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DATE: June 15, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Sheryl Bratton, County Administrator

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Response Update

The purpose of this memo is to update the Board of Supervisors and the public on the activities and costs associated with the County's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As detailed below, the memo describes the Department of Health Services (DHS) COVID-19 Section, programs and activities implemented, FY 2020-21 funding and costs, and FY 2021-22 continued response.

Health Services' COVID-19 Response

DHS is leading the County's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through its COVID-19 Section, and the Vaccine Mission, the staff implemented comprehensive response strategies to mitigate the impact of the disease and support a safe reopening. These strategies include COVID testing; non-congregate sheltering for unhoused, at-risk individuals; Alternate Care Site to care for those who are COVID positive or waiting for results; vaccine administration; community education, outreach, and assistance; and data on cases and progress with mitigation strategies.

County staff continues to provide all epidemiological and data support to the County's COVID-19 Emergency Response, including: case investigation and tracking, cluster and outbreak analysis, maintenance of multiple data dashboards (reopening, equity, testing, vaccination, etc.), all data for public presentations and public information, among others. As of May 24, 2021, Sonoma County Lab (SCPHL) has tested 158,628 COVID specimens since testing began in March 2020. The County has established an equity-focused, in-house capacity testing for our most vulnerable residents and developed drive-through sites to serve close contacts of COVID-19 cases allowing them to be tested and receive results rapidly within 24-72 hours.

As part of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the Department enacted Enhanced COVID-19 Strategies to address the ongoing operational goals, community needs, communication of COVID related information and efforts, development of partnerships within the County and the designated use of fiscal resources all targeting the underserved communities within the County. In partnership with our community clinics and health partners, the Department led a coordinated response to

implement surveillance and contact testing strategies to mitigate the disease spread. Via the COVID-19 Urgent Response and Aid (CURA) project, families were reached with education and prevention information and provided emergency financial assistance.

The County has collaborated with community healthcare partners such as the Federally Qualified Health Centers, to establish and operate 12 vaccine sites that are geographically distributed throughout the County. As of May 24, 2021, Sonoma County healthcare providers have administered 532,933 vaccine doses to Sonoma County residents, and over 300,000 Sonoma County residents have been fully or partially vaccinated. In addition, the county has supported community based organizations with funding to do community outreach to coordinate events and reach those who need help with appointment registration, who are hesitant, or who need more information to make an informed decision about the vaccine.

Overall, the costs of the COVID-19 Response for fiscal year 2020-2021 are estimated based on actuals and projections at \$77.8 million. This represents \$7.5 million in savings from the original estimated amount of \$85.3 million. As the response has progressed, savings have been realized as costs are recorded due to the actual staffing level of the COVID Section was less than in the original plan and non-congregate shelters and contracted services costs were less than expected.

Table 1: FY2020-21 COVID-19 Response Costs Overview

No.	Summary of Cost Estimate by Major COVID-19 Activities	FY 20/21 Cost Estimate	FY 20/21 Revised Cost Estimate	Estimate to Revised Estimate
1	COVID-19 Emergency Response Activities	\$60,631,591	\$56,657,902	(\$3,872,165)
2	Enhanced COVID-19 Strategies	\$16,585,153	\$ 11,143,622	(\$5,441,531)
3	Vaccination Coordination Activities	\$8,126,088	\$9,921,917	\$1,795,829
	Total	\$85,342,832	\$77,824,964	(\$7,517,868)

*Revised cost estimate includes a mixture of actuals and projected cost

**For Column "FY 20/21 Cost Estimate" Row 1 and 2 are based on the 1/5/21 board item, while Row 3 Vaccination Coordination Activities is based on the 2/2/21 Board item

The Board of Supervisors has made a significant investment into the response of the pandemic from a variety of sources. In addition to programming FEMA, Corona Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding, and other state and federal grants, the Board set aside \$20 million for the COVID-19 Emergency from one-time discretionary available funds; and \$1.8 million for the Enhanced COVID-19 Strategies from Contingencies to support activities meant to stop the spread of the virus.

