



Board Agenda Item 51

DATE: January 28, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: David Luchini, RN, PHN, Director, Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: Agreement with the California Department of Public Health Pertaining to COVID-19 Genome Sequencing Services

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute an Agreement with the California Department of Public Health, for continued participation in the COVID Network of California Laboratories for SARS-CoV-2 Whole Genome Sequencing Services, effective March 1, 2025 through February 29, 2028 (\$0).

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Approval of the recommended action will allow the Department to continue participating in the COVID Network of California Laboratories for SARS-CoV-2 Whole Genome Sequencing (COVIDNet) through the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Under this agreement, CDPH will continue to provide laboratory genomic sequencing in preparing and analyzing movement of the virus and the growth of variants in the County to support the Department's testing and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There are no viable alternative actions. Should your Board not approve the recommended action, the Department would discontinue providing positive COVID-19 samples to CDPH, hampering efforts to determine when and where variants are emerging in the County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. This is an approval for a user participation agreement which does not require a monetary exchange. The Department will be responsible for all costs associated with processing COVID-19 Specimens. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues for these costs are included in the Department of Public Health Org 5620 FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

On April 19, 2022, the Board approved Agreement 22-158 with CDPH, which allowed the County to participate in COVIDNet and to provide CDPH with COVID-19 testing samples for genomic sequencing data for epidemiological efforts to control the spread of COVID-19.

COVIDNet was established by the California Testing Task Force as a collaborative effort between CDPH, the Chan Zuckerberg Biohub, Invitae Corporation, Illumina, diagnostic labs, local public health labs (PHLs), and academic genomic sequencing experts, to track the spread of the COVID-19 virus in California and

characterize new cases and outbreaks using genomic epidemiology. By applying genomic epidemiology with enhanced testing, intensive contact tracing, and effective isolation, the State of California can execute an evidence-based public health strategy to successfully contain COVID-19.

This agreement between the County and CDPH is providing a phylogenetic tree at no cost to the County. A phylogenetic tree is a means of mapping the evolutionary process of cells within samples of a species. This phylogenetic tree provides a mapping tool to determine the variants of COVID-19 that are present within the community and is valuable to show how the virus is mutating and evolving over time to educate and guide the long-term process of combating COVID-19.

The COVID-19 samples will be submitted to CDPH for genome sequencing in order to better inform outbreak investigations and public health surveillance. These samples will provide the County with key data to determine when and where outbreaks are occurring as well as the evolution of COVID-19 growth and variants as the disease continues throughout the County. COVIDNet will use the genomic sequencing data to generate and maintain a timely and comprehensive phylogenetic tree of California COVID-19 viruses through the COVIDNet partnership and apply such data for use as warranted for local outbreaks and contract tracing investigations.

The term of the Agreement shall remain in effect for three years, unless one or both parties wish to terminate the Agreement upon 30 days advanced written notice. The agreement deviates from the County's model contract as this agreement contains a one-way indemnification in favor of the State.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #40, April 19, 2022

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Agreement with CDPH

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander