

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good evening, Los Angeles. Last night I spoke about how this new coronavirus loves division. It exploits division. But what has made me so proud as mayor of this city is the way that we have stayed unified in the most trying and testing of times. It is our unity that has saved lives. It is our unity that has made progress. It is our unity that gives us better number than we would otherwise have. And I want to thank you because that unity has not come from a mayor or from city hall. Hasn't come from elected officials. It has come from everyday citizens, Angelenos who know that the best way we can care for each other is by doing just that: Caring for each other, by taking individual actions that can ensure that this coronavirus stops its spread, and it is that spirit that will carry us into the next days and weeks and months ahead. So thank you for that.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Our overarching goal remains a safer Los Angeles, full-stop. For people who stay at home, for those who are at risk of dying, for those who need to work in these critical days and for those who will return to work in months ahead. And we won't ever ignore people suffering. While we will make decisions to save lives first and foremost always, guided by science. We also know how difficult this has been. Economically, psychologically and spiritually, how much we miss each other, our loved ones, how we want to hold one another, how we want to be together.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And knowing that that suffering is going on guides me and my decisions every single day, even as I make the tough calls about what can open or what needs to be closed. I know the human cost of this. But I also know that taking steps the wrong way forward will be bad for our health and for our economy. It will kill more people and will shut everything down again. That is why these days are so important, why our actions have to be so thoughtful, and why we have to not make political decisions or just ones from our gut, but ones that are based in the advice that we are hearing and the indicators that we can measure, the science and medicine provides us because we know that while numbers get better, the threat of this coronavirus is as dangerous today as it is the first day it arrived here in Los Angeles. So thank you again for all that you are doing.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And I am going to close tonight with a few important thoughts about what is guiding me as I make decisions in these days ahead with my fellow leaders across this county, state and country. But first, let me begin as I always do with the data, the numbers you need to know. Today the county reported 1,638 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases, the largest number that we have seen. This brings the total to 27,815. But as a percentage, it's a six percent increase, not the largest we've seen. This increase could be as much about our increased test capacity as spread. More tests equal more diagnosed cases. Not necessarily quicker spread.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We also know that these numbers come to us unevenly. Some days, especially right after the weekend or over the weekend, they are lower, midweek, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday it's often the highest numbers. That is why we average the seven days of a week. And based on that metric, our average over the past seven days has been about 1,000 new cases, 1,002, to be exact, over this past week. In the city we had confirmed 943 new cases today, bringing our total in the city of Los Angeles to 13,468. That represents an eight percent increase since yesterday. Again, that is a higher percentage increase but it also could be the

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

higher number of tests that we are doing in the city of LA as we have opened those tests up to people without symptoms as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And today one metric that doesn't change, that does not lie, the deaths that we have to announce and the worst part of this evening was 58 fallen Angelenos who we lost or learned that we had lost in the last 24 hours. This brings the total of our loved ones that we have lost in this fight to 1,313, a five percent increase since yesterday. We also average this out over seven days, and by that measure, we've had about 45 people die or that we find out have died each 24-hour period of the last week. And our hearts break every single time. I don't even know what number address this is that I have given to you each night I have come before you. But I never want those numbers to overwhelm us or to desensitize us to families that are suffering and loved ones that we have lost.

