

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good evening, Los Angeles, and thank you again for joining me here at Los Angeles City Hall. I know that these have been extremely tough days. And they are full of sadness, they're full of fear. But I hope that today you found a moment of joy, of smiling, of laughter, of connection, a reminder of the most important thing in the midst of this, to connect with one another and to know that we are stronger when we are all together.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But there is no sugar-coating the news. These headlines are tough. Today we learned that one in ten Americans have lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 crisis to date. It is a devastating number. And it is more than a number. These are people. Those watching right now who have now lost their livelihood, who are scared about the future and not sure what tomorrow holds. But through these hard times I want you to know that we are here to support you. We see you, we know what is happening. And we are doing everything we can to make sure whether it is at the national level, state level or here locally. we are here to get through this together.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Mayors around the country have been monitoring data. It helps us understand how our communities are responding to the changes and the moves around our cities as we work together hand in hand to address this crisis. And we have seen a significant drop in movement. That's because of you. And I thank you for that. It's a sign that folks are abiding by the stay-at-home order. And that is exactly what we need to see.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But based on a sample of movement data, we know that Angelenos are still visiting certain places of recreation and many folks are visiting places of worship. In fact, while it's good news to see a 69% reduction, still 31 % of the sample are visiting churches and temples. Going into the holiday weekend I want to remind you how important it is to stay put. That it is okay to participate, in fact, we encourage you to connect with services online, to listen to a sermon, to hear from religious leaders. But we need to make sure that we do that from a distance. That is how we will keep deaths down. These moments that we commemorate in this Holy Week and in the weeks ahead, we need to make sure that we are not adding to stories of tragedy, but that we are marking them and saving as many people as possible.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So let's get to the numbers. Today in Los Angeles County, there were 425 new cases, bringing the total to 7,955 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19. This is just a 6percent increase since yesterday. And that is the smallest increase we have seen since we have been tracking statistics. It is good news and the fourth day in a row of single digit increases. But remember, every day we are getting more new cases than we got in the first three weeks. So hold both of those numbers, that our work is producing a slower rate but that we still have some of the toughest days ahead of us.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In the city, there were 227 new cases, bringing the total in the city of Los Angeles to 3,587. Also, a 7 percent increase. And we learned today tragically of 25 new deaths. Bringing the number total of deaths to 223. Those 25 deaths are the third highest number we have seen. And it was a 13 percent increase since yesterday. Our numbers of deaths are still doubling every four days. And our hearts go out to those families who have lost in 25 different

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families, who are mourning the loss of the loved one for the first time and the other 198 who are still being mourning during this crisis. I know we get numb to these numbers but let us not be numb to the families and the people behind them.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Each one who can never fill that hole but we will remember them and we will do everything to try to ensure that there are fewer numbers in the days ahead. Hospitals continue to save lives, and I thank all of our hospital workers that are doing such amazing work to treat those that are sick and prepare for more that will come. The more lives we can save, the more we prepare for the peak. So let me share our hospital bed numbers with you. Across the county, our general emergency hospitals have 1,641 available beds, including 268 ICU beds, and an inventory of 971 available ventilators.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Testing we know too is the other weapon that's absolutely critical in our ability to not just flatten the curve, but eventually to see that curve bend down. And three weeks ago, when there were very few tests available, we acted on our own to provide test to first responders and to medical personnel. And then we expended about quickly to residents, administered by our fire and our personnel departments of the City of L.A. And now together with county workers as well. We opened testing earlier this week to anyone in the county that has symptoms.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Today we set a new record testing more than 4,000 people in our city and county. These were scheduled through our website and of course, there is more testing done directly through providers. But we blew past our goal through those drive-thru and walk-up centers of testing 30,000 people. We hit that one day ahead of schedule, and here is even better news: We are aiming to double that number to 60,000 by the end of next week. Even if slots are filled for a given day, I want to remind folks who are viewing that many open up because we always have a few people that don't show up. So check it out. If you can't get into one date, you will be pushed to another date. And you go to Coronavirus.LACity.org/testing to see if you qualify for a test and you get yourself an appointment.

MAYOR GARCETTI: The reality is some folks cannot go out, though, to get tested. So we need to go to them. Yesterday following the news of COVID-related deaths at the Motion Picture and Television Fund Nursing Home, our LAFD testing team deployed to that facility where they tested more than 100 seniors and employees right away and another 60 today. We have a responsibility to keep the most vulnerable who live amongst us, our seniors, our grandparents and parents safe. So tonight I have a good announcement to make on that realm, that beginning now until this crisis ends, the city will deploy a Rapid Mobile Test Team that will go to these facilities that are housing the elderly, chronically ill or debilitated, nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities and respiratory hospitals.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And if one of these facilities has asymptomatic resident or sees the start of an outbreak, we will send a testing team there as soon as possible to stop the spread and to help save lives. And we've set up a new website to help facilities get the testing that they need. So let me share that with you. That is Coronavirus.LACity.org/assistedliving. Everyone has a right to be protected in this crisis. And they should not have to fight for that right. I also spoke

