

Multicultural Advisory Committee of the State of Utah's COVID-19 Response

Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 20, 2020 | 3:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Google Meet | Online

Members: Chair Nubia Peña, Co-Chair Byron Russell, Co-Chair Ze Min Xiao, Aden Batar, Dulce Díez, Emma E. Houston, Celina Milner, Mikelle Moore, Ming Wang

Absent: Jess Anderson, Marc Babitz, Juan Becerra, Silvia Castro, Mayra Cedano, Neelam Chand, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Mike Haddon, Dustin Jansen, Deneiva Knight, Len Novilla, Asha Parekh

Guests: Ramy Ahmed, Joél Arvizo-Zavala, Luna Banuri, Rozanna Benally-Sagg, José Borjón, Heather Borski, Mayra Cardozo, Maegan Castleton, Emilie Ebert, Joelle Fierro, Ariane D. Hibo Ezeh, Jenny Hor, Jenny Johnson, Rossina Lake, Claudia Loayza, Jill Love, Nate McDonald, Antonella Packard, Angelo Papastamos, Katherine Potter, Jeremy Taylor, James Toledo, Rocio Torres Mora, Jeannette Villalta, Megan Waters, Marti Woolford, Amy Wylie, Yehemy Zavala Orozco

Welcome – Byron Russell, Co-Chair

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Holiday Gathering Guidelines – Jenny Johnson

There has been some confusion regarding the state of emergency, and what those limitations are going to look like for the holidays. Governor Herbert has stated that casual gatherings should only be with the people in your household—the larger the gathering the more dangerous the risk. On the [coronavirus.utah.gov](https://www.coronavirus.utah.gov) website, there are holiday tips and guidelines for people to follow: Wear a mask and gather with as few people as possible if you meet with people outside your home. There are also FAQ style tips to help prepare food, and travel safely during the holidays.

- Video assets and billboards will be added, and the webpage will continue to be updated.
- Spanish translations were done by Claudia Loayza and Rossina Lake as well as the Department of Health.
- Language translations in multiple languages are hopefully ready for next week.
- There are no travel restrictions in Utah, unlike other states, but there is a discouragement on traveling.
- For college students traveling home, the language is not as plain and clear as it needs to be in the CDC guidelines.
- College students should be tested, monitor symptoms during their stay, and limit interactions outside of their household as much as possible.

Economic Sustainability – Antonella Packard

The Economic Sustainability workgroup is working on a policy brief and what their future goals will look like. There are several factors that are not often dealt with in conversations of economics and business, which include generational wealth, cultural financial literacy, business development, and workforce development. The policy brief will require statistical data to back up the claims, and showcase the disparity. The difficult part is finding this data, and whether or not it is publicly accessible.

The social media campaign launched with two blogs posted on the MCA website. There is good engagement as the workgroup supported two businesses, and organizations with similar goals as them. For those who wish to nominate a business, or know of diverse business owners, please contact: maegancastleton@gmail.com.

Food Security – Celina Milner

Schools are in complicated situations. If a lunchroom worker gets sick, then staff will normally be stretched thin to accommodate the loss. Food pantries are meant for short term emergencies, but with everyone going into eight months of an emergency, food pantries are also spread thin. Schools themselves turn into emergency food providers, and they need more support to make it through the rest of the pandemic. Needs are only going to grow with the upcoming holidays.

The workgroup requests the governor's voice on aid packages and an increase in SNAP benefits to ensure people have enough food to help relieve the pressure on Utah's food banks. On top of more food resources there needs to be more multicultural food options. Families find it difficult to cook food they do not know so providing more options in respect to culture will go a long way.

Good Samaritan Foundation – Amy Wylie

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The organization is grateful to have received the \$50,000 COVID-19 Racial Equity & Inclusion Grant for rent relief. The funding has reached a lot of people. On the ground level this was run by a small staff all dedicated to getting the money where it needed to be. They relied a lot on partnerships to help get the word out and manage social media, otherwise the process would have been too overwhelming.

Within the applicants that applied, the largest group were 40-50 year olds. Older generations are in great need to keep rent or mortgages paid. Often widowers are alone with no resources to help in crises. They hear from people who report getting sick and weeks or months later, it will eventually go through the whole household. This creates complications, and this disparity hits some populations harder than others.

Anything to help get more funding is needed. People who were employed, had visas, or were work eligible are the groups that need recognition and help.

Other Business

Emma Houston: Universities are testing students, and Emma will be looking on the ground level to see what else the University of Utah is doing to help students during these times.

Mikelle Moore: There are a lot of cases in the ICU and hospitals. There are take-home kits to help those with less extreme cases take care of themselves, otherwise they would be transferred. Pediatric beds have been converted into make-shift adult beds to help expand capacity. Creating the bed, however, is useless unless there is trained staff to take care of the patients. There have been agreements to bring in 200 traveling nurses, and nurses in clinics and insta-care to be re-trained. This has its own complications, since there simply is not enough time and resources to train staff.

Currently there is a .5% mortality rate, but we expect that number to rise with winter as hospitals become overwhelmed. Exponential growth takes two weeks to be felt within hospitals, and there are too many unknowns as we transition to new leadership. There needs to be help creating messaging that shows the reality of what hospitals are going through.

- Would providing oximeters, and running Facebook Lives help ease the misunderstandings and questions people have? What is available budget wise?
- What will be available in 2021? These are the important questions that need to be resolved.

Next Meeting

Friday, December 4, 2020 from 3:00–4:00 P.M. through Google Meet.