MAYOR GARCETTI: These are big alarming numbers, but what we are witnessing is as much a reflection of detection, our scaled testing network as it is spread. We simply have more information and more information is good. It is good for us as we make decisions, it is good for us to know who people are who might not show symptoms but can spread this disease. So it is a double-edged sword. It may make us realize and sober us up about how tough the days are ahead and how constant this disease is in our lives and our city. It also encourages us about the work that we are doing to prevent lives from being lost as a result. And those numbers would be much, much higher if we hadn't taken the actions that we did, if you hadn't taken the actions that you are each day of staying home, of social distancing, of washing our hands, of wearing a mask, of using your head to make sure that we all are frontline responders against this disease.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And thank you through your actions for helping us keep our hospital still below capacity. It's the most important measure we have. We saw in Northern Italy, we've seen in New York hospitals come up to the point of their capacity and sometimes beyond. We have seen bodies in refrigerated units, we have seen decisions made in hallways about who lives and who dies, but here in Los Angeles, thank God, we haven't seen that yet. And I hope that we never do through our continued work. And the numbers don't lie here either. In our general emergency hospitals we have 1,281 beds that are available today, including 1,055 acute care beds of which 226 are ICU beds, and an inventory of 1,331 available ventilators.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We had 84 new admissions in our hospitals over the last 24 hours for COVID-19 and these numbers show a more stable number of hospitalized admissions. But remember, those cases overall remain high. And I just want to remind everybody, if you have a non-COVID emergency, if you feel a pain in your chest, if you think you might be having a heart attack, a family member needs to see a doctor for an underlying health condition, you can and you should seek medical health, help. We don't want people avoiding hospitals in the midst of this. We don't want them dying unnecessarily because of fear of COVID-19 in the hospitals. I have seen it firsthand how well our hospitals are keeping patients with COVID-19 away from other parts of the hospital and you need to look after your health.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Don't let COVID-19 kill us because of secondary conditions or other conditions because of our fear. Now, I hope everybody knows by now in LA County anyone can

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

get a test, whether you are showing symptoms or not. And you can sign up at a place I have said probably a thousand times in these briefings, coronavirus.lacity.org/testing. Or you can call during business hours 213-978-1028 or just call 311 after 5:00 p.m. There are 34 testing locations across the county, one close to you. That has always been our goal to make sure you don't have to drive across town, that you can find something convenient, and today we have the capacity to test a whopping 18,500 people.

MAYOR GARCETTI: By the end of today we will have busted through testing more than 200,000 people since we stood up these centers, and remember, you can get tests through your providers and other places as well while this is the bulk of the tests, together we think we've probably tested more than 250,000 people in the county. And starting tomorrow we are extending hours, as I mentioned, but I want to remind you, at all of our testing sites to 5:00 p.m. to make it more convenient for you and to help with additional capacity.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And one last reminder, the number tomorrow goes from 34 testing centers to 36 testing centers as we have open up in Northridge and Baldwin Hill Malls, a new drive-thru facility in each of those locations to give people even more places to go close to where you are. You know, everywhere we look in this crisis, we see far too many of our neighbors, of our family members and friends and loved ones hurting. Whether it is people struggling to pay the rent, folks who are suffering from domestic violence, workers, small business owners but we also have seen tremendous generosity, Angelenos who are stepping up to help, to give their time, their resources, their love to one another. And here at city hall our job, together with our board of supervisors and other city halls across this county is to marshal those volunteers into a united force, whether it is working at a food bank, whether it is in a new homeless shelter, whether it is folks who are visiting seniors to do wellness checks.

MAYOR GARCETTI: This assistance in the midst of an emergency means everything. And tonight, along with our City Attorney, Mike Feuer, I am very proud to announce a new initiative. It is called LA Represents. It is an unprecedented pro bono, that means for free, initiative to provide legal services to Los Angeles residents who are facing hardships caused by COVID-19. LA Represents is a coalition of our top law firms, bar associations and attorneys who are volunteering their services free of charge to the rest of us. Help vulnerable renters, help survivors of domestic violence and low-income families and workers with everything from employment issues to debt and bankruptcy challenges because people are finding themselves in some of the most pressing and painful moments of their lives.

MAYOR GARCETTI: These are complex situations and we don't always all understand the law, those of us who are not lawyers. Having a lawyer and an advocate by your side can make all the difference between a positive outcome or negative one. And on top of that work with individuals, LA Represents starting a new support system for small businesses that have been devastated by this pandemic, led by the extraordinary team at Bet Tzedek Legal Services. This is absolutely vital for small businesses to get back on their feet. Small businesses are the backbone of our economy. They are the mainstay of our main streets. They too often lack effective representation, and they right now may need sound legal advice to navigate new workplace rules