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last night about that disproportionate impact that this, we are seeing across the country of deaths on African-American community. And I am proud to say that we have doubled the capacity at our Crenshaw Christian Center testing facility in South Los Angeles. It is not enough to identify a problem. We have to take swift action to save lives, and I hope this is an example across the country of making sure that no community that faces tougher health indicators will die because we did not react to the numbers that we saw. Thank you to the county for sharing that and thank you to my testing team for ramping that up so quickly.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Today workers at 30 fast-food restaurants across California walked off the job to demand that their employers provide proper health and safety protections. And I want to remind employers that they have a responsibility to protect their workers. My worker protection ordinance requires that all employers provide face coverings for their employees or reimburse them for them, the opportunity to wash their hands or sanitize every 30 minutes, clean fully stocked restrooms, physical distancing measure between employees and anyone else in the establishment and had sanitizer at key touch points.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Additionally all customers who enter restaurants, markets and many other businesses, must wear a face covering. And this is not negotiable. This is a matter of people's fundamental right to be safe at work. I'd loved hearing everybody thank every worker that is out there. Whether they are working in a fast-food establishment or at a grocery store, in a hospital or responding to a 911 call. But let's make sure those are not just words. Let's protect those people so they don't get sick and so that they do not die.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Driving the City Hall each morning, I can see that Angelenos really are taking to heart the facial protection order. Thank you for doing that. But one last reminder that the worker protection order goes into effect officially this evening at midnight. So face coverings will be mandatory whenever you go to shop or work, at a restaurant, store, market, hotel, laundromat or pharmacy that is open, whenever you ride or drive a taxi or rideshare, and if you are working on a construction site or with a delivery service.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We know that during this time of crisis many individuals and families are in need of services. And support isn't just coming from the city. Your county is here for you too. And I want to thank our board of supervisors and each of the county agencies that's stepping forward to help. My wife, her first job when I convinced her to move from the Midwest here to Los Angeles was at the Department of Public Social Services. And those employees do work long before COVID-19 to help address poverty and provide opportunity for our residents. So if you are struggling to put food on the table right now, the CalFresh Program is there through DPSS for individuals and families.

MAYOR GARCETTI: If you are having a hard time making meets, making your ends meet, there is a general relief cash assistance fund for single adults. There is a CalWORKS Cash Assistance Program for families. And the Cash Assistance Program for immigrants that covers aged, blind or disabled legal noncitizens ineligible for supplemental security income, as well as refugee cash assistance for refugees, those who have found asylum here as well as trafficking, and other serious crime victims. Health coverage benefits have never been more important as

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well. And this department can help you make sure that you access or enroll for Medi-Cal during this critical time.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So do not wait till the last minute to access these benefits or to find out if you are eligible for them. Please tonight, if you need help, go to [DPSS.lacounty.gov](https://dpss.lacounty.gov) or call 866-613-3777 to ensure that you have the coverage and support you need. The county also provides critical delivery services for seniors, dependent adults and disabled Angelenos. And if you need that sort of help, you can call 888-863-7411 to schedule free delivery of groceries, household items and vital necessities. And I want to thank everybody who is doing this, whether it is neighborhood councils, whether it is some of the food supplemental organizations that help to deliver and our food banks as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And you can receive through the county program up to four deliveries per month and I encourage all eligible Angelenos to sign up and take advantage of this service. And with this crisis hitting our elderly and our disabled communities especially hard, the Department of Public Social Services also offers in-home support of services so that you can stay safer at home. Anyone in need of these services can apply right now for them by calling the In Home Support of Services Application Line at 888-944-4477.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I have made it very clear from the beginning of this emergency that this is a local emergency, but that we are not shutting down critical government services. Your City Government is up and running with water and power, street-cleaning, law enforcement transportation, all the basics remain and will remain covered. One of those core functions is picking up the trash. I've always said we need to get back to the basics, and I am proud about sanitation workers who are doing a day in and day out. And I want to thank all the city workers who are showing up and fulfilling their duty to serve our city.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And that work could not be more important because after three weeks of staying safer at home, a lot of folks are seeing more waste and recyclables that are piling up. So tonight I am announcing a new effort for the 750,000 single-family homes and many of our apartments in our city that are serviced by our Sanitation Department. We will temporarily offer free extra collection on those black and blue bins on your regularly scheduled collection days.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So here is our works. If you have extra bags of trash or recycling that do not fit in your bins, we ask that you meet the truck outside when it arrives, so you can hear the truck long before it gets there, our drivers will stay in their vehicles and customers will have to abide by the proper physical distancing. But once your bin is emptied, you can refill it while the team is there and they will take that in as well. Simply put, where doubling down on picking up your trash. And of course this is free. You won't be charged one cent more for this. I know is not a perfect solution, but it is the creativity that we are trying to add in a very difficult moment to make sure as more people are eating at home, staying at home, that we can lighten the waste load that you have, while protecting the health and safety of our workforce.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So this is free of charge, it starts on Monday and lasts until the safer-at-home order is lifted. And if you have any questions, please call our Sanitation Department

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hotline 24 hours at 1-800-773-2489 or during work hours call 311. Throughout this crisis we are constantly evaluating better ways to serve Angelenos while keeping you safe and our city services going. So in order to continue providing excellent care for our city's animals and protect our staff, we are consolidating our animal service care centers and beginning this Monday, April 13th the department will close its West Valley and North Central Animal Services Care Centers. The animals housed there will be moved to one of the four that remain open. That is the East Valley, the Harbor, Chesterfield Square and West Los Angeles Animal Service Centers.

MAYOR GARCETTI: This is possible thanks to an outpouring of love from all of you for these animals. Last month you helped us place 307 animals in foster care. Found homes for another 919 and placed 752 with rescue partners. Simply put, these numbers are off the chart. And there's never been a better time to foster or to adopt, so nobody should be lonely. And if you want to have a great friend join you, we are encouraging you and we are available for adoptions, to go and adopt. Animal services has a long list of folks wishing to foster, but you can jump that line if you are willing to adopt. So please visit [LAanimalservices.com/adopt](https://laanimalservices.com/adopt) or call 888-452-7281 and have the animal ID number ready from our website, and we will make sure that we guide you through the application over the phone, schedule an in-person pick-up appointment between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at one of the open centers. It would be a great way to get through this and to help an animal in need.

