

CALIFORNIA CORONAVIRUS WEEKLY RECAP

A weekly digest to keep you up to speed on the California coronavirus outbreak.

Nov. 24, 2021

Happy Thanksgiving to all! Have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Welcome to the 89th issue of the California Coronavirus Weekly Recap newsletter.

In This Issue:

- [The Economy & Your Finances: EDD requiring proof of self-employment; three reasons might allow PUA reassessment](#)
- [The Market & Industry: Market remains solid; mortgage rates inch even lower](#)
- [Around the State: Hospitals seek to streamline patient transfers; 80% of LAUSD students meet vaccination deadline; California COVID cases remain low](#)
- [Health Check-Up: U.S. FDA urges boosters for all over 18, especially 50+; where to make your appointment](#)

The Economy & Your Finances: EDD requiring proof of self-employment; three specific reasons might allow PUA reassessment

Although Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits have ended, the [Employment Development Department](#) (EDD) is now requesting PUA recipients to

provide documentation to prove that they were self-employed during the calendar year before and up to the start of their PUA claim. Remember, you may have to [submit proof of self-employment](#) even through PUA benefits have ended. You can upload the required documentation through the “Upload Employment Document” section on your UI Online homepage. Acceptable documents include state or federal tax identification numbers, business licenses, tax returns, business receipts or invoices, signed affidavits verifying self-employment status, contract agreements and bank statements from a business account showing self-employment. Providing more than one document may help support review of your proof of self-employment. Your deadline to submit the required documents will be on your UI Online homepage. You may be able to request more time if you have good cause, but if you don’t provide the required documentation by your due date, you may be required to repay any benefits determined to be an overpayment.

California’s Franchise Tax Board last week announced that workers who had previously been denied PUA claims for one or more weeks but who applied for one of three specific reasons [may now be eligible to reapply](#). If you are an employee who was laid off or had your hours reduced as a direct result of COVID-19; if you refused to work at a worksite that was not compliant with COVID-19 safety standards; or if you are a school employee whose usual work schedule was directly affected by COVID-19, and your EDD PUA claim was denied, the [EDD encourages you](#) to check your online account to see if you are now eligible to apply for reassessment of your PUA claim.

Sources: *EDD, KGET.com, FTB*

The Market & Industry: Market remains solid; mortgage rates inch even lower

While the heated housing market from earlier this year has plateaued, home sales are [still outpacing](#) the levels observed in recent years prior to the pandemic. Low interest rates continue to encourage homebuyers, and some buyers who may have been sidelined during the fiercer competition over the summer might have been able to get in during the last couple of months. Interest rates are expected to climb gradually but will likely remain below pre-pandemic levels for most of 2022. However, supply shortages for building will

remain challenging.

At the national level, home sales increased 0.8 percent in October from the prior month, recording an adjusted annual rate of 6.34 million units. While sales at the state level lowered slightly by 0.9 percent from September, the California market continued to outpace the three years prior to the pandemic. Homes are selling quickly and market competition remains high. Prices continue to rise, as both the national and state median home price rose more than 12 percent compared to a year ago.

Key mortgage rates [inched downward](#) this week. Thirty-year fixed rate mortgages lowered to 2.98 percent. The 15-year fixed-rate mortgage reduced to 2.33 percent. The 5/1 adjustable-rate mortgage also lowered, to 2.72 percent.

Sources: *Business Insider, C.A.R.*

Around the State: Hospitals seek to streamline patient transfers; 80% of LAUSD students meet vaccination deadline; California cases remain low

An expected holiday surge in COVID-19 cases has spurred hospitals in central California to ask state officials to make it [easier to transfer patients](#) to less-overburdened hospitals in other counties, such as Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Hospitals in San Joaquin Valley are already running over capacity before the Thanksgiving holiday, so that dozens of patients are being held in emergency rooms, and ambulances with stroke and cardiac patients are sometimes diverted to other facilities. Fresno County's hospitalization rate is four times that of L.A. and Orange County. While hospitals regularly transfer patients back and forth in cases of overflow or special clinical needs, transferring patients across county lines can involve much more bureaucracy.

Nearly [80 percent](#) of the 225,000 students aged 12 and older in Los Angeles Unified School District are on schedule to comply with the vaccination mandate that goes into effect as of January 10. By that date, students need either to have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or file a medical exemption. Families who do not comply

can enroll their children either in another school or district outside of LAUSD (including a number of approved homeschools and online schools), or transfer them to [City of Angels](#), the district's independent study program that now includes some live online instruction. That program currently has 16,000 students enrolled but might see an influx of many of the 44,000 students who have not met the deadline. A similar vaccination mandate might go into effect statewide in July, at the earliest.

As of 7:33 a.m. [yesterday](#), there were 5,029,717 reported cases of COVID-19 in the state, for a daily average of 4,861. This is a slight increase of 16.5 percent since the prior week, but a decrease of 22.4 percent from two weeks prior. [Hospitalizations](#) statewide are quite low (though some of the more rural regions remain high), at 3,178, a decrease of 8.7 percent. Statewide, [23.9 percent of ICU beds](#) are available. California has administered [56,312,907 doses](#) of the vaccine, and 71.4 percent of residents have received at least one dose (including 1 percent just in the last week!). Among all Californians, 63.7 percent are fully vaccinated. Experts say that about 85 percent of Americans will need to be vaccinated to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control.

Sources: *AP, Los Angeles Times, LAUSD, City of Angels*

Health Check-Up: U.S. FDA urges boosters for all over 18, especially 50+; where to make your appointment

Following California's lead from last week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced on Friday that COVID-19 booster shots are [now open for everyone](#) over the age of 18 and especially [urged for people over 50](#). Officials urge everyone who completed their vaccinations more than 6 months ago to get a booster shot, as the colder temperatures of winter and more indoor gatherings over the holidays are likely to increase viral transmission. Officials are watching infection surges in Europe as well as colder, Eastern U.S. states such as [New York](#) and Colorado, as cautionary tales for California and the rest of the nation. The new guidelines also encourage mixing and matching among brands, especially if you [started with the Johnson & Johnson](#) vaccine. For example, someone who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccines could get a Pfizer booster, and someone who received the Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson vaccines

could get a Moderna booster. In some cases, [switching brands granted slightly improved immune response](#), but any booster will vastly improve one's immunity over no booster at all. In short, get whatever booster is available to you. People with certain immune conditions can get a third, full-dose shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or a second full dose of the J&J vaccine.

California's vaccination website, myturn.ca.gov, is offering appointments for children aged 5-11 as well as people 12 and up. Vaccinations are also available at walk-in clinics, pediatricians' offices and pharmacies. Some counties have their own vaccine scheduling or information websites, such as [L.A. County's scheduling site](#), [San Francisco's scheduling site](#), [San Diego County's information site](#), [Orange County's information site](#), and [Sacramento County's information site](#).

Sources: *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Newsweek*, *Dr. Swanda (mRNA biochemist)*, *NPR*, *MyTurn.gov*, *L.A. County Dept. of Public Health*, *SF.gov*, *San Diego County*, *Orange County*, *Sacramento County Dept. of Public Health*



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