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

or to renegotiate commercial leases to apply for government loans that are available and figure out how to best comply with our emergency health and safety orders.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In a city that is built on the belief that everyone counts and that everybody deserves a shot, to every entrepreneur who has tried to stand up a business and now is trying to keep it afloat, LA Represents to them and to everyday Angelenos who need a little more help that we are here to help with your struggles. Anyone unsure how to make ends meet, anyone worried about being left behind in this crisis, we see you, we hear you and we are here to help you. And beyond Bet Tzedek, let me thank a few other partners who helped us kick this off that pursue every day and perform the work of justice for vulnerable and marginalized communities every day. The Legal Aid Foundation, Inner City Law Center, Public Council, Asian-Americans Advancing Justice and Neighborhood Legal Services. All extraordinary groups that every day long before COVID-19 were helping average Angelenos navigate legal issues.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And we are grateful to so many law firms who have joined us as well. Too many to name here tonight. But let me give you special thanks to LA Represents' talented leadership team of Jessie Kornburg, Eileen Decker, Diego Cartagena, Katherine Rizner and our legal team here. I want to thank Jeff Milman from my team who has headed this up as well, as well the city attorney's office who has put this together. For those who want to learn more and who are interested in joining this cause, please find out that information always in the same homepage coronavirus.lacity.org/larepresents. And indeed we do here in LA.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Today is also Giving Tuesday. This is a local and a global response to COVID-19 and to those nonprofit volunteer groups that are stepping up to help as here locally, around this country and around the world to navigate this crisis, to help those in need. That spirit of generosity has been on full display from the first moments of this crisis. And every day we learn of more individuals and families and companies and organizations who are doing their part. Companies like NBC Universal, which donated thousands of hospital items from their supply like surgical masks and gloves, hospital gowns, scrubs and shoe covers for medical workers. Companies like John Paul Mitchell Systems, which provided 16,000 gloves and 16,000 bottles of hand sanitizer to help us protect city employees. Thank you. Like Ring Inc., the home security company that so many of us are familiar with whose CEO, Jamie Siminoff personally dropped off a donation of 100,000 masks today at our City's Emergency Operations Center. Thank you, Jamie.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And organizations like Waves for Water, a humanitarian aid nonprofit that collaborated with the local startup Dine One-One to launch the Help the Helpers Campaign, an initiative that has activated 19 local restaurants here in LA to prepare and deliver more than 1,300 meals to frontline workers and people like Verónica Sánchez Soto, who is a McDonald's franchise owner in downtown LA who has twice donated breakfast for the first responders working at the Emergency Operation Center and handed out coupons for free meals for them to use later. And to everybody who has donated to the Mayor's Fund that's already helped thousands of families, given out millions of dollar in direct aid, and you can always visit and every donation counts at MayorsFundLA.org.

MAYOR GARCETTI: This is the best of who we are right now. I know is the toughest moments we have ever faced, but it demonstrates who we are, our mettle, our character, our determination, our ganas, in Spanish, the ability for us all to move forward and to say what we believe in and who we care for. We are now in a world that is so much more complex than just a few months ago. We're facing a virus that remains as dangerous to us today as the day when it started. This is not a world we wanted, that we expected or that we asked for, and we didn't get to pick up the moments in our lives that we missed so much and that we had to leave behind, but we do get to decide how we will response and what we will do.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In Los Angeles, we are using science and statistics together with caring and compassion to lead our way by keeping each other safe and protecting human life. We are responding with LA love. This is hard and things will be hard for a while, I have to say it every night, while I want to encourage you, I also want to hear the hard truths that we will be in this for a long time this year in one way or another. There aren't hard openings and hard closures. It is going to be living in the gray, in between the black and white, that I know some many of us hunger for, but we will get through this fog together.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I believe in you. I believe in us. I believe in LA, and I know that there are better days ahead. But before I close, as I said at the beginning, I want to answer the most important question on everyone's mind. What lies ahead as we begin to discuss reopening? And as I said last night, I hope later this week the city's leaders, and I say that plurally for many, plural, for many cities round here, as well as our county leaders, can stand together as we did at the outset of this and talk about how we will take those steps together. But there are few main principles that guide me in the decisions that we are making in the days ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: First, and to be clear, I want people to understand what the state says versus what your local leaders say. The state permits certain things, but it does not prescribe them. In other words, the state gives us the boundaries that we have to stay in between, but when people hear or if anybody ever thinks that they read an article that says, "Oh, the state's opening up on Friday," what the state has said is local government can decide starting from Friday how and when to open up with these guardrails. So Friday is the first day that can happen. But it's still up to local governments to assess what's it like on the ground? What are the conditions today? How can we do this safely? So the state permits but it does not prescribed moving forward.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Second, we cannot go too fast. You see it in polls across the country that people are much more worried about going too fast than too slow, but I know that there are people frustrated and strong and oftentimes loud voices saying we want this now, but it's the worst thing for both our health and for those who say, "What about my economic suffering?" It's also the worst thing for our economy. You see, if we go too fast and we see cases go up and we see people begin to die in bigger numbers, and we even see our hospital system overwhelmed, that's worse than going forward the right, just a little bit slower. And that is going to guide me every single day when we have confidence to take moves, as we have done in the past few weeks, by the way. We've taken moves throughout this. It's not that May 15th, is