MAYOR GARCETTI: During this briefings we really highlight the work of the Mayor's Fund of Los Angeles for Los Angeles which has been a central hub for our city's response. We are collecting and distributing donations to fill critical needs, whether that is meals for newly isolated seniors, whether that's shelter for domestic violence victims, childcare for parents who are working on the front line in hospitals or direct assistance, cash assistance to Angelenos who are experiencing financial catastrophe.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Make no mistake. As we share the news, good news about new contributions, that does not mean that we are covered or that we have all the donations we need. It is actually the opposite. Let me give you one example of how we are putting these funds to use, and why they are so desperately needed. On Thursday our city's Family Source Community Centers began distributing \$1.2 million in grocery gift cards. In just four days, they were gone. Our supply was completely exhausted and we helped 10,000 Angelenos get groceries that they badly needed.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And let me to thank the staff at our Family Source Centers who are working in this crisis. They rose to the occasion to manage a completely new program and to get this help out the door as quickly as possible. It's a tremendous example of the city and non-profit workers who are going the extra mile to help our fellow Angelenos. That is good news but it is also a reminder of how much need there is out there. And tonight we received a generous gift to help us with some of our most important work.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We've all been following stories about domestic violence during this crisis. And most of us are safer at home during this pandemic. But for folks who live in a

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dangerous environment domestically, this can be a dangerous time. LAPD has reported an increase in calls and the Los Angeles Housing Authority has determined that approximately 90 victims have been turned away from LA's domestic violence shelters since this crisis began. That is unacceptable for all of us.

MAYOR GARCETTI: These shelters are full, to because of increased demand, because they are intended to be temporary and Los Angeles's shelters normally house victims and their children for 30 to 45 days. During that time they do incredible work. They work with specially trained staff to address the trauma of these victims, stabilize them and either return them home, move them to alternate housing with family or friends or place them in transitional housing. But because of this pandemic, victims right now are frozen there instead of being able to move through those shelters. And as a consequence of this public health emergency, there is no movement to different living situations.

MAYOR GARCETTI: The unfortunate fact is that one in four American women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. And make no mistake, men are victims too. In Los Angeles County women who have been victims of domestic violence make up the largest subpopulation of our homeless population on Skid Row. One study said that 91 percent of women on Skid Row with the survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence. So we need a surge in shelter capacity. Two weeks ago the Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles quickly responded with funds to pay for hotel rooms and meal stipends for 80 families that were suffering from domestic violence for 15 days. An example of how funds are going quickly to fill needs, but on Monday we will need additional funds to continue sheltering 53 of those families, not to mention new funding to deal with the increased cases.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Which is why I'm so pleased tonight to announce a donation and I thanked Rihanna once already, but she stepped up a second time. But Rihanna's Clara Lionel Foundation and a new donor who's been helping us, Jack Dorsey, together are cofounding a 4.2 million-dollar grant to provide ten weeks of support including shelter, meals, and counseling for individuals and their children who are suffering from domestic violence. Their generous support will cover housing and food for 90 domestic violence victims per week with an additional 90 victims every week thereafter for 10 weeks.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And all I can say is thank you. You are truly angels helping this city of angels. Jack, Rihanna, you are helping save lives in more than one way, keeping people healthy and making sure that they are safe. So if you can afford it, please, every dollar counts. Go to [MayorsfundLA.org](https://www.mayorsfundLA.org) and chip in whatever you can. Crisis or not, that kind of generosity is part of who we are and so is gratitude. When we see neighbors who are helping neighbors and folks answer phone calls as volunteers, when they get to a food bank and help our seniors be fed, people have gone above and beyond to lift up people in need.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And I'm so proud to be the mayor of this city, so proud to just be a resident of LA alongside you. There are so many essential workers on the frontlines in this crisis and right now all of us are doing our part to protect public health. But no one is doing more than our healthcare workers, those doctors, nurses, medical technicians, janitors in our hospitals, those

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folks that are on the frontlines, treating patients, risking their own lives to save others. And I want to thank them all. I mentioned WET Design, Mark Fuller is the CEO, he called me today and he's donating some facial shields to help those workers and some of our grocery workers.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But our medical professionals have just been extraordinary and we've seen a movement around the country and around the world, to thank them, and we want to express our thanks tonight in Los Angeles. So tonight you will see City Hall hopefully on a TV screen; don't come in person, that lit up blue as well as a way of us saying thank you to our national healthcare work force. This is part of this national campaign that's been inspired by a global movement. And you also are going to be the Convention Center, LAX, LA Live, the Coliseum, the Music Center, Staple Center, Banc of California Stadium, and so much more joining in tonight.

MAYOR GARCETTI: There will be literally blue everywhere. And I know many of you have already started doing this, but if you want to do your part at 8:00 tonight open up a window or open up your door and applaud these workers, applaud so loud that they'll hear them coming back from a shift or going to an overnight shift. They'll hear them in a hospital or a clinic someplace close by or in their apartments or homes as they've come to rest their weary feet. One voice united as a city and a community, we say thank you. You are the ones who are saving our lives. That's the same thing that we can do every single day when we commit to being safe, so stay healthy, stay safe and stay at home. Thank you, Los Angeles and with that, I'll be happy to answer questions.

OPERATOR: And our first question comes from the line of Elex Michaelson from Fox 11 News. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Elex.

ELEX MICHAELSON: Hi, Mayor, congratulations on what seems like some good news and some progress when it comes to the numbers here in Los Angeles and also in California with March. What is your thinking? Walk us through your thinking of when you'll think, now it's time we can start going back on some of this stuff, start easing some of those restrictions? Because so many people that are so eager for that day to come. And secondly, just listening to your voice, it sounds like, are you a little under the weather? Are you doing okay?

