

House: Kaleidoscope
Location: Mission District, SF
Household: 8 adults

Public: Please share and adapt with attribution
Created: March 6, 2020
Updated: March 29, 2020

March 29th Update

We adopted Level 3 precautions on March 25th, and updated this doc with the details of our Level 3 precautions on March 29th.

Context

Kaleidoscope is an intentional community of 8 adults based in the Mission neighborhood of San Francisco. This document outlines our agreements regarding how we are responding to the COVID19 situation. While we've included many more implementation details, at a high level our agreements mostly follow the "Shelter in Place" orders that were instituted [in SF on 3/16](#) and then for [all of California on 3/19](#).

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This document adapts and builds off of the coliving house [Dreamship's COVID protocol](#), which was in turn built off of corporation [Coinbase's COVID protocol](#). Some content was borrowed from coliving house [Ibashi's COVID protocol](#). We are grateful to all these groups for publishing their own protocols.

Goal

As a house we're aligned on trying to avoid or at least delay catching COVID19 in order to avoid contributing to overwhelming our healthcare system and becoming a vector that infects more vulnerable people such as our friends, family, and strangers who are more vulnerable. We're also dedicated to adopting practices that reduce the risk of spread within our house if one of us becomes ill with COVID19.

COVID19 Background

- [Summary of risks of COVID19](#)
- [Details on the importance of taking COVID19 seriously and preparing now](#)
- [Great essay on societal trends in COVID 19 infection spread and the importance of taking action now](#)

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Overview

We've decided to step up the precautions we're taking as a house to avoid becoming infected with COVID19 as the estimated cases in the Bay Area rise and thus risk of exposure increases.

Given the delay in the onset of symptoms and the testing bottleneck, we've been using a few different tools to try to estimate the truth number of cases in the Bay Area in order to ramp up our precautions as the risk of exposure rises:

- The authors of the Dreamship protocol which ours is built off of created [a Guestimate model](#)
- Our housemate Matt Bell who's does extensive work tracking the spread of Covid-19 recommends the rule of thumb of multiplying confirmed cases by 8, to get a sense of how many active cases there likely are in the Bay Area to inform our choices.
- Our housemate who works in biotech shared this as [the best case map](#) she's come across

Level 1 - Significant outbreak - Mild quarantine - adopted by Kaleidoscope 3/11

• *Criteria*

- 100+ cases of community spread in the Bay Area
- Mortality rate remains over 1%
- R_0 remains over 1.5

• *Level 1 Precautions*

- **Travel and public outings:** Limit non-essential travel outside of the home (stores, restaurants, work/office meetings, etc.).
 - General principle: Risk increases when you're around more people, in closer quarters with them, when they're not taking safety precautions (eg big drunken party), and when they're more likely to be sick (eg hospitals)
 - "Limit" is not "eliminate": We will continue to leave home for logistically important or personally meaningful trips such as:
 - Going into the office most/all days if work cannot be done remotely or it is expected by one's employer.
 - Visiting close friends or relatives.
 - Walking or jogging around uncrowded areas in the city and hikes in nature
 - Carrying hand sanitizer is encouraged
 - Attending events under 10-15 participants where the host has established reasonable precautions such as hand washing upon entry, and before serving oneself food using shared utensils.
 - If we're uncertain about the precautions being enforced by the host we may contact them to suggest this approach

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- Lyft rides in support of logistically important or personally meaningful trips. The house will reimburse Lyft rides in situations where a housemate would ordinarily take public transit for financial reasons.
 - Attending uncrowded yoga classes with sufficient distance between other participants, using one's own mat which is sanitized afterwards
 - NO LONGER attending gyms or classes with shared equipment
 - **Avoid:**
 - Minimize restaurant visits, takeout food, and ordering in. Stick to hot food from high-cleanliness restaurants.
 - Large crowds and events over 15 (parties / concerts / clubs / bars / crowds, etc.)
 - No gyms with shared equipment
 - All public transit
 - Unnecessary flights
 - If you have to fly, we recommend wearing nitrile gloves, a mask, goggles and a hoodie (which can be removed as an outer layer).
 - Bring trashbags to put your stuff in when passing through TSA.
 - **Protective gear and public precautions:**
 - When one is unable to avoid crowded areas, masks/covering for the mouth and nose, and masks (sun)glasses or goggles, nitrile gloves, and hoodies (if one will be sitting on a shared seat on a train or plane for example) strongly encouraged.
 - Consider bringing hand sanitizer with you and not touching your face (especially in public!)
 - **Visitors:** Limit visitors. No sick visitors. All visitors get a verbal screen for symptoms, pre-entry sanitization, education on household hygiene procedures. All visitors wash hands or sanitize upon entry. No event hosting at home. Hosting a handful of thoughtful individual friends is OK.
 - **Deliveries:** No special precautions.
 - **Hygiene:**
 - Strong personal hygiene practices (hand-washing, copper tape, not sharing towels or utensils, etc.).
 - Pre-entry sanitization.
 - Daily cleaning of common surfaces if possible.
 - Tell people immediately if you're sick.
 - Sanitize your phone regularly with alcohol or Lysol wipes for this
 - Avoid unnecessary contact (but keep hugging and kissing a few sweeties)

