deaths seen -- >> Can you repeat that statistic again? What percentage, who died that were totally vaccinated? >> 7.3%. >> Shea: Thank you. >> You're welcome. And there were more deaths seen in the age groups of 30 to 59 in the August time frame due to the sars-cov-2 delta variant.

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And if you remember that previous slide that had the lines showing the increases in that 30 to 40 age group, you saw that there was an increase that was seen there as well. Next slide, please. On the right-hand side of this slide, we show our vaccination stats that we have had reported. Not all of our institutions have been able to give us completed information. So the 229 that's represented here is unknown. If you were to take that out and just look at what we do know, I want to explain that those who are partially vaccinated are not considered to be fully vaccinated or fully protected,

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so they actually go into the category of not vaccinated, because they're not fully vaccinated. And the fully vaccinated are represented by just that -- fully vaccinated. We define full protection by covid vaccine when 14 days has passed after that last shot that's received. And so the data here shows the

breakdown of those who are vaccinated in our hospital systems in the period of August 30th through September 12th. The left-hand side of the graph shows the breakdown of where people reside who have been hospitalized in our county hospital systems. And 52% of those hospitalized in Travis county are Travis county residents.

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And 48% of the patients are from surrounding counties. Next slide, please. Deaths are higher in surrounding counties with lower vaccination rates. And here we see depicted the surrounding counties, larger surrounding counties, and we see in Caldwell where they have 51% -- almost 51% of their residents fully vaccinated who are eligible for vaccine, they have a 245 deaths per 100,000. And here in Travis county, where we have almost 69% of our residents who are eligible for vaccination vaccinated, we have an 84 death per 100,000 death rate. Next slide, please.

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So in conclusion, on September 10th, the CDC mortality and morbidity weekly report and then was released a study that talked about the cases, hospitalizations, and deaths from covid-19 looked, according to the vaccination status. And that study showed that the vaccines continue to offer strong protection against covid-19 infection. Five times the reduction in risks, and hospitalizations were 10%, and 10 times reduction risk. And deaths are shown to be reduced by 10 times. So it is important that we continue as the caller discussed

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to vaccinate our residents and to continue to move our community to higher level of vaccination, particularly in the face of not being able to vaccinate those who are under the age of 12. And in addition to that as we have discussed and other settings, it's going to be important for us to look to our neighbors and collaborate with them and get their populations vaccinated as well, because as we've said many times we're all in this together. And our hospital systems here in the Travis county metroplex do all serve our neighbors. And so we all have to work

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together to protect ourselves, and particularly protect our children. So continued mask wearing and vaccination, social distancing, and staying home when ill. And I'd like to make one last point, and that is that we continue to utilize the regional infusion center to treat patients who are eligible for treatment for covid-19 within 10 days of symptom onset. That has had a good impact on our community. We've delivered over 1,500 doses of infusion to our region. And this service continues to be available, so if you feel sick, get tested. If you test positive for covid-19, seek help from the medical provider, and see if you're eligible for care, and if you are, have your provider

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refer you for infusion of monoclonal antibody therapy. And that will end my report. Thank you. >> Thank you, Dr. Walkes. And so, good morning, everyone, Adrienne Sturup, interim director for Austin public health. And I will jump in with our covid operations update. If you are sick, please get tested. If you are exposed to someone who tested positive, please get tested. And if you're not sure if you have a simple sniffle, some allergy ailments, please, get tested. Again, Austin public health is offering in-home testing. You can call 311, 512 -- 311 or 512-974-2000 to get an

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appointment scheduled if you are homebound or unable to visit a testing site. Our free options are here on the screen. We're at dove springs rec and we're at St. John's and we're also supporting our community by providing facility testing to senior living facilities, homeless shelters, and other congregate settings. Last week you can see we did just under 3,000 tests, so the demand is decreasing slightly. Last week we were over 3,000 tests administered. And so the staff thought that it would be useful to show this graph. It comes from the Travis county -- sorry -- the Texas department of state health services website. I'm going to get myself together this morning. And it shows our vaccine uptake

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over time. The box in the yellow shows the total number of doses that have been administered in the county, and you can see there that we're just over a million and a half. And the graph really shows over time what the vaccine uptake has been for Travis county. We can see at the highest point we were over 120 vaccines per week. And we kind of trickled off in the summer when we were in that period of stage two. And then we're seeing -- we had an increase in August. And so what we're asking our community is to keep up the good work. If you are not vaccinated, please, please do so. The stats for the city and community care for the last operational period, you can see since the beginning we've given over 450,000 shots. Last week we gave over 737.

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And so that is a decline from previous weeks. The good news is that according to dshs, about 79% of our population is vaccinated with at least one dose. And as Dr. Walkes said earlier, we're just under 69% of the eligible population. And that is anyone 12 and older who is fully vaccinated. We have made some progress. The last time that I gave the full figure there were 250,000 eligible people who were not vaccinated. And that number is now approximately 225,000. So the needle is moving. And we just need the community to continue to make the choice to be vaccinated. The flip side of that is that there's over 340,000 people who are not fully vaccinated. And this leaves us open for the potential of hospitalization, or even death if they remain unvaccinated.