MAYOR GARCETTI: No, I am fine, thank you. No, I am all good. My daughter has a non-COVID-19 cough, but besides that we are all doing well. So a couple of things, and now that you said that, I have to clear my throat, of course. I think you've hit the nail on the head, Elex, it's really tough because what I've tried to communicate to Angelenos is a mix of kind of your high school sports coach and Debbie Downer every night. I want you to feel encouraged but I want to be honest about the bad news too because I think the bad news steels us for what is ahead. And while it's true we have a better number the last four days, single-digit rate of increase, it's still increasing, and the base is bigger. So even any increase off the bigger base means hundreds of people where we used to say it was just a few or a few dozen people. That's

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really a tough thing to face knowing more people are going to be dying in these coming days, more tragedy.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Second, we see even in some of the places that did really well early on, I was just reading about Singapore, we are seeing maybe in Wuhan again, in South Korea, that places that kind of had not only bent the curve down but flattened it, they now are seeing second waves. It's still not clear, in some places there's evidence that people who have gone through this once and who we would think would be immune because of the antibodies, are getting a second positive. So we really have to follow the medicine, we really have to follow the doctors, we really have to follow the data. And not just as we've always done and we want to follow our hearts. This is a tough, tough challenge because as I said from the beginning, when it feels wrong it's the right time to do something, by the time that feels right, it's too late or when it feels right, it may be too early, I'd add to that.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So the idea that we will suddenly emerge; I don't want that to happen if that means a second wave of deaths or the marvelous work that we've seen here in Los Angeles by being ahead of many of these actions. In California, by being the first state to have a Stay at Home order that somehow we would see that reversed. And I believe I shared last night with you the story of 1918 in San Francisco where they did a really good job with the influenza epidemic. They declared victory, came out and had a sudden and severe onslaught a second time that resulted in lot of deaths.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So we are talking to a lot of folks, but until we have tools that maybe didn't exist a hundred years ago, but the tools of being able to test people with the blood tests, figuring out the workplace, environment rules, something I'm talking to mayors around the country and doctors too as well as, of course, our county Public Health, we are going to think really hard about that moment. We still, we know have some weeks before we'd even contemplate on having this order lifted. So with that in mind, we hope in the next few days to have a better idea of that and we are watching around the world. Those places that went first had success, but are now seeing some backtracking of that. What lessons can we learn from that? Thanks, Elex, next question please.

OPERATOR: And our next question comes from the line of Claudia Peschiutta from KNX News Radio, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Claudia.

CLAUDIA PESCHIUTTA: Hi, Eric. I wanted to ask, the LA Times did a story today about the difficulties of people on the street trying to get face masks and wash them and so I wanted to ask you about now that the order is due to take effect. One of the concerns that was raised in the story is that, you know, some people may not be allowed to go into laundromats and other essential businesses without masks, which would make it virtually impossible for some homeless people to wash their masks if they can get them or to get food or whatever other items they might need. And also, I'm wondering what steps the city might take and all along with county public health to track any outbreaks among homeless people on the street? We know that there are some

institutional investigations involving shelters place. What can be done to track something like this outright?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yeah, thank you for both questions. From the beginning we've been very concerned in the street, and we've moved LAHSA, the Homeless Services Authority has moved towards a way from just educating people on the street to now doing wellness checks. As I announced yesterday, we now have testing through clinics that are unhoused, Angelenos regularly go to with doctors who work with people who are experiencing homelessness and we saw hundreds of those go out just today alone. And the masks or the facial coverings, we have 35,000 that we have ordered, that we can distribute on the streets, some of that has started as well already. And in terms of the sanitation, on top of the 300-plus wash stations and, as I said yesterday, I wasn't happy that those were being serviced every week. We talked to the purveyor of those, the provider of those, excuse me, and now those are going to be filled and checked daily, not just by them, but also by our sanitation workers, so a double check on that to make sure that people can wash those things, can wash their hands, can be clean as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of outbreaks, you remember we had per capita more COVID-19 cases among people who are housed than people who are unhoused. That said, absolutely, the Public Health direction we had, whether it's in existing shelters or the new congregate shelters or even as we move people into hotel rooms and motel rooms are, when we know where people are, we can track them and it can be safer. So for instance, in Granada Hills, I know it was on the news, there were somebody who had tested positive in a shelter there for COVID-19. The system worked exactly as it is supposed to. If they'd been out on the street, we wouldn't have known, that could've spread, it could've been a cluster, but instead they are immediately quarantined, others were tested, the place was cleaned and folks were able to be restored there.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So we've never envisioned a world in which anybody who is housed or unhoused won't get COVID-19. It's about how quickly we can respond, and thanks to the country, for instance, at the Granada Hills shelter, here at Skid Row, at one private mission, they immediately have full-time people who are there to monitor and to make sure that as with jails, as with other congregate settings, that that doesn't become a cluster. So so far so good, knock on wood and we are getting those masks out. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Our next question comes from the line of Jory Rand from ABC 7, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey Jory.

