



May 15, 2020

To: All Domestic Employees

From: Pandemic Working Group

Re: **COVID-19: The Golden State ~ Lessons from the Front ~ A Day in the Life**

The Golden State. In contrast to the chaos that ensued in Wisconsin after its highest court lifted Governor Evers' stay-at-home order, the reopening in California is being accomplished by degrees. As reported today in the L.A. Times, based upon their ability to certify that they have contained the spread of the coronavirus, 20 of the state's 58 counties have been permitted to reopen dine-in restaurants and shopping malls. Other, more populous counties have not yet made this certification. In fact, in L.A. County, the number of infections now exceeds 35,000 which is about half of that of the entire state. Meanwhile, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties are working to forge a coalition to lobby Governor Newsom for permission to reopen local economies, despite the fact that some areas, such as Orange County, have experienced their highest daily detection count since the pandemic started. Interestingly, according to the director of the O.C. Health Care Agency, growing numbers are not due entirely to new testing, but, rather, appear to be arising in nursing home and jail populations. This photo, from MSN News, shows Huntington Beach, where access is limited, and beachgoers are apparently observing statewide protocols.



Lessons from Health-care Workers. AVD board member, Emer Gunter, called our attention to an interesting piece in the New Yorker, entitled "Amid the Coronavirus Crisis, a Regimen for Reentry," in which surgeon Atul Gawande describes the four part strategy that he has successfully implemented at his hospitals for protecting against the coronavirus, namely – hygiene, distancing, self-screening and masks. Starting with hygiene - handwashing is essential to keeping droplets from transferring from surfaces to nose, mouth and eyes. He recommends that we wash our hands every time we go into or out of a group environment and every couple of hours, plus disinfect shared surfaces.

Given that the primary mode of transmission is not surface contact (at 6%), but respiratory droplets (94%), however, it is also essential to practice social distancing from potential sources. In addition, as a way of protecting others from our own potential infection, we add an additional layer of protection or "source control" through face covers. Even though we do not have the benefit of surgical masks, Dr. Gawande assures us that if 60% of the population wore masks that were just 60% effective (which a well-made cotton mask is), the epidemic could be stopped. Add to that the practice of self-screening. Before leaving the house, whether for work or otherwise, check

yourself for any symptoms – cough, fever, shortness of breath, loss taste or sense of smell. If you have any of these, then it is best to stay at home. In closing, Dr. Gawande observes that the four-part strategy has worked at his hospitals and, if widely practiced, could facilitate reopening our states.

A Day in the Life. As evidenced by real events from my own life, you will see that anyone can put Dr. Gawande’s advice into practice. Hygiene – after leaving a scintillating (and, I might add,



moderately lengthy) meeting, I washed my hands. Then some equipment rental guy appeared in the lobby and handed me his business card – so I washed my hands again. Distancing – this morning, I was standing on my own circular floor sticker waiting to order an almond croissant at Moulin Café, when the guy behind me kept edging up on my heels and craning over my shoulder – so I stepped forward and kicked my toe into the display case. Face coverings – I wore a signature Arun Malik FEMA mask for the entire duration of today’s business managers’ call and lived to tell about it. Self-screening – even as I write this, I am checking for symptoms – and, as James Brown would say, “I feel good.” Enjoy your weekend. – TD

If you have any questions or comments on this advisory, please contact either kellyw@amvac.com or timd@amvac.com .