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And as Dr. Walkes said, we are considering anyone who has not completed the course as unvaccinated. And so our next slide shows what's been going on in our county with respect to vaccine distribution by provider. And we can see for our area the lion's share of the work has been through pharmacy with over 680,000 shots given. Followed right by public health and government, with 304,000 shots given. And so there seems to be a good disbursement of opportunity in our community. We just need to continue to work and get the messaging out that vaccines are available, and that they're safe, and that is the smart choice for folks during this time. When looking at the data that shows the number of people fully vaccinated by age, we see the

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highest age group is in that 16 to 49-year-old category. And they make up about 50% of the population that's fully vaccinated. The 65-79 or older are 84% fully vaccinated. And so the population estimates show that there are approximately just over -- just under 27,000 individuals that are 80 and older. So based on this estimate, we know that 72% of those 80 and older are fully vaccinated. Oh, let me go back. Also you can see here that within each age category, the split between gender, male and female, is about even. And so with we look at our first dose map, we had one zip code exceed the 70% first-dose vaccine mark, and 78758 from

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blue to green. So we're excited about that. I'm also excited that there's very little yellow on this map. And so we are making great progress as a community for our first dose. And then when we look at our second dose fully vaccinated, I'm excited that there's no red on this map, that there's minimal yellow but, again, you know, not to take away from the efforts that need to happen in those efforts. And so as in weeks prior, we continue to use this map to plan our strike teams event. We use it in the county collaborative. We use it as the basis for all of our communications and outreach efforts. So this map is very near and dear to us as it serves as one of the guiding data points for operations with respect to vaccine. And then we'll see for the week that we are at our standard locations. Again, there are no appointments

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necessary. No id is necessary and no insurance is required to come to any of the locations and they're listed here on the screen. So in addition to being at southeast library, little walnut creek, and at the Ana lark center, this week we'll be at the pflugerville library and also at manor new high-tech, at the harmony school of excellence, and out in Elgin at the intermediate school. Also of note the health equity task force continues to work with the vaccine incident management team, or imt, to identify and bring vaccine resources to zip codes that are not at the 70% goal. Outreach events continue to be an important tool to support protective behaviors, meet basic needs, and provide information about vaccines. So if we're not giving shots, we're talking about shots. We're giving out ppe to remind people and to support the need

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to mask. And we're also helping out with meal distribution and anything -- all of the things that our community needs to eliminate everyday thoughts and necessities or barriers that might get in the way of them being able to take the time out to get a vaccine. Last week we were at the poco loco supermarket on Saturday, with the help of the Austin black physicians association and we were at St. James for a vaccine pod. And then on the 11th, staff in partnership with Austin health and the del valle coalition held a movie night. You might be wondering what a movie night is important when we talk about vaccine operations. As a public health organization we're trying to always address the impact of covid on our communities in its totality. So we know that the main focus

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is, right, for people to practice protective behaviors, be vaccinated, test if you're sick and wear a mask and avoid large gatherings. But we also recognize the stress that our communities have been under, and we are trying to support overall health and wellness, because when you are feeling good in most areas

of your life, it becomes easier to adopt and to support all of the habits that contribute to your health. And so the movie night was a really creative and innovative way to get families together. Everyone was safe, and they were in their cars, you know, they got to come out and to be relaxed in a fun, safe environment and at the same time learn information about vaccine and get information about the different opportunities within our community where they could seek out a free vaccine. Along that same vein we were at

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the east Austin neighborhood center distributing ppe and food as well as information about where folks can go to get vaccines. This weekend we'll be at the turner Robert rec doing the same thing, vaccines and ppe. We'll be at the del valle opportunity center, again, vaccines and ppe. And our mobile testing sites will be at a variety of locations throughout the city. And, again, you can schedule those by calling 311 and you'll be directed to our imt or our incident management team, and they'll hook you up and get vaccines out to your location. And so when we talk about our focused outreach and messaging, I talked a little bit about this on the previous slide. You know, really just using that map and making sure that we have place-based opportunities for folks to receive support, not only for vaccines, but also for

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other basic needs that help support the general community health. Last time we were together we talked about the strides that we're making for booster planning. So nothing new here, just really want to reiterate for the community the differences between third doses and boosters. So the third dose is for anyone that's immunocompromised. If you're unsure, that is a conversation that you need to have with your doctor. But generally those are folks who have rheumatoid arthritis, you've had an organ transplant, um, you may be undergoing chemotherapy -- any medical condition that makes your immune system less likely to respond to the first two doses -- the third dose is for you. Boosters -- so according to the

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Biden administration, we're going to be ready for boosters on September 20th. And if that is the direction from the CDC and the fda, yes, Austin public health will be ready to provide boosters for the community. And boosters are the shot that's necessary because of the data is showing that your initial two doses -- the protection that you're having is waning, and so there is some preliminary data that shows that pfizer is waning at the eight or nine-month mark. So for anyone who is past the eighth or ninth month of their second dose, you might want to consider a booster. We don't have all of that data

yet from moderna. And so it seems that the preliminary studies are showing that the modern vaccine is providing a bit longer protection. So all of that being said, we're

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currently providing third doses for anyone who is immunocompromised. Free, same system, you can walk up, no appointment necessary. If you are a person who likes to plan, and not savvy on the computer you can call 311 and our equity line will help you to schedule an appointment for your third dose. If on the 9/20 date and we get the all go ahead from the fda and CDC that boosters for pfizer are actually necessary, we're ready. At any of our locations you can come and get that booster shot. It's still free, there's still no appointment required and still no id required and if you prefer to talk to a live person to schedule your appointment, you can do that by calling 311. And then just because we're public health and it's that time of year, and we're already thinking about flu, just to

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remind everyone that Austin public health is supporting the community through our vaccine efforts. And this is the same team that helps fulfill our duties as a safety net provider for vaccine for children and also for adults. And so just to give you an idea of how busy we've been during the month of August just on vaccines alone, you can see we provided over 5,000 doses -- 3,000 of those were first doses. A little over 1,800 were second doses and we provided 243 third doses of covid vaccine in August. We've also provided many back-to-school vaccines. We're talking about keeping our kids safe, right, so if you're not vaccine eligible for covid, there's still plenty of shots that we can give out to make sure that kiddos are ready for school. And so we gave over 3,200 doses

