



San Diego Community College District  
Office of the Chancellor

April 7, 2021

## CORONAVIRUS/COVID-19: UPDATE #21

To: SDCCD Colleagues and Friends

From: Constance M. Carroll, Chancellor

I hope everyone had a restful, enjoyable, and safe Spring Break. This has been an intense year, with the many changes in predictions regarding the path of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as with the continuation of the online instructional and remote operational formats. Our faculty, administrators, and classified professionals have definitely mastered these modalities, and our students and the community are the beneficiaries of this effort to continue learning and work despite the impediments caused by COVID-19. The Board of Trustees and I are grateful for everyone's excellent work.

This message will cover a number of decisions and plans that are taking shape as the overall situation with this pandemic seems to be improving. However, as we move forward, it is important to emphasize that preparations for reopening the District and the Colleges do not rely upon a single action but an interconnected network of many actions, including both facilities upgrades and individual behaviors. Let me begin this update with good news provided by the County of San Diego.

### ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK

From County Communications: "The County will move into the Orange Tier of the state's COVID-19 prevention framework on Wednesday, April 7, further easing restrictions and allowing more indoor activities. The region can move into the Orange Tier of the Blueprint for a Safer Economy because its case rate has been under 6 cases per every 100,000 residents for the last two weeks, after moving to the Red Tier on March 17. The move comes after the state raised the case rate threshold for counties to meet after meeting a goal to vaccinate more than 4 million Californians who live in areas with the least healthy community conditions. Now, to qualify for the Orange Tier, a region must have a case rate between 2 and 5.9 case per every 100,000 residents. The County's case rate is now 5.8 cases per every 100,000 residents.

"We have made significant progress in lowering our local case rate," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County public health officer. "San Diegans should enjoy the benefits while continuing to take appropriate measures to protect themselves and others, especially washing their hands, wearing a mask, watching their distance and, when it's their turn, getting vaccinated."

Here are some of the activities now allowed under the Orange Tier:

**Restaurants:** Indoor seating increases to 50% capacity or 200 people maximum. The 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew is also ending.

**Gyms and Fitness Centers:** 25% capacity indoors; indoor pools can open.

**Wineries and Breweries:** 25% or 100 people indoors maximum

**Movie Theaters:** 50% or 200 people maximum.

**Museums, Zoos and Aquariums:** 50% capacity for indoor activities.

**Places of Worship:** 50% capacity indoor activities.

**Bars with no food service:** Open outdoors with modifications.

**All retail:** No capacity limits.

Many other restrictions will end April 15. You can see a [complete list here](#). Also, Governor Gavin Newsom announced today (Tuesday, April 6) that if current trends continue, the tier system California has been using will disappear June 15, allowing for the complete reopening of the state's economy."

The San Diego Community College District will continue to monitor these developments closely and will provide regular updates.

## COVID INCENTIVE PAY

We are pleased to announce we have reached agreement with the bargaining units and meet-and-confer employee groups to provide employees with a \$500 incentive payment to address the increased costs and burdens that employees have faced while working remotely as well as continuing to work onsite during the pandemic. All employees will receive the payment with their regular April paychecks (April 30 or May 10).

## FACILITIES

Many people have been raising questions about facilities, and so I thought I would provide a short update on that topic. All buildings throughout the District meet or exceed current COVID-19 guidelines. All buildings have had their filtration systems upgraded. When occupied, the air exchange in our buildings is always increased to promote a healthier environment. The Facilities Department has ensured that the cleaning of facilities is also in compliance with current Health Department guidelines. In addition, water systems have been and will continue to be tested and operationalized to prevent any outbreaks of legionella due to their being unused for long periods of time during building closures that can cause water supplies to become stagnant. Facilities personnel go through each building on a weekly basis, systematically running the water and flushing toilets to prevent the build-up of stagnant water. Most definitely, these precautions will be emphasized when the District and Colleges reopen either partially or totally. We are operating in a dynamic environment and as operational guidelines change, the District does its best to adapt to the new requirements to ensure the safety of our staff, faculty and students.

## PLANNING FOR THE FALL SEMESTER

I am sure that everyone has been following the upbeat predictions regarding the complete reopening of California in June and the return to in-person instruction for all educational institutions, K-12, community colleges, and universities in the fall. In my judgment, while

these are optimistic predictions, much more still needs to be known and experienced with this pandemic, especially if there are surges again. It would not be in the best interest of our students and employees to reopen completely only to close again following a surge. As a result, we are doing our best to adopt an incremental approach. As the fall semester draws near, we will have plans in place that both ensure the safety of our students and employees and advance our return to “normal” teaching formats and operations. As I mentioned in my previous message, our current plan is to expand the number of hybrid/on-campus sections, so that students will be able to complete their courses and programs in a manner that allows them the laboratory and hands-on experience that many science, allied health, and career/technical programs require. It will probably be the case that many lecture-format classes will remain online, at least temporarily, until it is safe to have larger numbers on campus. When they do return, we may need to use larger rooms for social distancing and offer smaller sections of the same courses for this purpose. In every case, public health protocols will be followed.