JORY RAND: Hey, Mr. Mayor, thank you very much for taking our calls again. I really appreciate you're mentioning that cheer that's been going up every night. It's pretty special to see that happen in downtown in different neighborhoods so, thanks for addressing that. I do want to ask you about, I know you addressed that blood-testing, the antibody testing a bit yesterday. We were at a private drive-up testing facility today where they were charging people about a \$100 to get that antibody test. Is there any oversight of these private facilities? Is there anything people should be wary of when going to one of these sites? And, if someone does show

positive for the antibodies that they at some point had the virus, is that still added to the count of those testing positive for the city or the county? And also, just want to ask you real quickly about the rapid mobile test team that you mention earlier that would show up at a place, a facility where there is an outbreak or a patient who is showing symptoms or tests positive, would the city or county be involved in the next step? Would it be evacuating that facility? How would the city and LA County be involved and comes next after a positive test is found at a facility like this? Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: You bet, thank you, Jory, and thanks for your words too about our Public Health and health professionals. Let me start with the second question. So the guidance when this happens is, of course, in any of these congregated settings, our marvelous Department of Public Health has staff standing by and that are just focused on congregate settings. So they can bring somebody, it's not necessary to evacuate folks. Obviously, if it was a huge explosion, that's something to consider. But it is really getting rid of the folks who are there with that and putting them in quarantine. This has been part of the hotel and motel program that the county has, it isn't just for folks that are living on the streets who are experiencing homelessness who don't yet have symptoms. It's also for folks, whether you're housed or unhoused who do have symptoms and have no place else to go, who've been confirmed as positive. So that those can be isolated, those folks can be prevented from spreading further. And then, there's usually a Public Health professional, as I mentioned, at Granada Hills Rec Center who'll then stay there ensuring that everybody else is okay.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of some of the places we've done this, I mentioned the Motion Picture Home, the Jewish Home for the Aging out in the Valley had some more recent, had some positives, and we've--it's not exactly a concierge service, but working with places that have medical professionals, we're able to get these kits. This is some of them are through the partnership with UPS and Everlywell that I mentioned. And we can get them free transportation there, they get them, they are medical professionals, and this team would immediately be able to help them, make sure that they are taken and get them out of there that day to be processed in a lab, so it's a quick process. And in terms of the availability, those hotel rooms and motel rooms that are available right now, there is more capacity than people in them, that's where people would go.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Secondly, in terms of the blood tests, I am glad you raised this. There is no way for us to regulate the private entities that do this, and there are many private providers that are doing testing, both virology and serology. The virology tests are the right test to know if you have it right now and you are infectious, whether you have symptoms or not. Obviously, we don't have enough tests yet to do that with people who are asymptomatic. But that would tell you whether you are sick and contagious right now. The serology or blood test will tell you whether you--they can tell you whether you have it or whether you have had it, but they are not as dependable for whether you are contagious.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So in other words, you may not, you may be contagious, you may have the novel coronavirus in you, but you don't have the antibodies yet, that would be something that the blood test would catch. So as such, it's not a dependable test to know whether or not you can

infect others. It's a good test to know whether you've had it. In terms of the price of this, I hope that our national government will exercise leadership to make this free for everybody, and if we can't make it free for everybody, make it free for those whose employers won't pay for it. I think for us to get people back to work, back to school, etcetera, we're going to need, you know, school nurses, employers, others to have these blood tests and at least see whether people have successfully had this and survived it.

MAYOR GARCETTI: With the caveat that I mentioned, we don't know the data yet, you can get it a second time possibly, even if you had it once before. So we have to wait for that science, these blood are useful. They are most useful in seeing what the incidence is out there. Has there been 2 percent of the population, 5 percent of the population, 10 percent of the population who's had blood tests? So that's where we focus paying for some blood tests ourselves because we need to know that information. In the meantime, we are putting all of our money into the virology test that can tell us if you are infectious right now because that's what we need to know, to isolate you and to stop the spread. I hope that explained both those, thanks so much, next question.

OPERATOR: Our next question comes from the line of Steve Gregory from KFI News, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good evening, Steve.

STEVE GREGORY: Hey, Eric, good evening. Quick question about some interesting stats had had come out of Dr. Ferrer the other day about the rate of cases in the African-American community, and there were a concern about that, and it was just proportionally high. I am wondering if you've got any kind of a plan to do any kind of aggressive testing, any kind of a program that might target those communities and give them some help in that respect. The other question I have has to do about homeless encampments now. We are getting a lot of feedback from listeners that some of these areas that have encampments, people are getting attacked, approached, and still panhandling, that kind of thing. They are worried about the social distancing that's not being adhered to by that community, LAPD is involved and apparently someone from Councilman John Lee's office had told these individuals that basically the city has to be hands-off, the police has to be hands-off, and they can't really do much about it, and we're wondering if you can comment. Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure, let me start with that. I've always been very careful to say, "Look, we've got crime. People that live on the streets and people who live in homes." And nobody's status in terms of whether you are housed or you are unhoused, will protect you from criminal behavior. So anybody who thinks--and there's always these rumors--and I've said it to chief, the chief said it to every single officer. We will go after crime wherever we can and wherever we see it, and nobody is immune from that simply because they are housed or unhoused. On the flip side, it's very important to remember that, you know, not everybody who is homeless is somebody who has a mental health issue, a substance abuse issue and/or who is a criminal.

MAYOR GARCETTI: That in each one of these, when we do plenty of polling on this, we see plenty of surveys on this, this is a minority of the people that are out there. But where there are those incidents, please do call LAPD, 1-877-ASK-LAPD, or if there something that is happening, a crime in progress, call 911, and there is no sort of immunity to that at all. We can't be all places all the time, but whenever there is violent crime, property crime, those things. Right now, we're seeing a drop in crime during this, a pretty dramatic one. We have resources available. This is not a public safety emergency where we have to restore order. So we do have those resources and we can use them, so please do contact either your local station, your local division, talk to your senior lead officer or just call that hotline.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of the African-American community, I mentioned this a little bit in my comments, but let me go all of it deeper. Yes, it was not enough, I said, to identify this problem, which we see in Chicago, Michigan, where sometimes our statistic was 9 percent of the county population, 17 percent of the initial data we had in terms of deaths were in the African-American community. Really three reasons, and I highlighted two of these yesterday. One is that we've had disproportionate health limitations in the African-American community, the impact of years of racism, the impact of poverty. So many of the underlying indicators that can cause somebody when they get the coronavirus to be more likely to die, disproportionately exists in those communities of color, and low-income communities as well. I bet if we did the same thing for poorer people, wealthier people are going to survive this with the same symptoms more than folks that are poor.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Second, I shared with you part of the things from the LMU poll which we'll be sharing some more about yesterday, I mean, sorry, tomorrow. I know some folks asked about that and tomorrow we hope to be able to share quite a bit of that robust data with you or over the weekend. We saw that of all different ethnic groups that African-Americans had the lowest percentage, that we're extremely worried that they thought that they would get COVID-19, it was 35 or 36 percent at the time, versus about 50 percent on average.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So I said a very loud and clear message. This affects everybody. Don't think that it won't affect you because you're young. Don't think that it won't affect you because of where you live. It is universal. And third, we have also in that same poll, it's very interesting, African-Americans were less likely to have lost their job or their hours. And that's a reflection, I think, how many African-Americans work in these critical professions that are on the line, in government and other places, whether it's, you know, your postal delivery person, whether is a city worker, whether it's somebody who works in a hospital or drives a bus.