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to 1,200 clients of those vaccines for kids that keep them safe. In terms of other adult vaccines that we provided, there were 281 doses administered. It is flu season. You have two arms, you can get two shots. Covid in one, flu in the other. And be protected. And so then last week -- or the last time we were together -- we mentioned that there was a survey that we were conducting to assess attitudes about covid vaccine that was tied to the incentive pilot. And there was a request to get some of the preliminary information from those surveys. And so I'll take a few moments to go through some of those questions. And this was developed in coordination with the county, and so I do believe that the surveys were administered at county collaborative locations, as well as locations sponsored

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by Austin public health. So one of the first questions that we asked was that anytime in past year have you felt hesitant or reluctant about getting the covid-19 vaccine. And we can see, unfortunately, by the Orange section that represents the "Yes, I have been hesitant or reluctant" pie, 68%, versus 32%. And then this next slide tries to dig into that a little more deeply to figure out what is driving the hesitancy. And we can see here that 55% of folks that's the greatest bar graph here have not been sure whether or not the vaccine is safe. Again, 48% of the respondents were concerned about the long-term effects of the vaccine. And then questions about whether

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or not the covid vaccine was effective. And so, you know, when we talk about operations and we talk about access, I think as a community, we're doing a good job with that because a lot of the hesitancy wasn't about fear from this at work, it wasn't about costs, so people are understanding that it's free. There were no concerns about missing work. And I hope that infers that they understand the flexibility and the hours that both the city and the county are offering for vaccine opportunities. So it's really more about the science it seems, like a lack of information about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine. And for those -- obviously they were there and they took the leap, and they decided to get the vaccine.

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Figure out what those trigger points were for folks that, you know, allowed them to overcome their hesitancy and drive them to a site to get a vaccine. And so increase in knowledge has been 59.8% of folks responded they learned more about the vaccine. And that changed their mind. Followed by concern about the delta variant. Followed closely, 50%, you know, folks were encouraged by friends and family. And then this one makes me feel good -- 48.9% reporting that they felt a sense of responsibility to their community. And so, again, you know, all of the things that we've been saying we're seeing their fruit. The importance of good communications and engagement and outreach. The transparency and the validity of the data that we're able to share to the community about the delta variant and the

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effect that it's having on our health care systems and on our loved ones. You know, we talk about trusted voices. Friends and family -- and so the more information that we can give out as a public health officials or on the Travis county side, health and human services, we can build ambassadors in our community of friends and family that can help their loved ones make a good decision to get vaccine. And then, you know, again wanting to figure out, well, where are people getting their information about

health? You know, of all of the concerns, or the greater number of the concerns are about the efficacy of the vaccine and the science behind it. 57% are still getting that information from their doctor. And so that's a good thing. And we want the community to continue to reach out to their primary care physician to have conversations about covid, and any other health needs that you

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have. Your doctor is your number one ally. And then right behind it at 39%, news, radio, television, online, our newspapers. So that's where we come in, right, as a public health department. And even though only 10% of folks said they got their information from Austin public health, we're going to keep on using our collateral and our team to produce information on the news, on radio, on TV, online, providing information so that folks can have access to good data to be able to dispel misinformation and myths and keep themselves and their families safe. So when asking about why folks did not get the vaccine sooner, 21% said they were waiting for a specific kind of vaccine to be available to them. And then 16% said that they

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didn't know where to get a vaccine. And so while that is the second top answer, I'm glad that the percentage only 16%. And so, you know, what that indicates with the team is that we need to continue the good work of making sure that we're out in community, that we're publicizing and promoting vaccine opportunities, and that work is just as important as standing up the vaccine clinics. People have to know where we are, so they can access the resources. And then this third one is important to us -- schedule conflicts with work or other travel or responsibilities. And so, you know, that helps us to not only to decide places, but to make sure that we're offering vaccines on weekends, after work, before work. We really have to be flexible and nimble in our operations to meet those needs and to continue to work to eliminate unnecessary

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barriers for folks getting the vaccine. And so just to round out, a good segue into what we're doing for media and outreach, we're introducing a vax facts campaign to combat misinformation weekly. We continue to promote the "Let's stick together" campaign, which is a joint effort between Austin public health, Travis county, and in central health. And those advertisements are available in English and Spanish. For media engagement, the joint information system is doing biweekly interviews with some Austin on the latest covid-19 information. We continue to do the media q&a every Friday at 10:30 A.M. On atxn, that's also available in Spanish on atxn-3.

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We continue to provide answers to numerous media inquiries and to different local municipalities within the county to make sure that everyone is having fair access to information. One of -- one of the community outreaches that I'm especially proud of from the Austin public health, health equity unit is my "Api live" and that started in the height of the pandemic in 2020. And it really was an opportunity or an effort to engage the different communities in Austin that we kind of put under the api umbrella. And so those are folks, you know, their first language may be Chinese. And it's facilitated by the Austin health staff and it gives an opportunity for the community to call in or to interact and to

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get information about different covid resources that are available in the community. And I smile because last week we were -- we were head-to-head, and it was the media q&a and "My api" Facebook town hall and the staff wrote me a note to say they beat me out by 1,300 views on Facebook. And I said I will take that -- I will take that we have over 1,000 folks from our api community tuning in monthly to get information about covid in an environment -- a kind of community that they've created via social media. So good job, y'all, keep up the work. And then last but not least, I always like to show a picture of our teams hard at work. I believe this is from an event at Gus. And you can see here the colorful bags of ppe that were distributed. So there's masks in there, there's hand sanitizers, there's

