

Daily Pilot

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Orange County reports highest hospitalization numbers

There are 162 patients being treated for the coronavirus with 1,753 total cases, including one additional death.

BY FAITH E. PINHO

Coronavirus cases ticked up in Orange County by 67 to a total of 1,753, and one more person died from the COVID-19 disease according to numbers the county released Wednesday.

The total number of deaths is now at 34, double the number of deaths from almost two weeks ago.

The county also reported its

highest number of hospitalizations, with 162 patients being treated for the virus, including 70 who are in intensive care.

For the first time, all 25 hospitals eligible to report coronavirus cases in Orange County are reporting their numbers, according to the county.

Roughly 20,145 of the county's 3.2 million residents have been tested for COVID-19.

Most who have tested positive are between the ages of 45 and 64. Of the 34 people who have died, 32% were in the 45-64 age group and 59% were 65 or older.

Here are the latest case counts for select cities, with their numbers per 10,000 resi-

dents:

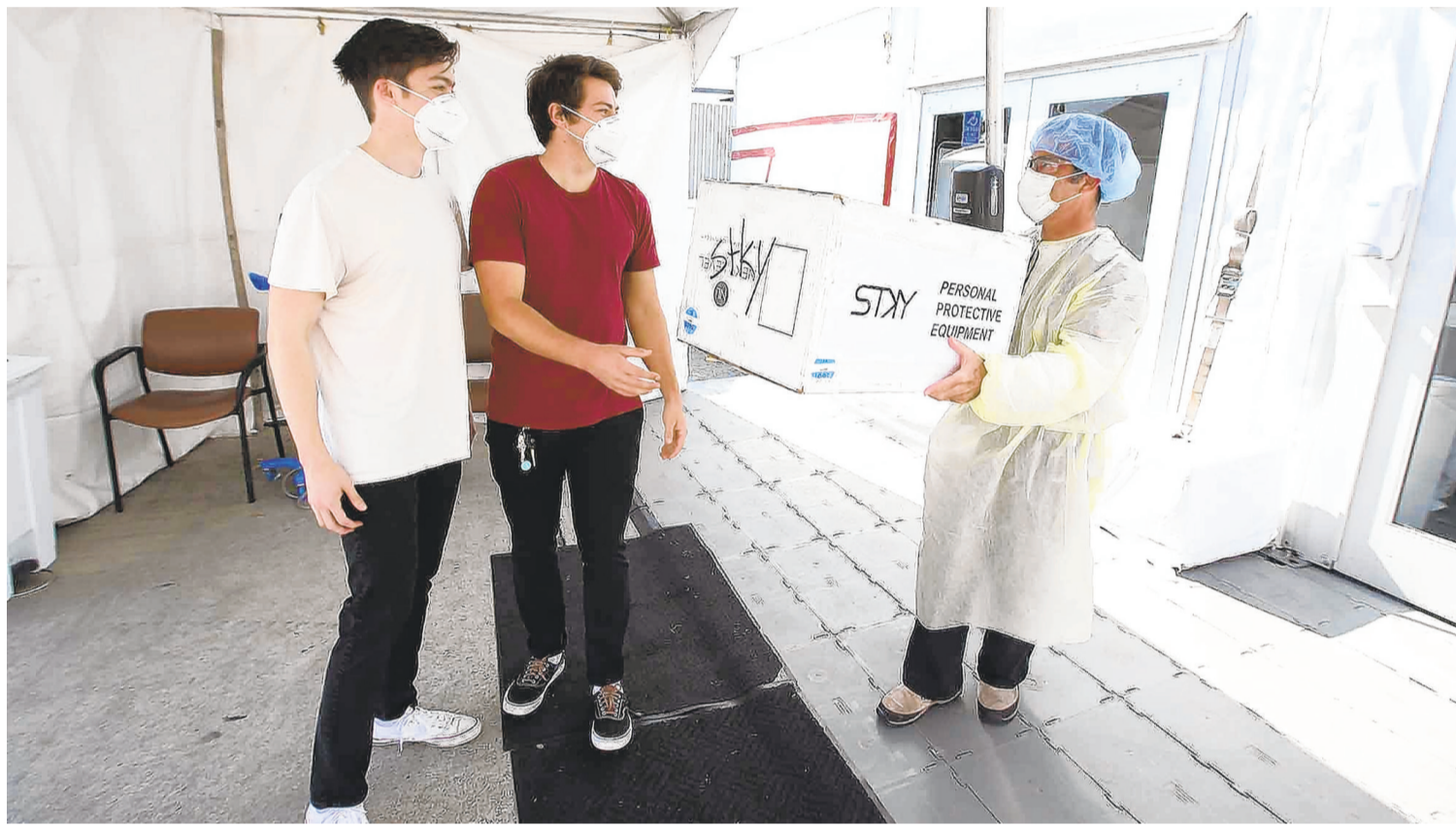
- Anaheim: 230 (6.4 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Santa Ana: 184 (5.4 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Huntington Beach: 153 (7.5 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Irvine: 119 (4.2 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Newport Beach: 89 (10.2 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Laguna Beach: 36 (15.4 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Costa Mesa: 33 (2.8 cases per 10,000 residents)
- Fountain Valley: 25 (4.4 cases per 10,000 residents)

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WITH OFFICE manager Daniel Zike helping, Dr. Matthew Abinante, left, prepares to take drive-up sample swabs from patients outside the Elevated Health offices in Huntington Beach.