MAYOR GARCETTI: African-Americans are more likely to be in dangerous work setting right now because they are well-represented in government jobs. And we thank them, and that's why we have an obligation to make sure that we don't just highlight this, but that we do something about it. So yes, as I mentioned in my remarks, we doubled down in the testing center that was closest to the largest population of African-Americans in the city. That's run out of the Crenshaw Christian Center, and we doubled the capacity in a matter of one or two days so that the testing there, I think, more tests are going through there than anywhere else because I want to make sure that the statistics isn't one that lingers here, and that we don't just give lip service to

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saying this is bad. But we actually put on action into saving lives, making sure that all the lives that out there matters equally. Thank you.

REPORTER: Thank you, Eric.

OPERATOR: And next question comes from James Preston Allen from RL News Port of Los Angeles. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, James. How are you?

JAMES PRESTON: Mr. Mayor, how are you doing?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good.

JAMES PRESTON: I wanted to ask you something about the business community.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes.

JAMES PRESTON: Throughout the city of Los Angeles, we have multiple property-based business improvement districts. And I am wondering whether or not you have elicited their help in helping to alleviate the difficulties that all of the small businesses are going through with the closure or partial closures of the restaurants, bars, and whatnot. Each of these property-based business improvement districts are authorized by the city of Los Angeles, and I am wondering if you've ask them to participate in relief programs for rent relief for their tenants or for any other help that they might provide to back up what your good efforts that the city is doing to help support small business.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes. Thank you for the question. We absolutely have been in contact with the business community and business improvement districts. They've helped whether it's in Hollywood, the Hollywood entertainment district going above and beyond to help us with our sanitization efforts on everything from, you know, pedestrian crossing light buttons, to looking at street cleanliness, to making sure that we do everything we can to keep our public spaces less likely to spread the COVID-19. That's one thing they've done too, absolutely. A number of them have stepped up again. This is--business improvement district is a self-tax of the same businesses that are suffering right now. So I know many of them have looked back at what they could do to return some of that money, help out businesses.

MAYOR GARCETTI: It's both, sometimes property owners and sometimes it's a business improvement district of the businesses, not the property owners. They are two different kinds. So it's much tougher for these ones who are already hanging on or some of them have gone under to use their own money, obviously, that doesn't exit. In terms of rent relief, no. We haven't reached out specifically to that 'cause usually the bid's budgets are quite small compared to what the need would be, I think, across the bid, but it gets to a good point that I've said many times on this, but I'll say one more time. Our national government, if we're giving assistance, for instance, to the banks, unlike what happened in 2008, need to give relief to the mortgage

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holders, these landowners that are the landlords of many of our small business and they in turn need to give help to our small businesses.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I believe the same thing should happen for rent forgiveness for our residential tenants as well, but if you look at the numbers, there is no way a business improvement district or even the city of LA would come close to but a small fraction before we would be bankrupt. This has to come from the big packages that are coming out of Washington D.C. We would be held liable but they can make that mandate since they regulate the banks and I think that's the right place to do it. Thanks for the question, James. Next question.

OPERATOR: The next question comes from the line of Erick Hines from CBS News Service. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Erick. How are you? Go ahead.

OPERATOR: I'm sorry. If you could one zero again, please.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I think you have to press 1-0 one more time.

OPERATOR: There you go. The line is open, Mr. Hines.

ERICK: Mr. Mayor, can hear me?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes. I can hear you great.

ERICK: Okay, thank you. I just wondering if you had a number of the volunteer medical workers who have signed up through the portal, and also, what kind of work they are doing currently? If they're going to be part of that mobile corona virus testing unit? Any other detail on that program.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yeah. Just got briefed on this today. I don't know what the full number is, I'll see if I can get it to you by the end of this. It was 3,750- something a few days ago. It might be well north of that. Plus, of course, there's the California Medical Corps that the governor put forward that had over 100,000 people signed up already. We've now started going through that list together with partners who need this to relieve our testing centers, to help us out at the convention center where we're setting up hospital beds.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So we anticipate that when that gets going in the next week or so, that there will be folks from Medical Corps that help us in the testing centers, any spillover places for standing up new beds, including perhaps helping at St. Vincent's when that opens up. So we know that there is a shortage of medical personnel right now. We have a wonderful database but it does require some background checks, it requires a few things that we are speeding up as quickly as possible. It's not quite enough to say, "Hey, I'm here," when people's medical care is on the line. You have to go through a couple more hoops. But we do anticipate putting the first

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of those folks to work this coming week. And I'll try to get you an overall number by the end of the press conference. Thanks. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Last English question comes from the line of Elizabeth Chou from LA Daily News.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Liz.

OPERATOR: Please go ahead. One moment, please.