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fliers about the different opportunities for testing and vaccine in our community. And we have the boxes of fresh foods that we make available to community. And we have our team hard at work loading up cars and trunks of stuff for folks. And here's another picture, stuffing bags and engaging with folks as they drive through. And that's all that I have today and we're welcome to take any questions. Thank you. >> Judge Brown: Thank you, director Sturup. Chuck, turn it over to you and constable morales. >> Good morning, judge brown, mayor Adler, commissioners and councilmembers. I'm chuck Brotherton, the executive for emergency services. Here today with constable George morales to update you all very briefly on activities of the Travis county vaccine collaborative. If you will give me just a moment, I will share my screen.

[9:51:26 AM]

And for the week of September 6th through September 12th -- I want to again to give you a quick overview of what we have been doing. Total vaccinations provided for the past week September 6th through September 12th, are 1,096. Those are combination of first, second and a handful of third doses. We're not doing many third doses, but like director Sturup stated, both aph and the collaborative have the third dose available for the immune compromised. And we have been giving out some of those. The week prior to this past week we did actually take a well-deserved break for our hard-working team members. We did not do vaccinations at our typical weekend strike teams and at the expo. So the week of August 20-September 5th was slightly lower. And then total doses two weeks

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prior were 1,695. So we are starting to see demand tapering off somewhat, though we continue working very diligently to be out in the community seven days a week doing strike teams at a variety of locations and, of course, weekend drive-thru at the expo center on Decker Lane. Doses by month and the strike team events -- you can see we are starting over here on dose by month. The first dose, second dose and third dose. In September, we are doing mostly second doses. Though there are still first doses being given out. And then our strike team events, you can see just the number of events that we are having month-to-month. August was a very big month with 115 separate events and September so far, 11. And it looks like we will exceed the number of events that we did in August.

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And this map just shows a day-by-day for the week. Monday was Labor Day, so we did not do any activities on Monday. But on Tuesday the 7th, you can see the different strike team locations where we appeared in the eastern crescent zip codes and the number of doses given out at each strike team. And then so on through the week. Wednesday, five events. Thursday, four events. Friday and then Saturday. Both Saturday and Sunday, with you get to Sunday the 12th, one event which is our Travis County Expo Center where we are appearing both Saturdays and Sundays. Before I turn it over to Constable Morales, I do like to demonstrate to our viewers and to y'all just how easy it is for our community to find online

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information about vaccine locations. On the Travis County tx.gov home page, our landing page, just one click away and you can see our vaccine events calendar day-by-day, Tuesday, September 14th, the different places where we will be appearing. Some of these are commercial pharmacies, but primarily these are both Austin Public Health and County Collaborative strike team events. Click on any one of these, the J.P. Market and Cedar Creek, for example, and you will find the address, the type of vaccine being provided, hours of operation and so forth. On the austintexas.gov landing page at austintexas.gov,

one click, and find coronavirus vaccinations right here. And very similar information to what you'll find on the

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traviscountytexas.gov. And those looking for a commercial vaccine provider, vaccines.gov, find covid-19 vaccines, and you can do -- just enter your zip code and you will find all of the commercial providers around you that are giving away vaccine. As director Sturup indicated, the Travis county collaborative vaccine efforts, we continue doing first, second and third doses. We are prepared and ready to scale up at expo and at all of our sites to deliver boosters when it's appropriate to do so. No appointments are needed for the Travis county collaborative locations. No identification required, of course, and no insurance information is collected. Just by Austin public health, we are doing this for -- to make it as easy as possible for our residents to get vaccinated. So at this time, I will stop sharing and turn it over to constable morales. >> Good morning, commissioners,

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judge, councilmembers and mayor. We continue to focus on outreach, on education, ensuring that our strike teams that are out there are very successful. Our mobile vaccines collaborative, we did see that it was 1 -- I'm sorry -- 1,096 doses that were given. That number is actually changed, it's 1,117 doses that were given this past week, with a 21 additional shots coming in. A total of 2,079 for the first two weeks of September of vaccines were distributed with our mobile vaccine collaborative. We handed out about a total of 4,100 fliers and made a total of 848 phone calls and to our communities that are really high with covid, so of those zip codes that you are aware of 78758 and 78767 in del valle communities. We will continue to target this week and in the next couple weeks to those zip codes to

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continue to bring more information and to educate our community. This week we start with St. Mary's in pflugerville church with the hospital of pastor coxam, and, again, hitting those areas of concern with outreach in the communities of pflugerville. Something important that we did start with aid, we started two static locations, one is at Mendes middle school at 78744 and also at Keely middle school in 78702 areas. Real real quick, I do want to recognize the great work that star collaborative, with the help of our local leaders and effective. Commissioner Shea was a big help in the committee last week. We did a really good job out there communicating. And the wells branch community also did a great job, community leaders out there, reaching out to their communities, local

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apartment complexes and businesses and bringing people to the clinics, along with our outreach personnel. Thank you to judge Mueller with project engage, with the help of constable Lopez, we went to the justice center and gave out shots there. I want to mention and give a shoutout to the teams that are out there daily. Austin public health, ascension-seaton, Travis county fire rescue, Travis county outreach personnel, precinct four. We are a team, and together we make -- we're trying so hard to get these shots out to this community. And our efforts are working. And it's showing that it works. So I just want to thank everybody that's out there that's going their part and helping get these shots out to our community. I'll turn it back over to chuck. >> Thank you, constable, judge and mayor at this time, we'll

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turn it back to you all for questions. >> Judge Brown: Thanks, chuck, and constable, and team. So, we'll go through the questions now. Again, even probably more so than last week, we have a full agenda after this, so if folks could limit themselves to one question each, that would be great. And we'll start as usual with commissioner Gomez, go through the commissioners, and then to me, and then to council. >> Gomez: I'm very glad to hear about the progress that we continue to make, even though it looks like it's dwindling a little bit out there. We need to just keep pushing the education of the public and making sure that they understand the importance of getting vaccinated. It's okay to get ppe to kind of have some protection, but the real goal here is to get vaccinated. Just like in the other times when we had to deal with polio, when we had to deal with other things that hit us.