## FULL RETURN TO ONSITE WORK PLANNING

As mentioned earlier, the District has been proactively planning for a gradual increase of in-person instruction, student services, and work activities over the summer and fall as public health restrictions are lifted. Health and safety measures, such as upgrading air filtration on HVAC systems to meet or exceed public health recommendations, have been implemented across the District’s facilities. There are many factors impacting how quickly programs and activities will resume onsite. District staff will continue to work with County Public Health agencies to ensure that we are fully compliant with health and safety guidelines.

With input from the Academic Senates, Classified Senates, bargaining group representatives, meet-and-confer employee groups, and College and District leaders, the Human Resources Department has developed a COVID-19 Prevention Plan to guide the safe return of onsite activities throughout the District. Over the past year, many employees in essential instructional programs such as Nursing and the Fire Academies, facilities, police and security, and various administrative services have worked onsite safely. Observing strict compliance with public health guidelines, the District has been highly successful in developing and implementing protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among employees working onsite. The COVID Prevention Plan builds on these protocols to ensure that we can safely scale-up onsite activities towards a full return to normal operations. The final Plan will be reviewed by the District Governance Council, Chancellor’s Cabinet, and presented to the Board of Trustees at an upcoming meeting.

Resuming onsite activities will be a gradual process. Leaders at the Colleges and in the District Office are working together to prioritize instructional programs and services most difficult to conduct online and remotely, determine physical space requirements and protective equipment needed to return onsite, and develop plans.

As part of the return to onsite activities planning process, you will soon receive a short survey about vaccinations, return to onsite activities, and reopening the Colleges to the public. Your input is highly valued. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey.

The COVID-19 pandemic will continue to impact us in many ways going forward. The most important factor in our success with reopening the District to our students and communities will be our individual choices. If we continue to wear masks and face coverings around others, observe physical distancing guidelines, get vaccinated, and follow public health recommendations, we can all contribute to a safe return to in-person operations.

You can find a wide variety of COVID-19 related resources, including links to schedule a vaccination appointment, on the Human Resources website here:

<https://www.sdccd.edu/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources/risk-management/covid-employees.aspx>.

## COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

One of the most salient recent developments is the expansion of vaccination access, including the new vaccination site that our District has arranged at the Educational Cultural Complex (ECC) of the College of Continuing Education in conjunction with the County of San Diego. Here is a news clip about that.



New Vaccination Site at ECC

SDCCD – March 31, 2021

[Watch here](#)

The decline in COVID-19 infections and increasing vaccination rates are reasons for great optimism. Recent findings published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) suggest the vaccines currently available are effective at preventing illness from COVID-19, preventing fully vaccinated individuals from spreading the coronavirus, and are effective against new coronavirus strains that have emerged over the past several months. While this information is encouraging, our individual choices will determine how soon we can fully return to onsite instruction, student services, and work activities.

Next week, all people in California 16 years and older will be eligible to schedule an appointment to receive a COVID vaccination. If you have not already done so, we strongly encourage all employees to make an appointment and get vaccinated. Last month, the District reached agreements with the bargaining units and meet-and-confer employee groups to provide paid leave for vaccination appointments and related illnesses. Earlier this month, a new state law providing up to 80 hours of paid leave for specific COVID-related reasons, including vaccination, went into effect. With these protections in place, every employee can get vaccinated without losing pay or using their sick leave. All managers and supervisors are expected to support this effort and work with their staff to provide as much flexibility as possible to schedule and attend vaccination appointments.

## SDCCD COVID-19 CASE TRACKING

The District continues to track all COVID-19 cases. The most recent update follows.

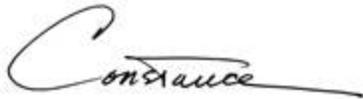
**San Diego Community College District  
COVID-19 Positive Case Report  
March 31, 2021**

	City College		Mesa College		Miramar College		*Continuing Education		DO DSC POA	District wide		Grand Total
	Stu	Empl	Stu	Empl	Stu	Empl	Stu	Empl	Empl	Stu	Empl	
September	0	0	21	0	4	0	0	1	1	25	2	27
October	0	5	0	2	0	2	0	2	1	0	12	12
November	4	2	4	0	4	3	1	0	3	13	8	21
December	35	4	47	1	15	0	5	1	3	102	9	111
January	50	5	18	5	24	5	3	9	19	95	43	138
February	25	3	33	4	27	1	4	1	2	89	11	100
March	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	5	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>415</b>

**IN CONCLUSION**

Mere words cannot express enough the appreciation that the Board of Trustees and I continue to have for the wonderful work our faculty, classified professionals, and administrators are doing through this extended pandemic. I personally appreciate your support, flexibility, and patience as we navigate these strange waters.

Stay well!



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