Level 2: "Containment is failing" - Medium Quarantine - adopted by Kaleidoscope 3/16

We estimated that the Bay Area crossed the threshold of 1,000 actual cases around 3/14, so we adopted our Level 2 Precautions at our next house meeting on 3/16.

- **Criteria**

- (1000+ cases of community spread OR government quarantine actions taken) in the Bay Area
- Mortality rate remains over 1%
- R_0 remains over 1.5

- **Level 2 Precautions**

- **Travel:**
 - We've agreed to all shift to working from home as of 3/16.
 - We're minimizing use of Lyfts and have shifted to using personal bikes and cars.
- **Protective gear:** Masks and (sun)glasses whenever possible around members of the general public outside the home. Masks are worn whenever entering public spaces (eg grocery stores).
- **Visitors:**
 - San Francisco has banned travel outside the home except for "essential" reasons until 4/7.
 - In the Executive Order issued by the mayor, walking around outside in parks and such is still OK.
 - Internally, as a house, we agreed that we may still go on occasional walks with friends who are observing Level 1 or above precautions. On these walks, we'll generally avoid physical contact, wear a mask, and maintain a few feet of distance at all times.
 - We may still go on occasional hikes with the house and a few friends who are observing Level 2 or above precautions.
- **Food Shopping:**
 - We think getting delivery of prepared food is probably safe, but generally lean towards hot foods.
 - There is still some disagreement on this topic, but we've agreed to hold off on food delivery for 2 weeks until we know more about the risks and precautions taken by restaurants.
 - The available epidemiology looks like COVID19 doesn't spread through food (i.e.: you could catch it from service staff, or by eating at a space with COVID19, on the surfaces, but the virus probably [is not in the food itself](#)).

However, because there is so little information, we're exercising an abundance of caution, and that's why we are just eating at home for now.

- We think grocery delivery is safer than shopping in person, but both are allowed at Kaleidoscope right now.
 - When things are delivered, we'll leave the boxes and bags at the bottom of the stairs and bring up the unpacked items separately.
- We've agreed to try to buy items that are packaged rather than left open in the store (pre-bagged, pre-washed greens rather than a bin full of greens).
- **Hygiene:**
 - We have created a "decontamination station" for entry. Everything brought past that point is sanitized or washed if it touched things in the outside world, and some items (eg boxes, jackets, shoes) stay on the "out" side..
 - When returning home we'll sanitize our hands and then wash them and wipe down our phones with lysol or alcohol wipes or by slathering them with hand sanitizer
 - Outside clothing such as jackets will be hung up in the entrance for a day or two after being worn outside
 - Shoe rack location will move to the halfway point on the stairs
 - We'll sanitize surfaces and handles in the kitchen, dining room and bathroom twice a day.
 - Here is a [sanitization checklist](#) that we will adapt for Kaleidoscope. Lydia officially takes on responsibility for driving the adaptation effort.

Level 3: "Containment has failed" - Strong Quarantine - adopted by Kaleidoscope 3/25

- **Criteria**
 - 5000+ *active* cases of community spread in the Bay Area
 - Doubling rate < 10 days
 - Mortality rate remains over 1%
 - R_0 remains over 1.5
 - Or... SF/CA is still on lockdown
- **Data:**
 - As of 3/29 there were ~2000 official cases of COVID-19 in the Bay Area.
 - We estimate that actual cases are about 4-8x higher than the officially reported cases due to the following factors:
 - There's been a ~3x week-over-week increase
 - About half of cases are likely asymptomatic
 - Cases that are confirmed by testing reflect infections that occurred 5-10 days earlier.