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And so -- but I really admire and am thankful to the teams, as you consistently go out and talk to people. [Clearing throat] And all of the teams that are working on this. I can see that you have a very busy calendar. And that's good. We keep trying. And I guess we won't give up until we see more people vaccinated. So, many thanks to each and every one of you. >> Judge Brown: Thank you. Commissioner Shea? >> Shea: Hi, thanks, judge. Thank you to all of our staff and healthcare workers, and volunteers, everybody who's out there trying to make our community safer. I think I heard from director Sturup that about 340,000 people in our community are not fully vaccinated? I mean, that's over a third of a million people. And I just feel like we need to send a stronger message that the people who are unvaccinated are

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literally prolonging this pandemic. They are the hosts for the mutations which are the variants. And they're causing us to, you know, have to scramble around mask mandates in schools because children can't be vaccinated, curtail attendance, you know, in public facilities. They are a big part of the problem and I feel like we haven't made it clear enough that they're literally prolonging this. So maybe people don't want to be that pointed about it, but I think it's really clear we need to send stronger messages. And the thing that I cannot understand and I don't know if anyone can explain this, how is it that people are more willing to take a horse dewormer than they are to take an FDA-approved vaccine that will save their lives? I just cannot fathom what's happening in our society. It seems like people have lost their minds. Anyway, if anybody has an answer

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on that one, I'd love to hear it. Otherwise I'll leave my comments at that. Thank you. >> Travillion: You can't attach logic to an illogical response. That's probably the answer to that question. If somebody chooses to be defiant and chooses to harm themselves in the process, you know, I think that's why they make the Darwin awards. >> Shea: We need to send a stronger message to people that they are literally prolonging the pandemic by refusing to get vaccinated and refusing to wear masks. >> Travillion: So, first of all, let me start by thanking the team, not only the county team but the city team for the efforts that have been made to expand into communities. And my question is going to be about, you know, we've got a lot of title I schools. And I understand that there are a lot of kids that are not being

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exposed to the virus and to the variant -- that are now being exposed. Do we have a process that makes it easy for students who are over 12 who want to get vaccinated at schools, or teachers in those schools to make sure that they get their third shot as soon as possible? I think, given the fact that we don't have the entire medical infrastructure in the title I communities that we should have, maybe one important place to have an initiative would be in our title I schools. So do we have any plans for extending our efforts into title I schools, and how are we expanding our network of trusted relationships as we try to do so? What's the delta between the

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organizations that we worked with last week and the additions that we've had since that time? >> Is that a question for chuck? >> Travillion: Probably, that would be chuck. >> Commissioner Travillion, the aid school nurses are ascension-seaton affiliated staff. They are prepared and are ready to deliver vaccines in the aid school system, which is the bulk of the school system in the county, but it certainly doesn't cover all 15 of our ISDs. So, beyond what aid has available, we meet weekly, Dr. Walkes, I, judge brown,

others, meet weekly with our aid superintendents and we talk with them about their operations, about their unmet needs, anything that we can do to assist them. We remain and stand ready to

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assist them. >> Commissioner, I'll follow up. We do work with the care support specialists at all title I schools when vaccine clinics become available in their areas. We work with aid, their parent support specialists, who are awesome, and sometimes live within their community, and give a lot more resources and contacts out to where the vaccine is available. And working with those title I schools we know that a lot of them end up in our heavily affected zip codes. So we continue to do that effort, working with aid, manor ISD, and pflugerville ISD. >> Travillion: Thank you. >> Austin public health also provides -- vaccine at various school campuses, in particular at del valle and in manor. And so we do continue to work with our partners in the various ISDs to support. >> Judge Brown: Thank you. >> Travillion: Thank you.

[10:06:48 AM]

>> Howard: Good morning, Adrienne and Dr. Walkes. Thank you for the update. I'm still concerned about 78705, west campus, university of Texas. The reporting I've seen in the news is pretty positive about what's going on at U.T. I know that councilmember tovo asked about this last -- two weeks ago. Is there any update on, like, I'd love to believe that the yellow in 78705 is simply because the state doesn't know where the students live. But is there any insight to that? >> Dr. Young, who is monitoring and conducting the covid response for the U.T. Campus has been doing ongoing surveillance testing, and also symptomatic testing of students, and reports that their positivity rate has been dropping. She reported out yesterday that

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the surveillance tests showed a .65% positivity rate and symptomatic testing was 6.27, which is less than our overall county rate, which is in the 10.8 range. They continue to respond to -- with testing as their way of identifying cases so that folks can be isolated and/or treated if appropriately -- if it's appropriate to do so with monoclonal antibodies and such. So -- and they also have a very robust vaccine program that they're conducting for the student body. So they report to us throughout the week, and things seem to be stable there. >> Thank you, Dr. Walkes. Just to add on to that, U.T. Health continues to work on west

