



COVID-19 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Medical Sheltering Sites

Background: As part of Los Angeles County's humanitarian mission, the County's Emergency Operations Center is partnering with hotels, motels, and other providers to provide 2,000 medical shelter beds where persons who are COVID-19 positive or symptomatic can isolate safely or quarantine themselves per the County's Health Officer Order. Medical sheltering sites serve multiple populations, including persons experiencing homelessness. To date, six locations are operating with approximately 900 beds available. For daily updates on medical sheltering, visit: <https://covid19.lacounty.gov/incident-updates>. The following document provides responses to commonly asked questions.

What is the difference between the County's medical sheltering sites and Project Roomkey sites?

Medical sheltering sites serve people experiencing homelessness and anyone who cannot safely isolate or quarantine in their own home. These sites isolate and quarantine symptomatic and COVID positive people. The goal is to add 2,000 rooms, using RVs, hotels and motels where the following people can isolate and quarantine:

- COVID positive and need to isolate and shelter in place.
- Symptomatic and need to be isolated waiting for test results.
- People experiencing homelessness who are not symptomatic but have been exposed to COVID-positive individuals.

Project Roomkey is specifically for people experiencing homelessness. This new network of hotel and motel sites shelter and safely isolate asymptomatic and highly vulnerable people experiencing homelessness, to prevent their exposure to coronavirus. This project is funded by the state and FEMA, with an ultimate goal of 15,000 rooms across Los Angeles.

Who decides who gets medically sheltered at the LA County sites?

Referrals to these sites are made by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH). Walk-ups or individuals who self-identify themselves as needing medical sheltering are not accepted.

Who is eligible to be medically sheltered at the LA County sites?

The only clients allowed to stay here are:

- Clients who have tested positive for COVID-19; or
- Clients who show symptoms of COVID-19 (for example have a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) and/or are waiting for their test results.

County medical sheltering sites will accept individuals from the local community that are referred through DPH. The socio-economic status of individuals needing medical sheltering is not a determining factor in terms of who gets placed.

How can a member of the public get tested for COVID-19?

Los Angeles County has drive-up mobile testing sites for the public. Follow these steps if you are interested in being tested:

- Register on the screening website, coronavirus.lacity.org/Testing.
- Answer basic questions including name, date of birth, address, and whether you are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, coughing, and difficulty breathing.
- The website (in real time) determines your testing eligibility and will identify the nearest testing site.
- If you are eligible, you will receive a registration number by email. You will need to bring this registration number to the test site.

If you do not have access to the Internet or a computer, dial 2-1-1 for help making an appointment. If you do not have access to a vehicle, you can still be tested, as long as you have an appointment. Testing sites can accommodate pedestrians. There are, however, NO walk-up appointments. For a full list of locations and answers to questions about testing, go to covid19.lacounty.gov.

Is there a cost to the clients?

No, stays at the medical sheltering sites are free.

Who pays for the rooms?

The County contracts with hotel and motel operators to book rooms, negotiates group rates, and develops a contract unique to each site. The County is funding the medical sheltering program and will submit a reimbursement request to FEMA's Public Assistance Program for up to 75 percent of the cost.

How are clients transported here?

The Department of Health Services' Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is handling

transportation of clients to the medical sheltering sites and to hospitals when critical needs arise.

What is the intake process like?

Each client is first interviewed by medical personnel onsite before they are escorted to their room. Medical personnel are managing this process directly onsite.

Who is staffing the medical sheltering sites?

The Department of Health Services (DHS) Housing for Health, the Department of Public Health (DPH), and in partnership with other third party providers, will provide medical care onsite. County staff will provide management and staff which will support onsite logistics. Other wraparound services that are provided include meal delivery, sanitation, laundry and mental health support.

How are these hotels and motels being secured during their use as a medical sheltering sites

The County has contracted with private security firms to provide 24/7 security, ensuring the health and safety of the clients and staff.

Can clients staying at medical sheltering sites come and go? Are they able to leave the hotel?

No, clients assigned to medical sheltering must remain in quarantine or must self-isolate. Clients in the facility have either tested positive for COVID-19 or are awaiting test results and currently exhibiting symptoms -- but their symptoms are still mild enough to not merit hospitalization.

The main goal of COVID-19 medical shelters is to provide a safe place where clients can both recover from symptoms and also isolate themselves so that they do not spread the coronavirus to others. All clients will not be allowed to leave the area until after their isolation or quarantine period ends.

What about client discharge and post-care?

Onsite medical personnel will monitor each client's case and approve discharge when they are no longer at-risk of being contagious to other people. Support service providers will be onsite to help ensure people experiencing homelessness have access to housing accommodations once they are discharged.

How long will these locations serve as medical sheltering sites?

Leases and contract terms are case by case, so it depends on the contract that the County has negotiated with the owner.

What is the medical sheltering capacity at these sites?

They range from 70-290 rooms available for medical sheltering.

Are medical sheltering clients from Dockweiler RV Park being sent to other sites?

Yes, clients from the Dockweiler medical shelter have been transferred. These clients have a higher level of medical needs, but do not meet the threshold for hospitalization. Moving these clients will provide a more stable environment.

Why do medical sheltering sites have to be in these specific communities?

Self-isolation and self-quarantine are our most effective strategies in slowing the spread of this virus and protecting our families and our communities. Residents of LA County need and deserve a safe space where they can recover from COVID-19 while receiving medical care. The medical sheltering sites offer residents an opportunity to heal safely from this virus while remaining in close proximity to their families and communities.

The County has, and continues to, survey hundreds of potential locations for additional medical shelters. The sites need to meet several immediate needs of the County, including their geographic location, their facility footprint, and their amenities.

Are more medical sheltering sites opening?

Yes, the County of Los Angeles is establishing additional medical sheltering beds for people who either have been exposed to COVID-19 or who health authorities have determined need to self-isolate or self-quarantine but cannot do so in their own home. Approximately 900 medical sheltering beds are now available for people in need. If you are a hotel or motel operator interested in partnering with the County and willing to provide your facility as a COVID-19 medical shelter, please visit our website, doingbusiness.lacounty.gov. The County has created this website to quickly identify and engage interested hotel/motel operators in the COVID-19 response.