ELIZABETH CHOU: Okay. So I have some questions, I know that already answered some potentially about the shelter--

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure.

ELIZABETH CHOU: --in Granada Hills.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yep.

ELIZABETH CHOU: Okay, so my first questions is, what is the purpose of the trailers parked outside the Granada Hills shelter. Are they for the employees, as I've heard? Our workers? The other question I have is, are there concerns about the air filtration system at the Granada Hills shelter and has that been brought up with the staff? And the other question I have is, I think you have actually mentioned this idea yourself of commandeering hotels. Are you thinking about revisiting that idea considering maybe some of this, what's happened at the shelter? And I guess I wanted just to tack on the question about what you are you regarding what people go out after being at motels and hotels?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Okay.

ELIZABETH CHOU: Thanks.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Great. Thanks Liz. So in Granada Hills, no, trailers are there available if people need to isolate quickly. In these cases, we're able to, I think right now, put people pretty quickly into hotel and motel rooms and that's what was done in this case. As I said, there's more capacity than patients for that right now, but we expect that to quickly ramp up, which is why we need more and more hotel rooms.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of air filtration systems, no. That's not been brought to my attention. We have Public Health there, so we'll take any guidance from them, but we don't expect the need to have air filtration systems. I mean, anyplace, we're not putting any special air-conditioning in. People have their temperature taken before they go in there. It's safer than the street and when anybody does exhibit symptoms like we found there, the test is given. If they're positive, they are taken out of there. The place is cleaned and reset. So if the systems is

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working exactly like it's supposed to, so that people don't die on the streets, don't spread on the street and it spreads from the streets to everybody else as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of the more hotel rooms, we can't have enough of them, and we can't have enough of them quickly enough. In terms of my powers, I've said I have the power to commandeer them, but to be clear, the charter says, we must pay for them to. So this has always been a funding issue. When I said over two years ago, we need a FEMA-like respond to our homelessness crisis, I begged the State and Federal Government to bring those sorts of resources in so we could house people quickly. They took this crisis and I'm very thankful to FEMA, saying finally that we can reimburse for these hotel and motel rooms before somebody is sick, before the disaster hits them. In the past, it's only after an earthquake and people are homeless or after a disaster or fire that then FEMA will permit that. That is a remarkable change and one that gives us a real hope in taking many more people off the streets.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But as I announced last night, I've put kind of a czar on this, Jon Vein, who is the president of our Convention and Tourism Commission, so he knows many of those hotels folks. He is talking to them and trying to get even more deals as quickly as possible with the state and the county. And then, finally in terms of the exits, I've said it almost every night, but I'll say it again, shame on all of us if we collectively let all these folks that we're going take off the street simply go back to the street. We know not a hundred percent of them will go into housing, but if we can get hundreds or even thousands more than we would have because we've brought them into some safe place where they've articulated in some many cases they feel safer, they have a meal, where they're starting to feel more human, they can take showers, they can be clean.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We need to have an army of folks and the funding for it. If the federal government says, "Good luck, goodbye," if the state says, "Way to go, here's a few dollars," we will have lost the most important opportunity. And you will hear me talk about this with my fellow mayors up and down the state, that we really want to partner with the federal government. This is an amazing opportunity. Maybe some of these hotels and motels want to sell to us permanently and we need to turn that in housing. But we need staffing for them as well. You can't just put people in a setting and say, "Homelessness is over."

MAYOR GARCETTI: People who have needs, from job training, to childcare, to mental health and substance abuse issues, you have to actually get them those services. And I've always said the solution the homelessness might piss liberals and conservatives off. Liberals because you can finally move people off the street if you had enough beds, and conservatives because you have to pay for it up front. But if you do that, you don't have to pay for this crisis every single year, and so I hope this is not a crisis that we will let go to waste, and I certainly am going to lean in very hard on this throughout this crisis and when we declare victory on COVID-19 to make sure those folks are brought home permanently. Thanks, Liz. Last question, I think. In Spanish or next--

OPERATOR: We do have a follow-up question from the line of Steve Gregory from KFI News.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: Okay.

OPERATOR: Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Go ahead, Steve.

STEVE GREGORY: Hi. Eric, real quickly, I know want to get to Spanish.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Don't worry.

STEVE GREGORY: Do you have an update on the crisis response team and how many contacts you made with the nonessential businesses still open. How is that working out? Are you seeing the--

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yeah.

STEVE GREGORY: --(unintelligible) in that area? Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We've had a great, great--it's over 1,500 contacts, it might be over well 2,000. The last briefing I had was over 1,500 contacts. Visits now close to a thousand, and very small percentage, 92 percent of them comply. The 8 percent that then we need a more of touch with, almost all of them comply, and then it's really been just a few dozen where we've had to either bring LAPD and/or bring some sort of prosecution. The latest number I had was eight charges, but I do not know what the latest ones are.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Let me see if I can find that out for you as an answer the next questions as well. Okay? But it's been working really well, and as I said with all this, people asked this about masks, people asked this about our outreach folks. We really depend on people self-enforcement. We are here to supplement that, and to send a message that we will come after you. So I did get the number, by the way, on the medical volunteers for that question. It was 4,296 people who have now signed up. I'll take the next question. Thanks.

OPERATOR: And our only Spanish question comes from the line of Abel Alamillo from Telemundo 52. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hola, Abel.

ABEL ALAMILLO: Hi, Mayor. How are you?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good. How are you doing?

ABEL ALAMILLO: Good, thanks. So just wondering, though, in regard to the day-to-day COVID-19 cases. We saw that they declined considerably in the last 24 hours in LA County. Do you credit the safer at home orders from that decline?