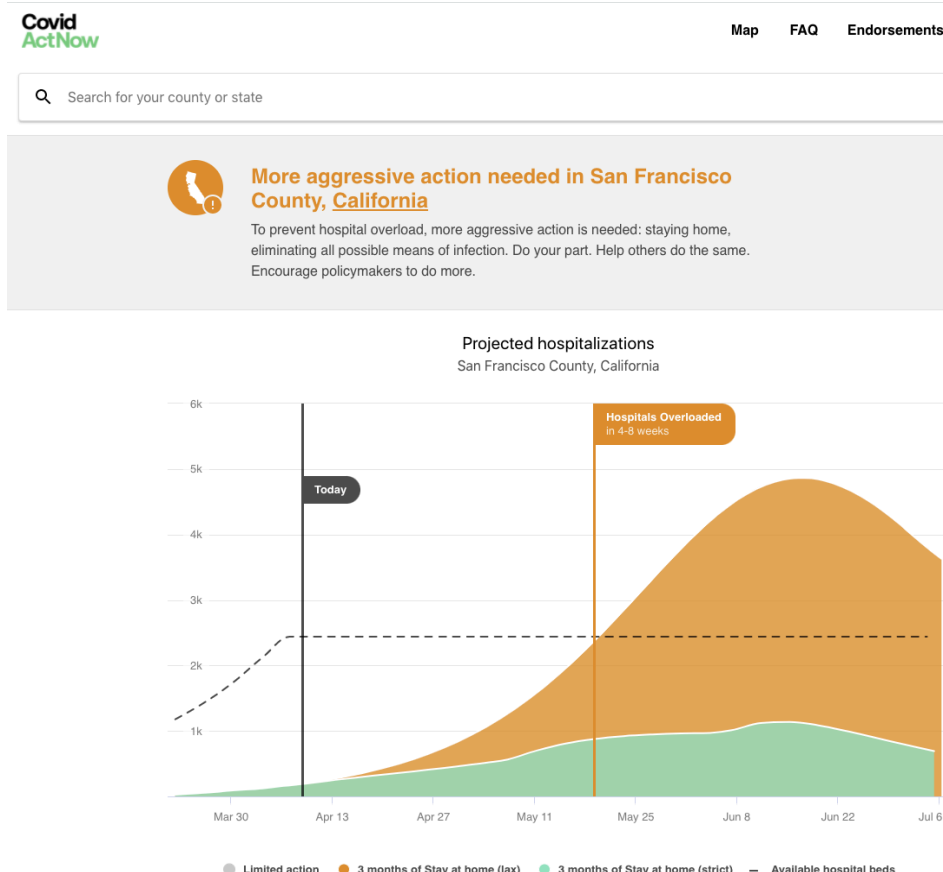
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- Since we estimate that there are in fact 8000-16000 cases in the Bay Area as of 3/29, that means that between 1 in 500 and 1 in 1000 people in the Bay Area are infected. This makes trips outside the house such as to the grocery store MUCH higher risk than they've been in the last few weeks.

- **Level 3 Precautions**

- **Travel:** No non-essential travel outside of the home, with the exception of low-risk outings for exercise and mental sanity. See "outings" section below in more detail.
- **Protective gear:** Masks (whenever possible) at all times outside the home, *unless* the visit has no exposure to other humans or potentially contaminated surfaces. (e.g. a run to the beach). Gloves and goggles strongly recommended for any trips to public indoor areas (eg grocery stores).
- **Visitors:** No visitors are allowed at Kaleidoscope (including outside partners) and no residents of Kaleidoscope will be visiting friends or partners at other locations.
 - Our decision to strictly adhere to the SF and California shelter in place mandates was influenced by models such as [Covid Act Now](#) which indicate that San Francisco will be able to avoid hospital overwhelm with strict compliance but that our hospitals are likely to be overwhelmed in mid may if compliance is lax.



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- **Deliveries:** Keep all packaging downstairs outside the main living area, wash or sanitize hands after opening packaging. Move items to a bin and then bring the bin up.
 - **Hygiene:** *(same)*
 - **Food deliveries:** Delivery or takeout food is OK as an occasional treat. [Most of the risk is from the people, not the food itself](#). Even then, cooked food is preferable.