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

suddenly a brand-new door. We have shown the ability to do things the right way when we do them correct and not just fast.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Third, building on that, we have a proven track records and experience, we are learning lessons. As we try to learn more about this coronavirus, we learning how to deal with it and live with every single day. Two examples, construction, which we started with. We learned early on that people weren't using PPE and stuff. We set up a system of inspections and inspectors, went to thousands of sites and were able to keep people's livelihood going, keeping critical infrastructure moving while we kept people save. Farmers markets was another great example. We had to shut them down temporarily because we saw people not practicing the safest measures that they could, but we then implemented working with them and the public ways that we could get fresh good food, go outside to those familiar and beloved farmers markets in our neighborhoods and still be safe.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So these experiences guide us moving forward. So that is the third pillar. And fourth, we have to do this together. I kind of wrapped this up where I started. This virus thrives on division. It thrives on political division. It thrives on geographic division. If we don't march together as much as possible, and we will never be unanimous across this country or across this region or even within this county. But if we can strive as political leaders, as jurisdictions, and as the people who live here to be, figuratively, if we can't literally, arm in arm. We will be better armed against this coronavirus. I support t, for instance, work in the next few days and weeks to do some things to make life a little bit better for all of us. I'd like to see the reopening of some low-risk spaces and places like trails, some streets that we might be able to shut down so that we are a little bit more room to walk in. Some of the places that we have already heard announced on the county, for instance, about making sure our mothers can have flowers on Mother's Day. We can do this but we must do this together. If we do this unevenly, we will fail, but if we do it together, I trust that we can, and we will succeed.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So please continue doing everything together. Wearing those masks. Don't be the one or two percent of people that are not, making sure we physically distance. Don't go out in a pack together or get together for a secret dinner that will spread coronavirus in your neighborhood. Continue to listen to our Public Health officials and I want to thank again Dr. Ferrer who I know is going through so much with 10 million people, the largest jurisdiction locally in the country to make the decisions about how and when, balanced with the economic considerations and political considerations of unity that we have to do. But I am confidence that our extraordinary board of supervisors, that my fellow city leaders around LA County can do this and do it well in the coming days. We have all been doing our part, and I promise you I will never stop doing mine on your behalf to make sure that we stay safe, that we stay healthy, and for now that we stay at home because when we do, we have that strength and love that will get us through this moment, and for that I thank you. With that, I am happy to answer questions for today. Thanks. First question, please.

OPERATOR: First one, the first question comes from line of Robert Kovacik. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Robert.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

ROBERT KOVACIK: Good afternoon, Mayor Garcetti. Listen, let's talk specifically about flower marts since you mentioned them. Your message has been clear about how and when we are going to reopen, but every day we are seeing more businesses moving forward and today we observed the flower mart in DTLA, there were shops that were open, there were people that were allowed inside despite the closed quarters. Are they operating with approval then? Are they being monitored, and are there ramifications if they are not?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes, yes, and yes. They are, as of today, we have given them permission to prepare for Mother's Day, one of the biggest days of the year. That is something that I think was something not only that we could pull off safely through our experience with farmers markets. Second, they are being monitored. We've got Public Health there and we certainly will do inspections as well, and if people do not, not just the flower mart, any place that opens up or people who aren't practicing safely, of course, we will, as we have done through this, educate, encourage and enforce.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So that is, as I said yesterday, with new freedoms come great responsibility, kind of paraphrasing Spider Man, but that is how we can keep things open, by being smart. We know by now, physical distancing is necessary. We know you have to wear PPE by now and so we have updated our order for wholesale flowers to allow that to happen. I also think as the governor has talked about and whether we do it this week or more likely the following week that curbside retail is something safer than what we are doing in our own supermarkets and pharmacies, and I know drugs and/or medicines and our food is absolutely critical. But I would think that we can take those steps, but we will be laser-focused on monitoring and hopefully, as I said, educating, encouraging and, if we need to, enforce. Thanks Robert. Don't forget to get your mother some flowers. All right. Next--

ROBERT KOVACIK: Will do.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thanks. Next question.