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campus, and they are having some internal incentives for students to promote vaccines. I think you can be eligible for a \$10,000 scholarship. And so they are working their resources to promote within their system, and Austin public health stands ready to assist whenever they request, or whatever. >> Howard: Good news. Thank you. Thanks, judge. >> Judge Brown: Right on. Thank you very much. Mayor, I will pass it on over to you. >> Mayor Adler: Judge, thank you. We'll go ahead and do the council. We're going to start with district number 1, work our way through. Mayor pro tem, do you want to start us off? >> Harper-madison: Okay. Thank you, mayor. Good morning, colleagues. Thanks, everybody, for their presentations this morning and for your continued efforts. I hope everybody's week is off to a good start. My brief question is, out of the 7.3 fully vaccinated individual who died from contracting the covid-19 virus, were any of them

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recipients of the third shot, or boosterred fully vaccinated people also experiencing mortality as a result of covid? >> No, ma'am. Not to my knowledge from the report that I just received, no, because that was before that was being rolled out. >> Harper-madison: So I wonder if there's a way, you know, for the next time that we connect with one another, I wonder if there's a way, since we'll have had that opportunity to collect some data there, to be able to answer that question when we have more information. >> Yes, for sure. >> Harper-madison: I appreciate that. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember Fuentes. >> Fuentes: Thank you. I first just want to thank our staff for all the work that they're doing. This past weekend, commissioner Shea and I visited the exponer expocenter and saw the operations

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first-hand. It's incredible the hard work that you are putting in at this stage of the pandemic. I just want to express my gratitude for that work, and for all of your efforts. I also want to thank director Sturup for this really incredible presentation. Service super thorough and had a lot of great information for us to share with our community. I really appreciate all of the data and the work that you have shown that our department is doing. And so I think that's really important for us to put it out there so people know to expect the vax facts campaign you are rolling out. That is brilliant. I will keep an eye out for it so I can re-share that material as it gets posted. My question is, I read recently that we have over a million Texans who have not received their second dose, I think it was 1.8 million who have not yet gone in for their second dose and are past that window of when it's recommended to get the second shot of the vaccine, whether pfizer or modern.

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Can you talk us through, what does that number look like for us in Travis county and how many individuals that we have who have received their first vaccination but have not gone back for their second dose ?and any strategies that we're doing to get those folks back into the system to get their second shot. >> And so I don't have the numbers available, and I'm hoping the team who's listening to the briefing will send me a text. If not, we will present that information the next time, certainly. So, we did pilot the incentive program with the H-E-B gift cards and there have been some conversation between us and our partners at the county about what additional incentives we would employ. And the number for us -- so there's two goals that we can strive for. So, less than 25,000 people in

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Travis county need to be vaccinated for us to reach the 70% mark. And so the first thought is using the second iteration of the incentive program to kind of drive that number, to get us to that standard of measure that's been out there nationally, communities who are at 70% fully vaccinated. The second thought is just that how do we more broadly use the incentive program to drive folks to get their second shots. Of course there's resource limitations to that. It will take millions of dollars to provide an incentive at the level of \$100 per shot in order to get us there. So, you know, it will be a combination of things. I think the first next good goal for us is to target that 25,000 to get us there as a community. And then continue to work with our partners in the county for those pockets that we know, those populations that we know

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that are having those disparities, and how we use any additional incentive programs to push numbers or promote vaccine up-take. So those are the initial thoughts that we have around that. >> To answer your question about the partially vaccinated, we have 9.2% who are partially vaccinated, which represents 117,000 plus individuals who are partially vaccinated in Travis county. >> And one more add-on. I don't have the numbers, but staff did remind me that we are proactively calling everyone who is due for their second dose, as well as proactively calling folks within our system who may qualify for a third dose. >> Fuentes: Good deal. Thank you. That information is super helpful and I really appreciate you all considering incentives as part of that effort to get folks in the queue to get their

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second dose, and certainly having over 100,000 who have not yet received that second dose is still a pretty large number. So I appreciate the hard work there and know that this is really -- a really complex

challenge that we have as a community, and the vaccine survey that you presented on shows that community feel the strength of our community and resilience of our community, and creating that type of mentality will go a long way. I think that's why in El Paso county we're seeing some really low rates out there, because they have that strong sense of community. I'm glad to see that pop up in our survey data. Thank you so much. I appreciate it. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember Renteria. >> Renteria: Thank you, Moir. And I also want to thank our staff, and the county staff for the work that they have done.

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And also the citizens of Austin. Y'all have really come out and shown you really care for the community, and I want to thank y'all for getting y'all's vaccination shot. I just last Friday took my booster shot because -- and I just want to let people know that you can go out to your doctor, and the doctor will set an appointment for you. I had a preexisting condition, so my doctor has always looked out for me, and I really appreciate him, Dr. Sanitego has been with me for almost 30 years now. I know that there's people out there that have insurance that has developed a relationship with their doctors. And please, contact them and they will let you know whether you need a booster shot immediately or you can wait. So, I would advise anyone,

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especially at my age, I'm nearly 70 already, to go out there and get your booster shot. Thank you, mayor. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember Casar. >> Casar: Well thank you, mayor. And I just want to extend my thanks to everybody that are providing those vaccines, having seen the change in color on the map in north Austin, my district, 58, and then also in del valle. I know that that has been long-standing work where you've been convincing people to change their minds and it's clear that there is a big part of our community whose minds can be changed. And I'm less upset with folks taking their time to change their minds than with the folks that are benefiting from spreading misinformation actively. And so I appreciate y'all going and working with people to get them to change their mind. But then there is going to be some requirements, and with the