Outings: (this section is almost directly borrowed from [lbasho's protocol](#))

- **General principles:**
 - Indoor public spaces are bad
 - Crowded indoor spaces are extra bad
 - More visits are worse than fewer visits, so bunch up your orders, and go with as few companions as possible.
- **Low-risk outings:** Going outdoors alone or with other household members is considered low-risk (such as to go for a walk or bike ride, or drive in a private car).
 - Protocol: Stay six feet away from any people you happen to encounter. If you will be going somewhere where it is difficult to maintain this distance, wear a mask unless you're in an area that's close to deserted. Upon arriving home again, wash your hands thoroughly.
- **Walks with friends:** Outdoor walks with non-household members (in groups of 4 or fewer) who are following similar precautions are considered slightly higher risk, but are worthwhile because they're emotionally important!
 - Wear a mask (surgical masks are ok) unless you're in an area that's close to deserted.
 - Before going on a walk, directly ask the person you're walking with whether they have a fever or any respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, sniffles, etc). We've noticed that some people won't volunteer this information, so we suggest that you ask.
 - If they have symptoms, no walks until after they are cleared (3 days after no fever, or 7 days after substantial improvement in respiratory symptoms, whichever comes LATER).
- **High-risk outings:** Includes any activity that might put you in close proximity to other people (grocery shopping, etc).
 - Protocol: Add the following precautions: wear eye protection (normal glasses are OK); wear gloves; bring an N95 mask or P100 respirator (whichever fits best).
 - Also, upon returning home, remove any potentially "germy" clothing, and consider washing your face and/or showering.
 - Disinfect any possessions you touched (phone, wallet, car keys) using a disinfecting wipe or sanitizing solution.
 - If you drove, disinfect the parts of the car that you touched.
- **Transportation:**
 - Walk / bike / personal car strongly preferred
 - Solo Lyft/ Uber is only acceptable if its not possible to borrow a car. (If you must use one, please wear mask and gloves, carry hand sanitizer, avoid touching your face, and wash hands afterwards)
 - Shared cars / public transportation are only to be used in case of emergency. High-risk precautions required.

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- **Avoid:**

- Kaleidoscope will have no visitors to our home during Level 3, including friends, partners, vendors, contractors, plumbers, except in emergencies.
- We have all agreed to make no nonessential high-risk outings.

What if someone gets sick?

Below is a chart with some information about how to tell whether or not someone is exhibiting Coronavirus-like symptoms. *(It's a big chart, and sometimes it gets moved onto the next page — scroll down if you don't see it)*










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Personal quarantines

Is it cold, flu or coronavirus?

COVID-19, the new coronavirus, struck in the middle of cold and flu season, leading some people to wonder what their respiratory ailments indicate. According to health officials, fever, cough and shortness of breath are the main coronavirus symptoms and are similar to flu symptoms. A runny nose and sneezing most likely means hay fever.

SYMPTOM	COLD	FLU	CORONA-VIRUS
 Fever	Rare	Yes, often high	Yes
 Cough	Mild to moderate	Yes	Yes, typically dry
 Shortness of breath	Rare	Yes	Yes
 Fatigue, weakness	Mild	Yes	Yes
 Headache	Rare	Yes	Sometimes
 Muscle aches	Slight	Yes, often	Yes
 Sneezing	Common	Sometimes	No
 Sore throat	Common	Sometimes	Sometimes
 Stuffy or runny nose	Common	Sometimes	Rare

Source: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Chronicle

If someone in the house becomes sick with early symptoms of COVID-19, it probably makes sense to engage additional quarantine procedures around that person. Given the range of possible responses, we'll discuss this

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on a case-by-case-bases based on what symptoms we're seeing. This will likely entail: isolating the person to a room (having food delivered to the door), wearing a mask when needing to leave the room for some reason, and having dedicated use of a bathroom. ([Reference](#)) Depending on how closely the person matches the symptoms, we may be doing all of that for [14-24 days](#)!

The tricky question is: when should a protocol like this be initiated? Options run from "Has tested positive for COVID-19" (which should definitely trigger the protocol) to... "very mild symptoms".

Where do we draw the line? On the one hand, the whole point of a proactive quarantine is to prevent the spread of a disease while it's still small. So it's all *about* taking action while the chance of individual contamination is low. On the other hand, I'm not sure if we want to initiate a multi-week personal quarantine every time someone coughs?

One reference point: [WHO's COVID-19 symptom list, sorted by decreasing frequency](#)

Protocol breaches

Dreamship Notes: I think perfect compliance will be hard, both due to mistakes, and because the ruleset will be imperfect (i.e. corner cases where they technically rule out something that needs to happen).

So how do we handle protocol breaches when they happen?

I think we just need to trust each other to do our best to comply & disclose if there's a big breach that warrants some sort of group assessment. I suspect the breach would have to be pretty major to warrant action (e.g. a personal quarantine).