Raul Roa
Staff
Photographer



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

NOLEN PUTNAM, left, and Sawyer Farmer, center, longtime friends and business partners, deliver their first batch of protective masks to Fountain Valley Regional Hospital's temporary COVID-19 testing tent on Monday. Proceeds from the sales benefit front-line medical workers.

SHIRTS FOR MASKS

Young Newport clothing designers blend business and altruism to sell mask-inspired T-shirts.

BY HILLARY DAVIS

The respirator mask has become so ubiquitous during the coronavirus pandemic that it's easy to make the connection when looking at the T-shirts Nolen Putnam and Sawyer Farmer are selling to benefit front-line medical workers.

Deceptively minimalist, the T-shirts the best friends and college students designed for their Newport Beach-based clothing brand STKY are white, with long sleeves or short, and a block of spare black lettering on the chest that mimics the industrial text stamped on every mask, plus a subtle Orange County reference: *STKY 2020 Health care particulate Respirator and surgical mask N949*

The entrepreneurs charge whatever the customer wants to pay — suggesting at least \$15, but their online store front has an option to drop \$1,000 — and use 100% of their proceeds to purchase KN-95 masks to donate to medical facilities.

On Monday, their first 150 masks went to Fountain Valley Regional Hospital, where Farmer's father, Craig, is an emergency room doctor. Their next beneficiaries will be several nursing homes in the Los Angeles area.

The shirts draw attention to a critical piece of personal protective equipment that,

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DR. TIM KORBER, left, medical director of emergency services, accepts a box of the protective masks from Putnam and Farmer to the Fountain Valley Regional Hospital on Monday.

2 COVID-19 deaths strike Huntington nursing home

BY JULIA SCLAFANI

Two patients at a Huntington Beach nursing home have died of complications related to COVID-19, the facility said on Tuesday.

It's the same day that the care home, Huntington Valley Healthcare Center, saw the rate of infection reach nearly half of its patient population and approximately a quarter of its healthcare staff, it said.

The skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility on Newman Avenue learned Tuesday of its first fatality related to the coronavirus, a 79-year-old man who had been transferred to an area hospital to receive acute care had died overnight. A 77-year-old man who died Tuesday afternoon was the first to die at the nursing home, according to a spokesperson for the center.

The nursing and rehabilitation facility, which houses approximately 100 residents and boasts a staff of equal size, has seen 50 cumulative cases among residents and 24 additional cases among staff as of noon Tuesday,

said David Oates, a spokesperson for the center.

Of the resident population, 14 infected individuals have been transferred to area hospitals, Oates said.

As of Wednesday, Huntington Beach has had 153 cases of known COVID-19 infections, according to OC Health Care Agency, meaning the Huntington Valley cluster makes up nearly half of the infected population. Orange County has seen 1,753 cases to date, including 34 deaths, according to county health data, though that data does not include at least one of the healthcare center's deaths as of Tuesday.

COVID-19 infected residents at Huntington Valley are in isolation and outside visitors are prohibited from entering. The healthcare facility has also implemented visitor restrictions, screening of staff and medical providers, increased monitoring of patients' conditions and curtailing communal activities.

Infected healthcare workers were directed to self-isolate. Only "mild symptoms" have been ex-



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

A HEALTHCARE worker enters the Huntington Valley Healthcare Center, which had its first two deaths Tuesday related to the coronavirus pandemic.

perienced among staff, Oates said, and none have been hospitalized. Despite the sharp reduction in healthcare personnel, the facility maintains that it remains adequately staffed.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to their family of those who lost their lives from COVID-19.

Our top priority remains the health and well-being of everyone in our facility," Huntington Valley administrator Sarah Bates said in a written statement. "This incident underscores the service and sacrifices made by our dedi-

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Costa Mesa council cuts budget ahead of projected revenue loss

Unexpected shortfalls caused by coronavirus pandemic could reach almost \$20 million in the next three months.

BY FAITH PINHO

Few visitors and shuttered businesses mean more than a changing landscape for Costa Mesa — it could mean a loss of almost \$20 million in tax revenue for the next three months.

To make up for the unexpected budget shortfalls, the Costa Mesa City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday to make some cuts to the city budget and defer some costly capital improvement plans, to avoid dipping heavily into the city's reserve funds.

City staff projected the coronavirus pandemic could cause a loss between \$10 million and \$20 million through the rest of the fiscal year, which ends June 30.

"Even though it's been a short time, between 45 and 60 days in duration, the economic impacts and the magnitude of the challenges we're facing now financially because of the crisis are unprecedented," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said.

The projections — a \$10-million loss in an optimistic scenario and \$18.5 million or more in a grimmer scenario — are a result of sudden drops in sales tax, hotel tax and miscellaneous city fees and citations.

One of the city's largest economic drivers, the internationally-renowned shopping center South Coast Plaza, closed over a month ago. Tourism has dropped dramatically — hotels are at only 10 to 15% occupancy, the city's budget and purchasing manager Carol Molina said.

Most of the loss would dent the city's General Fund, which contributes heavily toward public safety and other city services. Sales taxes are projected to decline anywhere from nearly \$5 million to \$10.6 million; hotel taxes from \$2.6 million to \$3.5 million and miscellaneous fees from \$2.5 million to \$4.4 million.

To account for the projected losses, the council approved sev-

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ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Don Leach

LAGUNA MAYOR ASKS BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO CLOSE COUNTY BEACHES PAGE A2

CHIPOTLE TO PAY \$25M AFTER INVESTIGATION OF FOOD-BORNE ILLNESS OUTBREAKS PAGE A3