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announcement from the white house about osha establishing requirements for businesses to have their employees vaccinated, I'd ask for our city and county legal staff to look at ways that we can assist the federal government to make sure that we get as much as compliance as we can in our own community, because I think that this sort of requirement, if it's well-enforced, will get a lot more folks in that remaining category over to our clinics, hopefully. So just putting that request out there as those osha

rules get developed. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember kitchen. >> Kitchen: I have a question about -- just to reiterate that -- actually, I wanted to confirm, we're still in stage five. I heard the report about continuing to lower our rates, although not at a fast pace, if

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I'm understanding correctly. Can you give us any kind of -- what is your thoughts on how -- the direction we're moving in and how that might relate to moving down to stage four and beyond at some point? I hesitate to ask you to predict because I know you can't exactly predict, but can you give us any idea of how we're doing with regard to stage five and a potential move to stage four and below in the future? >> Well, at the current case, we are slowly moving down, as per the projections that we've been following thus far. And if we continue in that fashion, we may be looking at being in stage four maybe late september/early October. The real crux and thing that's going to stop this is -- this

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progression downward is increases in our school cases and increasing cases that require hospitalization, particularly the unvaccinated individuals. And that's what we've been saying for the past couple of weeks. And so far, fingers crossed, they're still going down with our case number. However, we still haven't seen the full impact of the labor day weekend, where there were gatherings and families and friends gathering. So that's the -- that's what we're waiting to see. And typically those types of things have an impact two to three weeks out, so we still have some time before we see the full impact of those gatherings from labor day. So, you know, it's looking good right now, but that's what we're waiting to see. I'm sorry I don't have that

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crystal ball. >> Kitchen: No, that's all right. I don't expect you to. That's very helpful. Thank you. >> M Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember Kelly is not with us today. Councilmember pool, I didn't see her on the screen either. And that gets us then to councilmember Ellis. >> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. I'm wondering if there's any information about people getting their third or their booster shot with a different manufacturer's vaccine. Is anyone trying to do that, is it advisable, or is it imperative you get the additional shots with the same manufacturer? >> The guidance is for the vaccine that you had originally to be the one that you receive as your third shot if you're immune-compromised, or booster shot if you're not immune-compromised. However, if that is not available, there is some

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provision in the guidance to receive a different mRNA vaccine. We still do not have guidance regarding j&j and what to do with regards to boosters or third shots. But for the mRNAs, the guidance is to use the same vaccine that you were given the first time. >> Ellis: That's helpful. I appreciate all the work you are doing to make sure we can get as many people vaccinated as possible. >> Mayor Adler: Councilmember tovo. You're muted. No. Why don't you call in. We'll go past you and come back. Councilmember Alter. >> Alter: Good morning.

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I was hoping that you could speak on two things. First, could you please provide some guidance with respect to the flu shot and the booster, and the timing? So, do you need to wait after one or the other, or can you do them at the same time, or what kind of guidance can you provide on that? And then secondly, can you give us a sense of in what ways Austin public health is able to help businesses that need to comply with the federal mandate, or what we have in the works to assist businesses in doing that in terms of information, or resources to facilitate the processes that are required? >> Councilmember, I'll answer the first part of the question, and I'll leave the operational answer to our director. But as far as the

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coadministration of the COVID-19 and the flu shot, they can both be given at the same time. >> Alter: And are we seeing prevalence of flu? I know that we're hearing reports. My daughter's at college, there are kids already with flu. She got hers before she left, but is that something that we're seeing in Austin? >> I honestly have not looked at the flu data today, but it would not be surprising to see some early cases of flu starting now as we have schools gathering and that congregating setting. So it is advisable to go ahead and get the flu shot now, as well as the COVID vaccine if you're not currently vaccinated. >> Alter: And my understanding is it's extremely important to get the flu shot in a regular year, but it is even more important when we're in the pandemic, because it does put a strain on our hospitals in and of itself. So just want to really encourage

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folks, if you're doing messaging, to encourage people to get that flu shot as well as the booster shot for the vaccine. >> I agree. Thank you so much for bringing that up. >> Alter: For the second question, director Sturup? >> We are prepared to take a look at any assistance we can offer. That being said, as a public health department, we really want to focus our efforts on those populations that fall within the

safety net category that are either experiencing disparate outcomes due to covid, or live in a community with a lack of infrastructure. And so, you know, using that as a guiding principle, do we reach out to construction companies? Are we looking in the restaurant business? Are we looking at, you know, those type of industries that

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typically employ a larger number of folks that would fall within those categories? Then yes, it makes sense. But we're still trying to dissect all that it means, what the should have mean, or the strongly encouraged to, what's a directive. So generally, yes. Our goal would be to get as many shots in arms as possible. But to be mindful of the resources and make sure that at all costs that data would drive our strategy. >> Alter: So I think that makes a lot of sense in terms of, you know, doing the shots and a lot of the other things. I'm just wondering if there's any role for providing some information and guidance that would help folks to comply using other resources. It just seems like it is a tall order to ask -- I totally support it, but I think that it will be more effective if there

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is information provided to those businesses on how to go about this, and what resources are out there in the community for doing that. Some of that's obviously on the federal level, but to the extent that we can be providing that information, which is different than going to those businesses and doing a shot clinic, I would support us providing that. I do also love the idea of us taking this and then focusing in on construction or restaurants, or other areas that have the populations that we're trying to target in different ways as well. And it may be that in doing that we learn stuff that then we can share with a broader community about how to do this, or if there are things out there in the public health community about how to do this that can be packaged in some way to share with those businesses, I think that would be useful. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember tovo, are you with

