Immigrant Services in Sonoma County During COVID-19

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COVID-19 in Sonoma

- Sonoma County has declared a **local emergency** in response to COVID-19.
- Currently, Sonoma County has a Health Order for shelter-in-place until **May 3rd**.
  - Expected to extend order until **May 31st**.
- Active as of April 17th, members of the public are **required to wear facial cover when in public**.
- As of April 30th, there were a **total of 5,690 COVID-19** tests conducted in Sonoma County.
- Those who are first responders and those who are entering congregate care/living facilities must wear masks and are subject to symptoms screening.
- As of April 29th, the **parks closure order was amended**. Walking, jogging, hiking or cycling in parks and on trails is now permitted, under some limitations, and as long as social distancing is still followed.
COVID-19 in Sonoma

* As of Thursday, April 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0.02% of Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8% of Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovered</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>52% of Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>0.05% of Population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source Data: Sonoma County Emergency and Preparedness Website
Foreign-Born Population in Sonoma County

Proportion of Sonoma County that is foreign-born

Foreign-born: 83,207 (16.6%)
Native: 417,736 (83.4%)

Data Source: American Fact Finder, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Top Sending Countries Among the Foreign-Born Population

Data Source: Social Explorer, ACS 2018
Citizenship Breakdown of Foreign-born Population

Source: American Fact Finder, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2018
Income and Poverty Rates Among Foreign-born population

Foreign-born statistics do include undocumented immigrants, but may be undercounted

Source: American Fact Finder, 2013-2017
American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Educational Attainment Levels Comparison

Educational Attainment of Foreign-Born in Sonoma County
- Graduate or professional degree: 7.3%
- Bachelor's degree: 12.9%
- Some college or associate's degree: 21.6%
- High school graduate: 20.8%
- Less than high school: 37.4%

Educational Attainment of Native-Born in Sonoma County
- Graduate or professional degree: 13.5%
- Bachelor's degree: 24.0%
- Some college or associate's degree: 38.1%
- High school graduate: 18.7%
- Less than high school: 5.7%

Source: American Fact Finder, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
What’s Being Done Currently: Federal and State Levels

- Undocumented immigrants not eligible for stimulus check
- Undocumented immigrants not eligible for unemployment
- Statewide immigrant relief
  - “Governor announces $75 million in statewide Disaster Relief Assistance funding to provide financial support for immigrant workers affected by COVID-19”
  - Supports undocumented immigrants (~$500 per adult, capped $1000 per household)
    - Helpful but is it enough?
- Philanthropic funds: California Immigrant Resilience Fund
  - Planning to raise $50 million to assist undocumented immigrants
  - $10 million raised so far from private companies such as Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Blue Shield of California
  - Citizens are encouraged to donate as well
What’s Being Done Currently:
County Level

- **UndocuFund**
  - Fund for disaster relief for undocumented immigrants in Sonoma
  - Community donations
  - No longer accepting more applications
    - Suggests huge demand for aid

- **Sonoma County Emergency Information**
  - Sonoma County’s section of county website dedicated to resources during emergencies
  - Daily updates on COVID-19 cases in county along with county latest news
  - Links to resources organized by need (food, seniors, housing, healthcare, etc.)
  - Ability to translate website in over 100+ languages
  - Lists of community groups helping with pandemic

- **County Social Media Pages**
  - Daily community updates in both English and Spanish
Interview with La Luz Center

- La Luz Center
  - Community center located in Sonoma Valley for 35 years
  - La Luz helps with local Latinx and undocumented communities
  - Physical center is currently closed, began remote operations on March 20th

- Interview with Sandy Sanchez, Director of Programs
  - Needs for immigrant communities have dramatically increased during the pandemic
  - La Luz went from assisting 250 people a month, to that amount in a week
  - Phone appointments are now prioritizing those who need financial assistance
    - Mostly rental assistance and filing for unemployment
    - During time of interview, La Luz had a 300 person long waiting list
  - Team members have been active in food distribution
  - Have handed out over 2,000 masks to individuals and families, preparing more kits
Interview with La Luz Center

“I can’t say much for county and help with undocumented individuals... I think the way they try to help is pushing out information of the community partners, but as far as any program or assistance, I have not seen any...”
Top Immigrants Needs in Sonoma County

- Funding/financial assistance
- Food
- Access to accurate information
- Access to Internet
  - In 2018, only around 90% of immigrant homes in Sonoma County had access to internet, meaning around 10% (3,198) households lacked internet access

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2018
American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates
Job Type Distribution Among Foreign-born in Sonoma County

Comparison of Occupations of Foreign-born v Native populations

Source: American Fact Finder, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Health Clinics in Sonoma County

Source: Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative, "Mapping Spatial Inequality" project
Legal Clinics in Sonoma County

Source: Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative, "Mapping Spatial Inequality" project
Lack of Access to Information

- Lack of immigrant-focused community centers in immigrant-heavy communities
- Online resources such as the county’s Facebook page and the websites of other organizations provide translations in Spanish, but not in other languages
- 10% of homes in Sonoma County don’t have access to internet
  - This makes it harder to access information from home
  - Remote schooling becomes nearly impossible for students who have had schools closed
Language Ability in Households

- In 2017, approximately 23.7% (45,003) of households in Sonoma County spoke a language other than or alongside English at home.

