
Los Angeles County Public Health Councils

Alice Berliner

Southern CA Coalition for Occupational
Safety & Health



Farmer John Meatpacking Plant

- **May 2020:** Outbreak in ham-boning department, *153 workers contract COVID-19*
- Company only provided masks and face shields, installed barriers *after* workers got sick
- “We need to feel safe on the job and we do not”



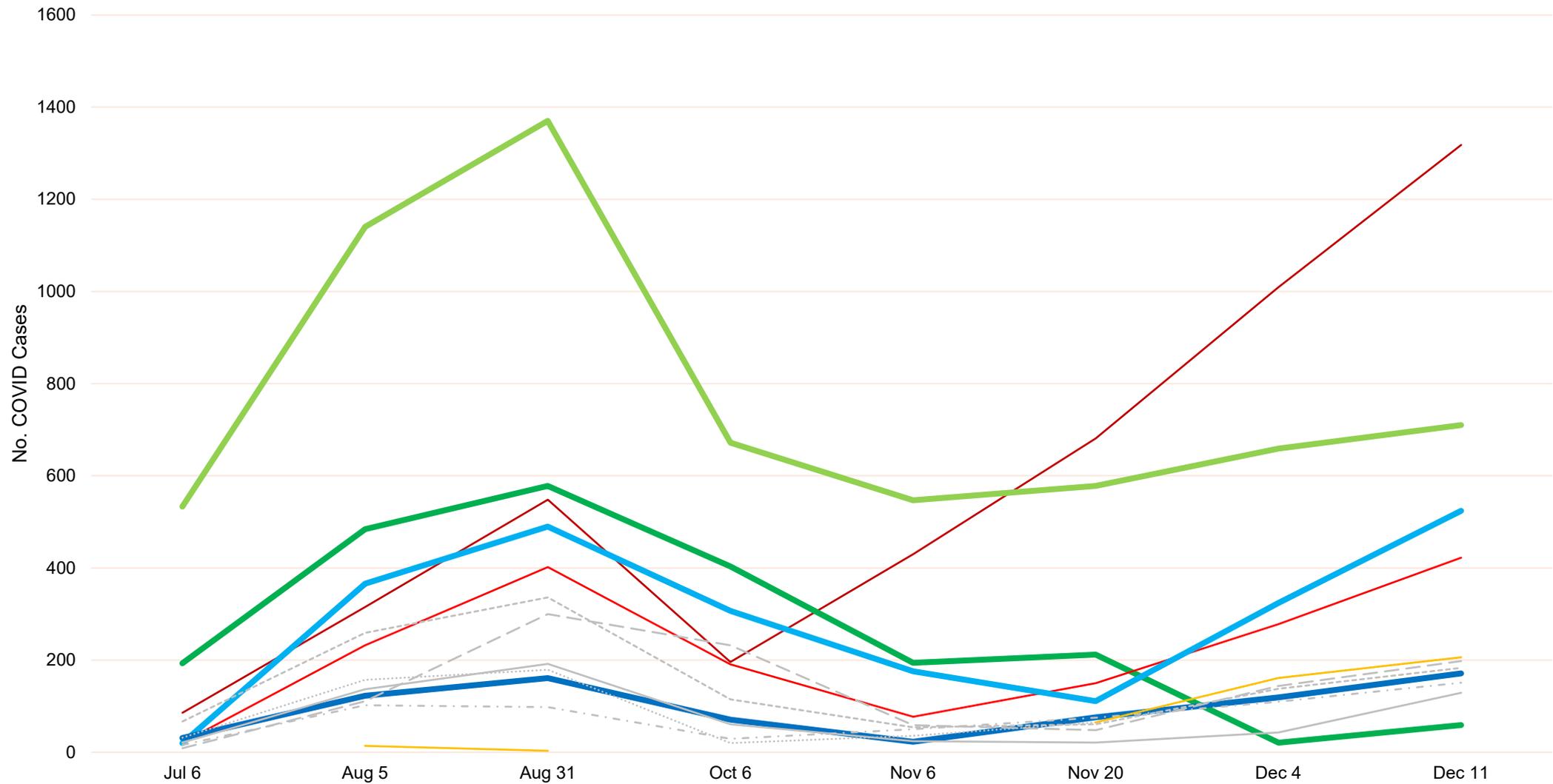
LA Apparel



Coronavirus outbreak hits Los Angeles Apparel with more than 300 infe...
L.A. County public health officials found “flagrant violations” of infection
control orders and said the company failed to cooperate with an ...
[latimes.com](https://www.latimes.com)