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

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Elex.

ELEX MICHAELSON: Hi Mayor, and I appreciate the love for mothers. A shout out to my mother.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes.

ELEX MICHAELSON: On this curbside issue, because there are going to be so many businesses that are going to want to reopen on Friday, they see other businesses around the state reopening with curbside. There will be extraordinarily political pressure and anger if you guys

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

still say people can't do this. What do you say to those people who may be seeing their neighbors being able to reopen if you tell them no, you can't.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I am sorry. We are not going to be moving on those things this Friday. As I said, the state permits that as the first day, but local areas, governments have to be really careful about how you do this, and it's not that we are starting to thinking, yesterday when the governor announced, we have been talking with retailers, with small shop owners, we've talked to big retailers, we have been talking to outdoor and indoor malls. We have to get this right because you don't do any business a service by saying it is open. Look at other states where they said, "Open movie theaters or restaurants," and the great majority of movie theaters and restaurants are saying, "No, thank you. We are not ready to do that yet."

MAYOR GARCETTI: And we want to make sure that we don't do something reckless and say, "Hey, we got out there a week or two weeks early just to score political points." Sorry three or four weeks later, we gotta shut you down because the cases are up. While we have some good trends, Los Angeles has 55 percent of the deaths in the state and we're 25 percent of the population in this county. You know, California overall is better. Los Angeles still outpaces the country, but let's look at those numbers soberly and let's get it right. We are not a county of 9,000 thousand people with a lot of people spaced out. We're a much dense place.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So I will continue to get this right. I don't care about those criticisms, though I always listen to them because sometimes there's kernels of truth, and I never let, you know, whether somebody is shouting it or whether they are saying it in the nicest letter, I never don't listen to that content, but my guide won't be balancing who is yelling the most. It will be listening closely to industry who I trust to tell me how to do this safely, running that by Dr. Ferrer and taking the county guidance on this because I think that is the only way we can do this responsibly. So, and I don't think people will look back and say a week or two difference was more important than getting it right. And we certainly still need some more days to make sure we get it right. Thanks, Elex. And we're going to get your mom in there, I'm glad you got that. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Next question comes from the line of Claudia Peschiutta, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Claudia.

CLAUDIA PESCHIUTTA: Hi. I have couple of questions about testing.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes.

CLAUDIA PESCHIUTTA: Some people are telling me that they are waiting far more than 30 hours for results. So I'm wondering if anything is being done to speed that up. Also, I am told that at the Woodland Hills site today, where it was in the 90s, people were tossing their samples into large open drums that were filled, so I'm assuming those samples were sitting there in the sun and heat for a while, perhaps this is happening at other testing sites. Is there any danger, you think, that that would damage the sample, and affect the results? Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure. On the second one, we've got, you know, medically trained professionals who work very closely with the labs, so I will get back to you specifically but we make sure that things like that don't happen or that they adhere to whatever recommendation they give us. 30 hours, which is one of the best numbers in the country, was the average, so absolutely, you will continue to find cases that do take longer. Since the beginning of this we have tried to make sure some of those cases, you know, we get calls through the Help Line all the time. We went to the call where somebody waited 10 days, and we find those outliers, but the average still is 30 hours which, you know, most jurisdictions are still between 3 and 5 days. But every single we try to speed that up. Every single day we work with our laboratories to see, and we've got different type of tests, too.