MAYOR GARCETTI: There's no question in my mind that this is your victory out there. That this decline in the increase, and by the way, we can see still larger numbers each day, but the decline in the increase is the result of people staying at home. So this to me, that we've had four days in a row with single-digit increases, that's not good. We are not going to be good until we have negative increase or a decrease. But that said, in the meantime, it shows that what we are doing is working. It's not time to let up. It is not time to declare victory. It's not time to come out. It's time to double down. It's time to stay home on Easter. It's time to not go out, and as often as you can, you know, stay at home instead of going to the market. If one person has to go, send one person, not the family. It's evidence to me that this is working. I'll say that as well in Spanish.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Estos números son increíbles y son el resultado de sus acciones y gracias a la gente de Los Ángeles porque la reducción en el aumento de casos es el resultado de su visión, de sus acciones y también es un reflejo del alma de Los Ángeles. Segundo, es importante no declarar una victoria porque tenemos más y más casos cada día. El aumento es reducido pero los casos en total están creciendo, y necesitamos tener días donde no hay un aumento. Esta será una victoria, pero ahora es un tiempo para doblar su trabajo, doblar su presencia en su casa y es importante también por toda la gente tomar estas órdenes en su corazón, en sus acciones en una manera seria porque nosotros podemos salvar vidas de nuestras familias, de nuestra comunidad donde continuaremos con esto. En unas semanas o unos meses nosotros podemos declarar una victoria, pero estas son buenas noticias. Con esto, I'm going to speak a little bit Spanish now too, thank you everybody in English. Strength and love to you all, and thank you for tuning in.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Muy buenas tardes a la gente de Los Ángeles, y gracias por estar aquí esta noche. Sé que estos son tiempos muy difíciles, pero quiero que sepan que yo y su ciudad estamos aquí para ayudarle. Primero, la información que usted necesita. Hoy hubieron 425 nuevos casos en el condado de Los Ángeles, llegando a un total de 7,955. Este es el aumento más bajo que hemos visto pero aun agregamos cientos de casos nuevos. Esto significa que sus acciones están ayudando, pero todavía tenemos días difíciles por delante.

MAYOR GARCETTI: En la ciudad de Los Ángeles tuvimos 227 nuevos casos, llegando a un total de 3,587, y tristemente hoy fallecieron 25 personas más en el condado, llegando a un total de 223. Nuestro amor está con todas las familias de los fallecidos. En nuestros hospitales tenemos 1,641 camas disponibles. Entre ellas, 268 están en las unidades de cuidados intensivos, y tenemos 971 respiradores disponibles también. Hoy hicimos pruebas de detección para 4,300 personas en nuestra ciudad. En total 33,000 personas se han hecho la prueba en nuestros centros, y estamos en camino para doblar ese número a 60,000 la semana que viene.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Si tiene síntomas de coronavirus visita la página coronavirus.LACity.org/testing para hacer una prueba de detección ahora. Pero también sabemos que hay personas quienes necesitan hacerse una prueba pero no pueden salir, entonces esta noche estoy anunciando que la ciudad lanzará un equipo móvil de pruebas de detección para instalaciones alojando a las personas mayores con enfermedades crónicas o comunidades de vida asistida. Lanzamos una página para ayudar a estos lugares a acceder a estos servicios, coronavirus.LACity.org/assistedlivingtesting.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Mi orden para la protección de trabajadores entra en vigor hoy a la medianoche, la cual indica que los empleadores deben ofrecer coberturas faciales para sus empleados, la oportunidad de lavarse las manos cada media hora, sanitarios limpios y medidas para implementar la sana distancia. Además todos quienes entren en un restaurante, hotel, mercado, taxi o un sitio de obra en construcción o servicio de entrega deben llevar una cobertura facial. También les recuerdo que los servicios municipales siguen en operación. Esta noche estoy anunciando que el Departamento de Servicios Sanitarios ofrecerá recolección adicional de contenedores gratis temporalmente para los hogares individuales y pequeños apartamentos. Si tienes un bolsa de basura o reciclaje adicional, espera afuera para recibir el camión cuando llega, manteniendo siempre la sana distancia, espera que vacíen el contenedor y después llénalo de nuevo con la segunda bolsa y el camión se lo llevará.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Este servicio es gratis para residentes. Empieza el lunes hasta que acabemos la orden más protegidos en casa. Si tienen preguntas, llama al 311. Además para continuar a proteger a nuestros animales y personal, empezando el lunes 13 de abril, cerraremos nuestros centros de servicios para cuidado de animales en el Valle Oeste y Centro Norte. Van a mover los animales a uno de los otros centros que quedan abiertos, Valle Este, Harvard, Chesterfield Square y el oeste de Los Ángeles. Si quieres adoptar una mascota, visita la página LAanimalservices.com/adopt o llama al 800-88-452-73-81. También quisiera ofrecer progreso sobre nuestros Mayor's Fund de Los Ángeles. El jueves, nuestros centros de recursos familiares distribuyeron 1.2 millones de dólares en tarjetas de regalo para supermercados a 10,000 familias que las necesitan. Si pueden donar para ofrecer más a estas familias, por favor visita mayorsfundla.org para contribuir. Tenemos que hacer todo lo posible para apoyar a nuestros héroes y podemos empezar con decirles gracias. Esta noche estaremos iluminado el ayuntamiento de color azul para expresar nuestro agradecimiento para ellos. También participarán el centro de convenciones, el aeropuerto, LA Live, el coliseo, el centro músico, el centro Staples y el estadio de Bank of California y ustedes también pueden participar con abrir sus ventanas o pararse afuera y aplaudir esta noche a las 8:00. Con una voz y una acción expresamos quienes somos en Los Ángeles. Quédense en buena salud, quédense protegidos y quédense en casa. Fuerza y amor, Los Ángeles. Thank all so much. We'll see you tomorrow.