Note from Lydia at Kaleidoscope, added 3/12/2020:

I think encouraging "radical candor" and "impeccable agreements" in the style of the book *15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership* will help with this issue.

- The book *15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership* has a section on integrity that I really like. (I don't like everything about the book, especially when it comes to questions about power or abusive situations, but I think it has many good frameworks.) They have a notion about "impeccable agreements" wherein they suggest that a conscious leader will probably be able to keep 90% of their agreements and it will be fine, as long as:
 - 1/ They make clear agreements, and they NEVER make agreements they don't fully plan to keep. (The book's authors have a hypothesis that most agreements are broken because people never really plan to keep them in the first place, and I tend to agree with that assessment)
 - 2/ They keep agreements as much as possible, and if not...
 - 3/ They renegotiate agreements as fast as possible if they realize they can't keep them
 - 4/ And they clean up broken agreements as fast as possible, while understanding and accepting that they may have broken or lost someone's trust by breaking an agreement, no matter what their reason was for breaking it.

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Notes

Notes from Level 2 meeting:

- Trips are only for essentials or for walks in uncrowded spaces (eg trails, parks)
- Hikes are OK.
- Restaurants are closed at this point, though many are offering food for pickup/delivery.
- No prepared food delivery -> all food is store-bought.
 - Do we want to only get veggies that come in sealed packages? Or go to farmers' market, which is open-air? If it's still open?
- SF is banning all non-essential visits.
- Use gloves when out of the house and touching things?
- Minimize Lyft use? We have cars and bikes people can use.
- Institute a containment zone at the door? Keep outdoor things out and indoor things in? Don't bring shoes/boxes into the main area?
 - We ultimately created a "sanitization station" at the door that we modeled on the following ideas posted by a friend on Facebook:
 - *Maybe the most useful concept from chip fab clean rooms is the idea of a passthrough.*
 - *You can make one for your home.*
 - *A passthrough is a special place of purgatory just inside your front door.*
 - *A small table will do.*
 - *Put Windex (Or Simple Green. Or 409. Or anything with a detergent in it.) and a roll of paper towels on the table.*
 - *EVERY TIME WITHOUT FAIL:*
 - *When you walk in through the front door, put everything you are carrying onto the passthrough table.*
 - *PHONE. Wallet. Keys. Glasses. LAPTOP. Pen.*
 - *Everything.*
 - *Put grocery bags and mail down beside the passthrough table.*
 - *Take your shoes off. Leave them by the door.*
 - *Go wash your hands.*
 - *Then rip off a paper towel and spray it with Windex. (Or Simple Green. Or 409. Or anything with a detergent in it.)*

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- *Then wipe down everything on the passthrough table that your hands have touched, and everything that has touched outside. Every surface. Wallet. Credit cards. PHONE. Keyboard. etc. etc. For extra bonus points, wipe down the passthrough table when you're done.*
 - *Remove exterior cardboard packaging from mail and groceries and put it in a recycling container beside the passthrough table. A paper bag will do. Wipe down hard surface items like bottles and cans.*
 - *Etc.*
 - *Thorough is good, but EVERY TIME is infinitely better.*
 - *When you are done, wash your hands again.*
 - *You are done.*
 - *You may now pass through the entrance to your home and into your home.*
 - *The important thing is to define a place of purgatory between your home and the outside world. With borders and rules that make sense and which keep you safe.*
 - *Everything passes through that purgatory.*
 - *The Passthrough.*

Thoughts about Bay Area Spread (MB at Kaleidoscope) 3/11/20

Bay area community spread is at 33 *confirmed* cases. Actual # is probably much higher (maybe 10x) due to lack of available tests.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KETW3ETMVPRf-g4kUSEgOap8uK8dJ4bVjb3YUraOI1Y/edit#gid=0>

At ~300 bay area cases we are at Level 1 now and we're halfway to Level 2.

300/8m = 1 in 27k people.

~500 ppl touch the checkout kiosk at a supermarket every day

~3000 ppl touch a BART turnstile every day

~3000 ppl use a TSA checkpoint every day

As an 8 person house, our footprint is relatively big. If one of us catches it, there is a significant chance we'll all catch it. (thanks, superspreaders!)