MAYOR GARCETTI: The ones in the drive-thru centers are the thirty-hour average. But you also have ones which are the nasal swabs, those ones have to be picked up, sent to a lab that is not right here, and those usually do take a little bit longer that we are working on for our senior care facilities and also for some of the folks that are experiencing homelessness, where back on Skid Row had a record number of tests today, I think 145 in our pop-up center and we still, I think we have five positives of more than 1,000 tests that we've done on people experiencing homelessness. So we're always guided by the scientists, we are guided by the medical folks. I have no evidence that anything in Woodland Hills or anywhere else was done improperly but we'll follow-up and get back to you specifically on that. Thanks, Claudia. Next question, please. I'll take the next question.

OPERATOR: Next question comes from the line of Steve Gregory with KFI News. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Steve. How are you doing?

STEVE GREGORY: Hi, good evening, Mayor.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good evening.

STEVE GREGORY: I wanted to ask real quick, first of all, you made an interesting comment about telling people not to have secret dinners. Do you have some sort of intel about people doing that? I mean, what kind of even prompted you to think of that? Also, I wanted to ask you if you've had any more information about how the services are going on downtown with the makeshift nursing homes in the hotel downtown or, excuse me, the hostel downtown, and if you have any more information about how long the USNS Mercy is going to be here. Thank you, sir.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure. Let me work backwards. The most important thing that the Mercy as much as it's been great to have a ship should we have had to surge the hospital beds and relieve non-COVID-19 patients to the ship, is the navy personnel, the doctors, the nurses, the medical teams that are working in our senior care facilities now, senior nursing facilities. That is not just LA County, by the way, for everybody listening in other counties like Orange County and in the region; these folks have gone out there. As I've mentioned, the city has six surge

teams that go to senior nursing homes. We've been in and had tests or pending tests for more than half of all the ones that exist now or in contact with the remainder with a very small percentage left.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We want to keep those teams here so regardless of whether the ship stays. I don't have any information about timing; I know it's very expensive to keep it in port with everybody there. We really want the personnel at this point. Should we need a ship back? Should we need that surge capacity? We know it's close by in San Diego, so I'm good with it whether it stays or goes, but I want to keep those strike teams that are really critical where the most people are dying, which is from our senior nursing facilities responsible for about 40 percent of our deaths.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of the secret dinners, no, I think we just hear that anecdotally, and we get calls all the time: My neighbor is doing this; there is a party there, etcetera. I know some people kind of consider themselves of having a coronavirus bubble of friends that you all kind of can hang together. We don't permit people to get together right now in the numbers that, you know, 20, 30 people together. And we do not only not encourage that, we strongly discourage that. So it's more anecdotal and calls and people who have said, "Oh, I think my neighbors sound like they had a dinner party with ten people."

MAYOR GARCETTI: There will be days ahead where can see each other again, where we will have protocols for that, but please use your good judgment. One night of fun isn't worth us all collectively, ten million staying in for another week or two or a month. So we really want to make sure that people are adhering to that and, of course, we always follow-up when we, you know, get leads to make sure people aren't doing that. And then I think, oh I want to correct one other thing too, that I said of the number of people that have been tested by our tests, it's 1,800 people experiencing homelessness have had tests, and now it's 17 positive. I gave you a number from yesterday with 5, so 17 out of 1,800 tests so far have come back positive for people experiencing homelessness. And I think I hit everything, Mercy, nursing homes, secret diners. All right, thank you. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: We have a question from the line of Elizabeth Chou from LA Daily News. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Liz, how are you?

ELIZABETH CHOU: Thanks. Hi, mayor, so, I was wondering if you shared how much the per room cost was for the downtown LA hotel that is participating in Roomkey? And I also was wondering if you can talk a little bit about shelters getting more testing? Shelters getting more testing and why the shelters have been on a different track so far, potentially with getting testing from a partnership with Everlywell because there was a motion today by Councilman O'Farrell to expand testing at shelters, and I wanted to see how that idea aligns with what you have planned or what the county has planned. And those are the questions that I have. Thanks.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