Enhanced FEMA funding, which moved from an anticipated 75% to 100% reimbursement, as well as cost savings mean that only a portion of the discretionary funding has been used to date as the County works to maximize use of outside funding sources first. Much of the FEMA funding anticipated has not yet been obligated, however, and so given the uncertainty over which expenses will actually be reimbursed as well as uncertainty over how long federal aid will

last in the coming year, staff recommend maintaining these funds in the COVID-19 Disaster Fund for the present.

Table 2: FY 2020-21 COVID-19 Response Expenditures by Funding Source and Date

COVID-19 Emergency Response Activities	FEMA 100%	CARES Act	Grants	County Funding	Total
Temporary COVID-19 Section within Public Health Division	571,769	11,376,063	3,734,396	488,781	16,171,009
Non-DHS staff from other County departments ¹	607,526	1,137,104	309,785	1,452,312	3,506,727
Disease Control and Public Health Lab	1,777,376	3,661,892	1,320,132	100,875	6,860,275
Alternate Care Site at Sonoma State University and Other Facility beginning in mid-July 2020	10,819,522	-	-	-	10,819,522
Sonoma State University non-congregate sheltering	426,344	-	-	-	426,344
Motels and Shelters - non-congregate sheltering	9,555,399	-	958,000	-	10,513,399
Sonoma County Fairgrounds non-congregate sheltering	2,452,106	-	-	-	2,452,106
Personal Protective Equipment	420,000	636,975	-	-	1,056,975
Sanitation Stations	1,700,001	613,333	-	-	2,313,334
Health Department Operation Center (DOC) through 8/31/20	\$2,639,735	-	-	-	2,639,735
Subtotal Lines 1 - 11:	30,969,778	17,425,367	6,322,313	2,041,968	56,759,426
Enhanced COVID-19 Strategies	-	6,187,966	4,086,270	869,386	11,143,622
Vaccination Coordination Activities	7,794,609	-	2,127,307	-	9,921,916
Grand Total Lines 1 - 13:	38,764,387	23,613,333	12,535,890	2,911,354	77,824,964

FY 2021-22 Continued COVID-19 Response

For FY 2021-22 COVID-19 Response, there is an assumption of a ramp down in full time employees and other costs associated with the COVID-19 activities given the decline of COVID-19 activity within the county. There are currently 328 extra help, time limited, or permanent full time employees within the COVID Section. By the end of FY 2021-22 there will be 2 FTE monitoring COVID as a sole responsibility. The Public Health Division will continue to monitor and respond to the COVID-19 Virus as a part of the division’s normal operations.

The non-congregate shelter and alternate cares sites are planned to continue through September 2021 when funding from FEMA is set to expire. As the population in these programs become vaccinated the costs are no longer FEMA reimbursable as the individuals are no longer at risk of getting and spreading the virus. This could affect the funding for these programs prior to the FEMA disaster declaration end date of September 30th. Alternate funding might need to be identified prior to September and if the shelter and care sites were decided to be continued past September. The Governor’s May Revise to the proposed State Budget does include \$150 million set aside for non-congregate shelters to continue operations past the FEMA reimbursable period. Specific allocations available to the County in the May Revise are unknown at this time and staff will monitor the State’s Budget approval for updates.

The FY 2021-22 COVID-19 Response is being added to the Recommended Budget with Supplemental Adjustments. The total expected costs for COVID in FY 2021-22 are \$45.1 million. Funding for the response has been projected at \$15 million from FEMA, \$13.5 million from grants, and \$16.5 million from other available sources. The County Administrator recommends that funding come from the \$96 million the County will receive from the American Rescue Plan.