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us with sound? >> Tovo: How about now? >> Mayor Adler: Yes. >> Tovo: Thank you. I really was just saying thank you for the presentation, for the information, for all the continued and consistent work that you're doing. I wanted to verify something I think I heard earlier about where infections are happening within schools. And unlike during some earlier phases of the pandemic where most of the transmission seemed to be happening in extracurriculars, especially sports, I believe I heard Dr. Walkes, you say that a lot of the transmission now is happening within classrooms, which makes sense, because before we didn't have lots of kids in classes, students in classes. I just want to make an observation that

in -- I was noting at one of the back to school nights the presence of fixed seats, which I had really hoped we were getting away from for academic purposes. I think there's a lot of really

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good research out there about how much the student and the learning environment changes when you don't have fixed seats in classrooms, because students can work in small groups, they can be more collaborative, they can interact in different ways that are pedagogically strong and important, and innovative. And so, you know, it -- now in this context, seeing the number of fixed seats, sometimes in really close proximity to one another, concerns me from a perspective of virus transmission. So, you know, I don't know if that's something that Austin public health has had conversations with our school districts about. You know, when you're in a fixed -- in fixed seats that are at some points, like, facing one another -- I mean, there's really no opportunity for distancing yourself any more than that structure permits, which is sometimes not -- -- so

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it's really an editorial comment and an observation, but also a question about the extent to which you're working with our school districts and our professionals about ways to distance, sometimes within an infrastructure that makes that challenging -- physical infrastructure that makes that challenging. >> Mhmm. >> Go ahead. >> I was just going to quickly say that I can check in with assistant director Donna. She has been leading the childcare and schools task force since last year, and interfacing with the school systems, providing updated guidance on safety practices, making sure that they have available resources. So I'll check in with her to see if there's been any discussion about fixed furniture and make sure that, you know, in our communications that we are giving the recommendation that however schools can change their

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environments to support social distancing would be key. >> Tovo: Thanks. That would be interesting to maybe have in a future session, a little bit of feedback on that. Thank you very much. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. I concur with my colleague mayor pro tem asking for just a little bit more information on folks that are dying, just so that we can help the community better understand those numbers. It looks to me like if 69%, the people that are not vaccinated are responsible for 77% of the mortalities, that means that 31% unvaccinated are responsible for 93% of the mortalities. That would make it 30 times more likely to die of this virus if you're not vaccinated than if you are. And I think that's an important

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number. Do we know if that 7% has a significant number of people with comorbidities? >> Yes. The case investigation, ongoing, showed that the majority of those individuals, almost all of them have comorbidities, so that's likely having an impact on their demise. >> Mayor Adler: That would then make it seem, then, that if you're vaccinated without comorbidities, you're even less than 1/30 the same chance of dying from the virus. Again, just more information for people that are trying to decide whether or not to get vaccinated. I appreciate that you're making it real easy to do. I was looking at the hospital admissions on the website by week. You present to us I think numbers over a six-month period

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of time. If you look at the website, not looking at actual numbers because they're not on there, but the averages with respect to -- the percentages with respect to race and ethnicity, it looks like over the last two months, the percentage of people that are admitted into hospitals that are hispanic, significantly lower than the six-month number that you presented. And that's a real good thing to see, I think, because of the activity and the real focus of aph and the county with respect to getting to those populations. And in the last month the number goes even lower than that in terms of what the admissions were in the hospital. In the last month it looks to be about 35.8% of hospital admissions, people with hispanic

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backgrounds. African American, the same kind of thing. Numbers lower the last two months than the last six months, but the numbers seem to be going up over the last four weeks in terms of admissions, so something obviously we need to watch. Can you speak for a second, Dr. Walkes, there used to be a certain correlation between hospital admissions and icu admissions. And now it looks like the admissions numbers are going down, but the icu and ventilator numbers are staying relatively plateaued. So even if we were to drop from stage five to stage four because hospital admissions have gone down, it may not catch the fact that we still have too many people in our icus, or too many people on ventilators. Is that something that is an anomaly that we're seeing, or is that something that is associated now with this delta variant? >> It's something that's

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associated with the progression of covid-19 in particular, the severity of the delta variant and we will continue to see the numbers of people in icus, on ventilators for some months now. It's going to take

about two to three months to clear out our icus. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you. And another reason to make sure everybody is vaccinated and masking. I want to close just with saying thanks to the number of employers that we're seeing and venues and the like that are requiring people to have testing before they're admitted. Often, frequently with a vaccine waiver to waive out of the testing requirement. You know, the law is perhaps confused in this state with respect to, you know, whose orders and laws control. I really appreciate the school districts stepping forward in the way that they have in our

[10:36:31 AM]

area, but businesses still, it seems, are allowed to do mandatory testing for their employees, or for their customers with a vaccine waiver. And I appreciate the ones that are stepping out and modeling that. I continue to think that it's something that we need to be taking a look at at the city and maybe the county too with respect to employees, and I appreciate the work that's going on now to study that. With that, judge, again, on behalf of the council, thank you for letting us join you in this joint meeting. I turn it back to you. >> Judge Brown: Thank you, mayor and council, and commissioners, and everybody that's working together on getting folks vaccinated. We're going to adjourn until 10:45 here at the commissioners court and I'll turn it over to you, mayor, to do the same. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. We're just going to adjourn the meeting. We're done for today, Tuesday, September 14th, 2021, 10:37 in

[10:37:33 AM]

the morning, our portion of this joint meeting is adjourned. Thank you, guys.