MAYOR GARCETTI: Great. So, working on the tests first, absolutely supportive of that, we've tried to expand that. We've mostly done it in reaction to anybody that has symptoms. And we successfully caught some people who were positive with COVID-19; been able to take them to a place to isolate where necessary, quarantined any people, but we haven't seen an explosion and spread in any of the city-run shelters that we have, which is good. As we have more capacity, absolutely. The Everlywell tests are also serving our senior nursing facilities, we're seeing an even greater danger, so we've put that and the county has asked us to continue ramping up and helping them with senior and nursing facilities. But as we build capacity, you know, we've got in those shelters about 1,000 people right now, I think we've got, let me see if I have the exact number, 862 of the 1,036 beds.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So that shouldn't be much of a problem for us to be able to do. It's just a matter of logistics, so I am very supportive of that and appreciate Councilmember O'Farrell's doing that. In terms of the--we're not disclosing room prices. These things have to be negotiated over 800 hotels, as I've mentioned, that we called, but we're always trying to get the most value. And to that, where people are saying, "Hey, why not put people up in this hotel or that hotel?" Remember, a Ritz-Carlton costs a lot more than other hotels, and we tried to get the most people in for the amount of money we have. Everything costs something and so, I don't want to spend in the most expensive places or for the most amount of money for a symbolic win. I actually want material wins where people get into housing. Thanks, Liz. Next question. Oh, I'm sorry, we have ten clinics for shelter testing right now that are working on that too. So some of the clinics that already interact with folks on the streets are helping us with that testing not just Everlywell. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: And the next question comes from the line of Dakota Smith from LA Times. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Dakota.

DAKOTA SMITH: Good evening, mayor. Just some questions about the flower mart. In terms of the flower mart being able to open, do flowers fall under a specific category of retail that's being allowed to open this week? And if so, what other businesses under that umbrella will also be allowed to open with restrictions? And if it's just flower shops that are being allowed to open, why flowers? And if it is just flowers, is that surely because of Mother's Day or why flowers? Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure. It's actually under the agricultural permission of the state which kind of farmers markets have also fit under, so it's only the wholesale distributors and that's preparing for. We'll see, I'm going to follow the county's guidance on retail moving forward absolutely. I think part of it is that this is an area we felt we actually saw some other flower marts that do wholesale open in another parts of the states and even this county. The big daddy is here downtown. People know the wholesale flower mart, and we thought that if those ones have stayed open, this one should be as well, especially coming up for Mother's Day and especially because that's so critical for our flower industry on one of the biggest days of the year. But hold tight, that stuff we're still waiting county guidance on any more retail, but it's not retail;

it's wholesale under the agricultural permission that it's already there in the state. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: And our last question for the night will be in Spanish and comes from Abel Alamillo from Telemundo. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Abel, buenas tardes.