Table 3: FY 2021-22 COVID-19 Response Expenditures by Funding Source and Date

COVID-19 Emergency Response Activities	FEMA 100%	Grant Funding	ARPA	Total
Temporary COVID-19 Section within Public Health Division	-	4,916,787	7,696,623	12,613,410
Non-DHS staff from other County departments ¹	-	729,987	1,793,080	2,523,067
Disease Control and Public Health Lab	-	1,465,686	2,757,528	4,223,214
Alternate Care Site (FEMA funding through 9/30/21)	2,722,564	-	-	2,722,564
Motels and Shelters - non-congregate sheltering (FEMA funding through 9/30/21)	5,696,044	-	-	5,696,044
Sonoma County Fairgrounds non-congregate sheltering (FEMA funding through 9/30/21)	828,991	-	-	828,991
Personal Protective Equipment	-	-	360,000	360,000
Sanitation Stations	-	-	2,433,333	2,433,333
Subtotal Lines 1 - 8:	9,247,599	7,112,460	15,040,564	31,400,623
Enhanced COVID-19 Strategies	-	4,893,460	852,926	5,746,386
Vaccination Coordination Activities (FEMA funding through 12/31/21)	5,839,318	1,567,713	595,443	8,002,474
Grand Total Lines 1 - 10:	15,086,917	13,573,633	16,488,933	45,149,483

Emergency Food Distribution Program

Through June 30, 2021, Sonoma County's Department of Emergency Management's COVID Emergency Food Task Force will have provided 1,664,222 meal/meal equivalents to residents in Sonoma County. Organizations supported are Council on Aging, Coastal Seniors, Petaluma Peoples Service Center, Sonoma Family Meal, Catholic Charities, Ceres Project, Food For Thought, Salvation Army, and Redwood Empire Food Bank.

The Emergency Food Task Force will continue through December distributing 88,420 meals a month. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is covering 100% of the costs for the food program estimated to go through September 30, 2021. Subsequently, switching to a month to month potential extension. \$900,000 is allocated for Food Task Force in the COVID budget for July-December 2021. This represents a gradual decrease for partners still participating. Projected meals provided will be 349,510. New needs have been assessed with each vendor to determine their support needs over the July-December periods.

It is projected that the total Emergency Food Distribution Program will provide 2,013,732 meal/meal equivalents to the community who are COVID insecure from March 2020 to December 2021 for a total of \$6,095,444. Funding for the food program is \$1.5 million of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), \$3.7 million from FEMA, and \$900,000 from County General Fund Contingencies.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program

The COVID pandemic has affected all aspects of life for the community in Sonoma County. Housing stability has been one aspect that posed a significant threat facing families and individuals. The County, State, and Federal Governments have allotted funding to establish and administer a rental assistance program over the past year. The Community Development Commission has been the lead agency for the County in executing the Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) assists low-income households with rental and utility assistance for past due payments that have accumulated due to the COVID-19 crisis. The goal of the program is to prevent low-income households from becoming homeless and providing assistance to promote housing stability. The Community Development Commission has and will continue to contract with Community Based Organizations to distribute the funds into the community.

During the April 6, 2021 Board Meeting, the Board authorized the receipt and use of \$32.2 million from the State Block Grant funds from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA 1). On September 1, 2020, the Board allocated \$2.5 million from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) for rental assistance. \$833,000 was also received from the CARES Act for the Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG). In total, the County has received \$35.6 million to help the families and individuals in the community with housing stability.

On May 7, 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration announced the allocation of the additional \$21.6 billion under the American Rescue Plan for Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA 2) – including \$2.5 billion targeted to the highest-need areas, where job loss and high market costs have made it especially difficult for low-income renters. The ERA 2 funds will continue to provide assistance until September 30, 2025. The County is set to receive an \$11.6 million allocation and \$5.7 million as a high-need area from the ERA 2 program. The CDC will bring an item to the Board with the program’s details and requesting approval for the receipt and use of these funds for rental assistance.

To date the Community Development Commission has distributed \$5.8 million to organizations, while \$47.2 million (including the \$17.3 million of ERA 2 which has not yet been programmed by the Board) remains to be distributed. Of this total, \$8.3 million is expected to be distributed prior to June 30, 2021. The remaining \$38.9 million will be distributed from FY 2021-22 through September 2025.