- Of these households, just above 8,000 were limited English-speaking homes, totaling to about 4.3% of homes in the county.

Source: American Fact Finder, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Interview with City of Petaluma Mayor Teresa Barrett

- “Cities don’t have a chief medical officer. Any work that is done is done at the county level.”
- “The undocumented are very unlikely to reach out to the city government for any assistance they are looking for. They are more likely to go to a non-profit working on their behalf.”
- “We adopted a “It Won’t Happen Here” Resolution that everyone who was in Petaluma was welcome to be in Petaluma. We made it very clear that if there were any need on people’s part, the city of Petaluma would be able to take care of them.”
- “We don’t really provide social services...it’s through non-profits or the county.”
- “How we deal with low housing and food shortages, which are important right now, is mainly through a network of nonprofits that we work closely with.”
- “Earlier this week, I signed a letter that people were sending out to provide relief for undocumented immigrants... This is an attempt to get the governor to provide something that directly provides undocumented immigrants with something to meet their needs.”
Interview with City of Petaluma Mayor Teresa Barrett

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Services available in Petaluma

According to Mayor Barrett, the following services are available to all residents, and are all focusing on helping those who are impacted by COVID-19:

- Meals on Wheels
- Senior Cafe
- Petaluma Shelter Service Center
- Senior Citizen Services
- Day Labor Centers
- Additionally, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has given money to the city that will be distributed for housing needs, and is especially focused on low-income housing. Some money is going towards helping with rent subsidies.
Food Insecurity and Assistance

- Due to overwhelming need for food security, Sonoma County suggests first reaching out to personal circle for food assistance, then local organizations.

- April 14th: Virtual Town Hall held with Sonoma County food assistance leaders
  - Hosted by Northern California Public Media in which resources on where to find food assistance was provided
  - Pages default in English, but allow visitors option to translate into 13 languages

- Currently, **36 school sites** in county where children and can pick up grab-and-go meals
  - Most are located in Santa Rosa, with others scattered throughout rest of county

- **Redwire Empire Food Bank**
  - Food bank that operates in 5 counties in California
  - Operations have continued as normal for some sites while others have canceled services; 80+ sites all over Sonoma County in parking lots, churches, community centers, etc.
  - Website in English and Spanish, also advertised by several different resource sites
Interview with City of Santa Rosa Mayor Tom Schwedhelm

- “I’ve done 5 different videos for our community. Anytime there is a new health order, I get up and talk about it. We then translate it into Spanish.”
- “We are responding to the county’s orders. I know they are also reaching out to different communities.”
- “In Santa Rosa, we have a Measure O... In that we have 50 different service providers, school districts... we are very much embedded in the community.”
- “Anytime Santa Rosa puts something out, it gets distributed to all of those partners. My expectation is that they put it out to community action partnerships. They do a lot of outreach with the immigrant community.”
- “My hope and expectation is that they send it out to the clients that they are serving.”
- “Our main effort has been messages to push out information. Much of it is on our website... that is one click away.” [Mentions that they also use radio]
- “We have a lot of undocumented folks up here... Some abusers would use their immigration status [to beat their partner up] and say “if you go to the police because I beat you, you will get deported.”... Now with the shelter in place, how will this affect those who need to report? There are folks out there who need our help, but how do we get to them?”
Interview with City of Santa Rosa
Mayor Tom Schwedhelm

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Where does this leave immigrants?

- Services available to all impacted by COVID-19
  - Profound lack of programs aimed only at immigrants
- Not enough aid from government for non-profits
  - Backlogged requests in non-profits
- Good amount of Spanish translation
  - Not enough translation options for other languages
- Lack of Accessibility
  - Health and legal clinics not spread out
What can be done? Some recommendations…

- For local and city governments:
  - More Translation -- Increase number of languages available on govt. websites
  - Expand Outreach -- More shout-outs to community organizations helping immigrants
  - More Funding -- To meet increasing demand
  - Get the Word Out -- Utilize ethnic media
  - Free WiFi -- Open up centers such as in school gyms
    - Open at least one other community center in Roseland/South Santa Rosa.
- Outreach to all -- Existing community groups should outreach to immigrants
  - Accessibility to Law -- Open up more legal clinics
Any Questions?

“If you have any questions about our health-care plan, take it up with the Supreme Court.”