- **June 2020:** 300+ workers test positive for COVID, 4 die
- Workers not informed of cases by supervisors
- Piece rate payment system; fear of retaliation
- County Health Department closes plant on June 27

Number of COVID Cases (Employees) at Active LA County Worksite Outbreaks,
by Industry/Sector, Jul-Dec 2020



- Manuf. - Misc. — Food Manuf. — Apparel Manuf. — Retail
- Warehouse/Wholesale — Restaurant - - - Municipal ····· Construction
- · - · Law Enforcement - - - - Shipping/Transport — Grocery — Education



RESEARCH BRIEF | JULY 2020

Workers as Health Monitors: An Assessment of Los Angeles County's Workplace Public Health Council Proposal

Contributors: Tia Koonse, Ken Jacobs, and Jennifer Ray

An innovative idea to combat the spread of COVID-19

The County of Los Angeles faces an extraordinary task in the coming weeks as it attempts to reduce its record COVID-19 rates while fostering a beleaguered economy. Health officials observe that workplaces throughout LA County are focal points of transmission,¹ as enforcement of public health orders has lagged in a climate of desperation and fear. Lack of access to information and inadequate reporting mechanisms for public health order violations, particularly LA County's detailed, industry-specific "Reopening Safer at Work and in the Community" (County Health Order) jeopardize public health and economic recovery.² Meanwhile, the County's Department of Public Health (DPH) lacks sufficient investigators to pose a credible threat of a compliance check at the county's 244,000 businesses.

LA County Public Health Council Model

Public Health Councils

- Groups of workers trained to monitor compliances with County Health Officer Orders (HOO) at their worksites.

Certified Worker and Community-Based Organizations

- Third-party organizations certified by DPH to serve as the intermediary between public health councils and DPH.*

LA County Dept. of Public Health (DPH)

- Collaborates with third-party organizations to address reports of non-compliance at worksites.

* Certified worker and community-based organizations will:

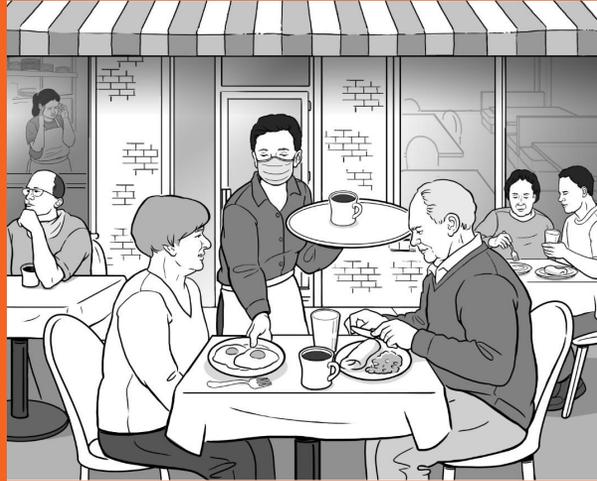
- Assist public health councils to understand public health orders and guidance
- Provide technical assistant to public health councils to identify non-compliance
- Help public health councils prepare reports and documentation to submit to DPH

Training and Support Organizations

- Provide training technical assistance, and other support to public health councils, certified worker orgs, and DPH.
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Certifying Worker Organizations

12-hour Train-the-Trainer Course for
participating worker organizations
and staff interfacing with Public
Health Councils



THANK YOU!

Reach out!

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