Table 4: Emergency Rental Assistance Program and Distributed Amounts

CDBG-CV			
Organization	Budget	Distributed	Remaining
COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF SONOMA COUNTY	384,212.59	363,881.52	20,331.07
FRIENDS IN SONOMA HELPING, INC	108,253.89	108,221.73	32.16
PETALUMA PEOPLE SERVICES	110,433.51	77,397.99	33,035.52
WEST COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES	284,427.01	284,427.01	-
Sub Total	887,327.00	833,928.25	53,398.75

CARES ACT Coronavirus Relief Fund			
Organization	Budget	Distributed	Remaining
LASC Housing Justice - CARES Act CRF	123,000.00	123,000.00	-
CAPSC Rental Assistance - CARES Act CRF	1,029,071.00	1,029,071.00	-
FISH Rental Assistance - CARES Act CRF	290,000.00	290,000.00	-
PPSC Rental Assistance - CARES Act CRF	620,000.00	620,000.00	-
WCCS Rental Assistance - CARES Act CRF	437,929.00	437,929.00	-
Sub Total	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00	-

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA 1)

Organization	Budget	Distributed	Remaining
Russian River Alliance	250,000.00	102,092.21	147,907.79
Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County	1,831,444.00	250,000.00	1,581,444.00
North Bay Organizing Project	10,000,000.00	500,000.00	9,500,000.00
Reach For Home	825,000.00	187,500.00	637,500.00
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa	697,950.00	-	697,950.00
La Luz Center	275,000.00	-	275,000.00
West County Community Services	4,678,520.00	450,000.00	4,228,520.00
California Parenting institute (DBA Child Parent Institute)	3,151,719.15	458,541.96	2,693,177.19
Face 2 Face	38,940.00	-	38,940.00
Petaluma People Services Center	5,203,750.00	480,576.16	4,723,173.84
Legal Aid	712,000.00	-	712,000.00
Other Contracts and Unallocated	4,561,894.85	-	4,561,894.85
Sub Total	32,226,218.00	2,428,710.33	29,797,507.67

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA 2)

Organization	Budget	Distributed	Remaining
Unallocated	17,332,239.80	-	17,332,239.80
Sub Total	17,332,239.80	-	17,332,239.80
	Budget	Distributed	Remaining
Grand Total	52,945,784.80	5,762,638.58	47,183,146.22

Business Grants and Assistance

Businesses in the County have been significantly impacted by the pandemic and health orders requiring reduced services or closures. In response, the County has created the Business Stabilization Grant and Environmental Health Pandemic Offset programs to aid businesses impacted. When these programs conclude, \$5.2 million will be sent out into the community as business relief.

On September 1, 2020, the Board delegated authority to the Economic Development Board to develop and administer a Sonoma County Business Stabilization Grant program in the amount of \$2.5 million from the CARES Act relief funds. The program provided grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$15,000 to local small businesses. The effort resulted in 542 grants awarded.

The Board set aside \$2.8 million from the Infrastructure Sinking Fund and directed staff to develop a strategy for an offset of permits and inspection fees collected by the Environmental Health Section. Staff presented the Environmental Health COVID Pandemic Offset Program on May 25, 2021 that will offset fees in total of \$2.7 million for food, body art, and recreational health businesses. The program is just beginning and disbursement is expected to occur in FY 2020-21 and potentially early in FY 2021-22.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 Pandemic has greatly impacted all aspects of life in the community during the past fifteen months and will continue for years to come. Through significant effort by the County, staff, community organizations, and the public, the spread of the virus has been mitigated and financial, housing, and food assistance has been disbursed to those in need. To date, approximately \$187 million from County, State, and Federal funding sources will be invested to address the pandemic and its effects. As a result of all these efforts, life is beginning to return to normal within the County. However there is still work to be done and the County's COVID Response will continue in FY2021-22 and beyond until the virus is no longer a threat and its effects are diminished.