



Re: Open Letter from local leaders to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Mayor London Breed, and other Bay Area lawmakers to take preventive action to address the unintended consequences of ending the Public Health Emergency

Sign the petition: www.MarkedByCovid.com/DearSF

**Public Health and Medical Professional sign on: <https://forms.gle/twHqqqvTr6E8QxMc9>
Google form for organizational endorsement: <https://forms.gle/CxoS5fi4wpm2uC2fA>**

Dear San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Mayor London Breed,

We write to urge you to take immediate action to address the numerous and significant impacts that the expiration of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) will have on San Franciscans and the greater Bay Area at a time when our most vulnerable community members continue to struggle. These impacts will exacerbate existing regional challenges and jeopardize tenuous progress on core issues of public interest such as public safety, access to medical services, displacement and homelessness, food insecurity, and wealth inequality, while hamstringing progress on disability, environmental, and racial justice.

Although we understand that our collective actions, bolstered by your leadership and the very-best science, have brought us to a “new normal”, allowing for some restrictions to be lifted as the threat from SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus behind the COVID-19 pandemic improves, certain protections must remain in place to prevent a devastating surge in evictions, limitations in medical services, and increased risk for infections, especially for the most vulnerable members of our community. This letter is also an invitation to join with us to work together to protect our Beloved City and Bay Area Community.

Without your intervention, the effects of an abrupt end to the public health emergency and its embedded protections, will fall particularly on vulnerable populations who have already been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic – including people with disabilities, older adults,

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low-income households, people of color, people facing housing insecurity and food insecurity, artists, working families, LGBTQIA+ folks, people with chronic illness, immigrants, children, and our essential workers. We urge the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Mayor London Breed to take the immediate following actions:

- Support ongoing monitoring and reporting of Bay Area SARS-Cov-2 presence in wastewater, cases, hospitalizations and deaths;
- Extend eviction protections one final time, through January 31, 2024, while developing and implementing an equity-charged “Recover and Prosper without Displacement” off-ramp strategy to prevent a mass surge in homelessness;
- Continue universally masked access in healthcare settings, and promote universally masked access to indoor or crowded public spaces and schools to protect and shield medically vulnerable individuals, who will still require increased public health protection to prevent serious illness or death, thus protecting their inherent right to accessible spaces and not undermining progress made through groundbreaking laws like the ADA;
- Work with us to develop a “Public Space, Public Air, Personal Choice” sunshine ordinance that requires and supports upgrades to measure and disclose CO2 levels in public spaces. Just as radar speed signs calm traffic and reduce harm this public disclosure will safeguard access to public spaces while providing transparent unfettered public access to data to facilitate personal liberties in decision-making;
- Commit funds to support a public education effort to inform people of their rights while also helping at-risk community clients to access local nonprofits that support families on their way to recovery from pandemic-related setbacks;
- Create, in advance, transparent criteria to recognize, monitor and communicate to the public the presence of any new variants of concern or of any possible surges in infection with specific thresholds for reinstituting recommended public health protections, first voluntarily, then on a mandatory basis;
- Bolster and fund established and emergent community leaders and multi-stakeholder efforts to address homelessness, displacement, and other forms of inequity in San Francisco. Multi-stakeholder platforms have the power to amplify communications from the frontline to provide ongoing and critical information and avert distress; and
- Commit to meeting with us and make it possible to hold a public summit with our “San Francisco United in Equity for a Just Recovery” coalition to discuss these and other concerns and lay the groundwork for a truly inspired collaboration that will meet the challenges of the moment.

Already over 1.12 million people in the United States died from SARS-CoV-2 representing nearly 20% of total global deaths, despite the US being only 4% of the global population. Our disproportionate burden exposed flaws in society jeopardizing the very promise of the American Dream. California was the bright spot in the USA’s pandemic response: following the science early on and creating a data-informed response that took into account not just the virus but also social determinants of health and *systems that harm* we’re all working to dismantle. That shining spot of our response was made possible by the 7 counties coming together to act

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quickly, decisively, and in concert with one another in the face of an imminent threat. Despite differences, we acted as one. No doubt their actions saved us from the realities of refrigerator trucks, mass graves, and paupers' cemeteries overflowing with the dead that we saw in places like New York City and El Paso, Texas.

As we worked together to lead the nation in a strategy to address the virus, this is an invitation to work together to lead the nation in a strategy that ensures a more equitable and just response to the challenges of recovery. Now that the public health emergency is officially ending, we must focus on maintaining crucial and effective policy shields, such as the continuation of masking in healthcare settings, and pandemic-related moratoria, to name just two, in order to build on the hard work and strong foundation of knowledge our city has acquired since March 2020.

The people and reputation of San Francisco – as a shining example of equity, justice, community, and as a leader of innovation in a changing world – is in our hands.

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[Marked By Covid](#) is the grassroots nonprofit leading the national movement for pandemic justice and remembrance. Founded by and for those most harmed, we promote health, equity, and pandemic prevention.

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