



JOHN CRUIKSHANK, MAYOR
ERIC ALEGRIA, MAYOR PRO TEM
DAVID L. BRADLEY, COUNCILMEMBER
KEN DYDA, COUNCILMEMBER
BARBARA FERRARO, COUNCILMEMBER

October 6, 2020

Via Email

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kathryn Barger
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Suite 869
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Reopening Indoor Operations in Businesses, Schools and Places of Worship

Dear Governor Newsom, Chair Barger and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes urges you to reassess state and county reopening guidelines so that more businesses, more classrooms and places of worship can operate indoors in a manner that is safe and responsible.

Los Angeles County is the most populated county in the United States, with 10.17 million residents and 88 cities with varying COVID-19 infection rates. Applying the same reopening guidelines to all of its jurisdictions unfairly burdens sectors that are ready to reopen as safely as possible.

To date, Rancho Palos Verdes has seen only 316 confirmed cases of COVID-19, or 0.75% of the City's population. Although L.A. County's adjusted case rate falls in the most restrictive tier in the state's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, the positivity rate falls in the moderate tier. But because the guidelines keep counties in the stricter tier, L.A. County's restaurants, gyms, places of worship and other sectors must still operate outdoors only, even if they are located in a community with a relatively lower infection

rate. Almost seven months into this public health emergency, even with partial reopenings, our small businesses continue to struggle and face great uncertainty.

L.A. County has opened the waiver process for in-person instruction for grades TK-2, but the program grants waivers to schools based on their percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, not on community case and positivity rates.

Much of the discussion around reopening has focused on the economy and education, but our houses of worship, too, have felt the impacts of pandemic-related closures. These are vital spaces that play an important role in the emotional well-being of our communities and the welfare of those in need, especially when so many are struggling with job loss, isolation, depression, anxiety and other hardships in this time of crisis. Like other sectors, houses of worship should be afforded the opportunity to reopen indoor services in a manner that is safe and responsible.

As we continue on the road to recovery, we urge you to reevaluate the reopening process to factor in the on-the-ground realities of the spread of this virus in L.A. County's diverse communities.

Sincerely,



John Cruikshank
Mayor

cc: Janice Hahn, L.A. County Supervisor, 4th District
Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director, L.A. County Department of Public Health
Sandra Shewry, Acting Director, California Department of Public Health
Ben Allen, Senator, 26th State Senate District
Al Muratsuchi, Assembly Member, 66th Assembly District
Jeff Kiernan, League of California Cities
Marcel Rodarte, California Contract Cities Association
Dr. Alex Cherniss, Superintendent, Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District
Eileen Hupp, President and CEO, Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Rancho Palos Verdes City Council
Ara Mihranian, City Manager
Karina Bañales, Deputy City Manager