ABEL ALAMILLO: Regarding LA Represents, what are some of the qualifications to receive this help? And would the undocumented community be able to benefit from this?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Absolutely. LA Represents, there are no qualifications; you just need to have a problem that you need assistance with. It is without discrimination in terms of immigrant, non-immigrant, whatever your immigration status is, age, ethnicity. This is available to everybody who is a resident of Los Angeles. So without any fear, without any discrimination, this is universal. La programa de LA Protects y yo tengo más palabras de ese programa en un momento, es para toda la gente, inmigrantes, sin papeles, con papeles, todos los raíces, los residentes, cualquier vecindario de Los Ángeles. Es universal para toda la gente.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So again, I want to thank everybody who has tuned in today in English, who might be sounding off. Thank you, as always, to the press for your great work in these tough, tough times, bringing these messages out and asking that the questions that people need to know answer to. And with that I'm going to switch to Spanish, I'll see everybody tomorrow. Look forward to seeing you throughout this week, and I know that will be not just me, but also with some of our county representatives and fellow city representatives soon.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Muy buenas tardes a todos y gracias por venir. Esta noche estar unidos en lucha es crítico para salir adelante. Sus acciones a nivel local están liderando nuestro país ahora, y están salvando vidas, vidas en nuestras familias, vidas en nuestros vecindarios, vidas que son importantes. Hoy hubieron 1,638 nuevos casos en el condado de Los Ángeles. Este es un nuevo récord, llegando a un total de 27,815. Pero es importante recordar, tenemos más pruebas, con más pruebas tendremos más casos. En la ciudad de Los Ángeles tuvimos 943 nuevos casos, llegando a un total de 13,468, y hoy supimos del fallecimiento de 58 personas más en el condado, llegando a un total de 1,313 muertes.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Lloramos con todos quienes han perdido un ser querido en esta crisis. Estos no son números, pero son humanos. No dejen que estos números les den miedo, simplemente con más pruebas tenemos más información ahora que antes. Y esto es exactamente lo que necesitamos para combatir este virus, si no estarían quedándose en casa, estos números estarían más altos. Gracias, gracias, gracias por su trabajo para luchar esta amenaza de este coronavirus. En nuestros hospitales somos fuertes. Tenemos 1,281 camas disponibles, entre ellas 226 están en las unidades de cuidados intensivos. Y tenemos 1,331 respiradores disponibles también, este es buenas noticias. Y les recuerdo que si tienen alguna emergencia que no relaciona al COVID, por ejemplo, un dolor en el pecho o el tratamiento para alguna condición médica/crónica, deberían de ir a consultar un médico o ir al hospital si se necesita.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Todos pueden hacer una cita para hacerse una prueba aunque estén enfermos o no. Visita la página coronavirus.lacity.org/testing o llámanos al 213-978-1028 o al 311 después de las 5:00. Hoy tenemos 34 sitios de pruebas y la capacidad es increíble. Nuestra capacidad de hacer pruebas a 18,500 personas al día, y para el final de hoy habremos más de 200,000 personas, 207,000 es el número exacto. Por toda la ciudad vemos gran ejemplos también de generosidad de la gente de Los Ángeles y nuestro condado en apoyar a sus vecinos.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hoy estoy orgulloso de lanzar un nuevo programa, LA Representa, una iniciativa con el fiscal municipal Mike Feuer para ofrecer servicios de representación legal para angelinos enfrentando desafíos por el impacto de COVID-19. Esta coalición une a grupos de servicios legales, colegios de abogados y bufetes quienes están donando su tiempo gratis para apoyar a inquilinos, víctimas de violencia doméstica y familias de bajos ingresos con temas de desempleo y aún temas de bancarrota. LA Representa ayudará a las personas sufriendo para asegurarles que si te preocupa no saber cómo llegar al final del mes, estamos aquí para ayudarles. Si eres un grupo interesado en unirse a esta iniciativa, por favor visita la página coronavirus.lacity.org/LARepresents. Hoy es el martes de dar y gente por todo el mundo está contribuyendo al esfuerzo en respuesta al COVID-19. Y en Los Ángeles también hemos visto esta generosidad de muchos. Si pueden donar al Mayor's Fund de Los Ángeles para asistir una familia que necesita asistencia directa, por favor visita la página mayorsfundla.org.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yo sé que esto es difícil pero lograremos salir adelante juntos. Tengo fe en ustedes, tengo fe en Los Ángeles, tengo fe en nosotros. Y finalmente, me gustaría responder a una pregunta muy importante, ¿qué nos espera con el comienzo de la reapertura? Primero y para ser claro, el estado permite pero no prescribe. El estado emitió nuevas pautas pero las localidades como Los Ángeles tienen que decidir qué y cuándo sucede dentro de estos límites y cuándo. En segundo lugar, no podemos ir demasiado rápido. Seré una voz de precaución, eso significará la diferencia entre hacerlo bien y mal.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Tercero, tenemos experiencia, un historial comprobado en esta crisis de tomar medidas seguras para proteger el comercio y las personas. Mire lo que hicimos con los sitios de construcción en toda la ciudad, mercados de granjeros, minoristas como supermercados y farmacias. Y esta experiencia es mi guía en estos próximos días por nuestros próximos pasos de reabrir. Y cuarto, tenemos que hacer esto juntos, este virus prospera en la división: división política, división geográfica. Y apoyo la reapertura segura de algunos espacios de bajo riesgo y lugares como senderos porque todos necesitamos un poco de esperanza y ayuda. Y les exhorto a todos los angelinos que continúen haciendo su parte para mantener la sana distancia y llevando coberturas faciales. El poder en esta crisis no está aquí en el Ayuntamiento, está en sus manos, las manos de su familia, en las manos de la gente de Los Ángeles. Yo tengo mucha confianza en la gente de Los Ángeles, unidos, poderosa y también con una visión de un futuro mejor. Amigos, quédense en buena salud, quédense protegidos y quédense en casa. Mucha fuerza y mucho amor. Gracias, hasta mañana. Thanks everybody, see you tomorrow.