Notes From Kaleidoscope's First Coronavirus House Meeting (March 3rd)

Contacts: Lydia Laurenson, MB

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Background research:

China has largely contained the coronavirus but at immense cost (via intense quarantining measures). We should plan for something similar, but probably less drastic (eg large events cancelled, workplaces shut down, schools closed, personal protective choices like masks, goggles, hand sanitizer etc). Things got really bad in Wuhan because the government was caught unaware. If our government doesn't totally mess things up, we're probably going to be OK (like Northern Italy, which is currently under a light quarantine, as opposed to Wuhan), but we should be ready to spend a lot more time working from home and be more self-sufficient. The worst-case scenario is that the hospitals get totally overwhelmed. Let's hope that doesn't happen, but plan for it, just in case.

Virus:

- Fever is the most common sign of coronavirus infection, followed by sneezing/coughing. We should keep a thermometer on hand and call a doctor immediately if anyone gets a fever.
- Mortality rate for the average healthy <40 year old is ~0.1 - 1% outside of Wuhan (though hospitalization + extended quarantine is still common even for younger people, and the disease can permanently damage your lungs). In places like Wuhan where the hospitals get overwhelmed because there are so many cases, mortality rates are higher, even among young people.
- Infection via surfaces, bodily fluids (eg sneezes), aerosolized fecal matter (no really, close the lid when you flush)
- Households tend to get sick together (though some controversy on this; might be a few superspreaders)
- Given known ~30 cases in CA but severe test kit shortage, there are probably actually ~500. Doubling rate is probably 5 days or so, which means there will be a lot more in a couple weeks.
- Northern Italy now is probably what the Bay Area will look like in 2 weeks.
- Lots of conferences have been cancelled. Schools might close. Many workplaces might encourage WFH.
- If it gets a lot worse, they might shut down public transit, shutter most workplaces/businesses etc.
- Utilities (water, gas, electric) will stay up; cell/internet might slow down a lot

Preparedness:

- Gloves, N95 masks (we only have 20 because the store was almost out when we got there), goggles
- Cleaning & disinfecting equipment
- Medicine (zinc, vitamin c)
- Medicine in case we are infected & medical system is overwhelmed (aspirin, electrolytes, chloroquine).

Note that chloroquine is a somewhat speculative treatment with limited evidence and nasty side effects and is truly recommended only for well-informed users in emergencies. We have some notes about it here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/160RKDODAA-MTORfAqbuc25V8WDkLjqj4itMDyzBTpcc/edit?fbclid=IwAR1huZXQGT29SwVz-oz5uiZ71ukfxz7U0_IRGPBqJEZPdEHv-f8Hq3s268w

- Emergency food — ~1.5-2 weeks. If things get bad we may want to reduce exposure by preparing food at home instead of getting takeout.

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Protective measures:

- Everyone washes hands or uses hand sterilizer on the way into the house. Get guests to do the same.
- Avoiding high risk exposure (more on our shared norms about this below).
- Regular disinfecting of shared surfaces (table, kitchen, and bathroom). We don't currently do this so this is a new chore and we worked out logistics at the meeting.
- Cover surfaces that get frequently touched in copper tape, where the virus doesn't last as long.
- Everyone agrees to seek medical treatment & testing if you have a fever.

Questions:

- Anything we're missing that we can't do without a resupply for a few weeks?
- Cleaning paradigm of isopropyl alcohol onto regular towels or paper towels. Are we all good with this? (Wipes aren't a great option at this point, as some wipes are still available but prices are jacked up 2-3x)
- Do we want to curtail house events above a certain size? *[Conclusion: no more house events for a while]*
- What do we do if a house member gets coronavirus?
[Conclusion: They quarantine in their room, they use disposable eating utensils — plates of food are brought to their door and then the plates are thrown away, they get a designated bathroom, there is one house member designated to bring their food and water and tea and such from the mainspace. If they are sick then we have been exposed and should behave as such when we interface with the outside world.]
- We should discuss shared norms on risk profile. There may be differences, and that means we're taking on as much risk as the least risk-averse person in the house.

[Conclusions:

- Taking BART this week is OK with the group, but next week it will probably be high-risk. We're asking housemates to not take BART starting next week
- Wiping down all the surfaces in kitchen, bathrooms with alcohol once a day
- Hand sanitizing or washing for everyone on the way in
- Potential house fund for people who are financially impacted by not taking BART (e.g. if people must use Lyft to get to work/ business meetings) or impacted by taking other precautions to protect the group
- We do not yet deem eating out to be high-risk, but it could be soon. We'll reconvene and discuss
- Please disclose potentially high risk activities to the house and discuss with the group before finalizing (e.g. flights, large events, play parties, cruises)
- Note that you may not be able to board flights out of the bay area (one person already had this experience over the weekend). And if you leave the bay area on a flight, you might not be able to get back in.