Is the state effectively containing the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”)?
Weekly trends and risk assessment report for July 13, 2020

**STATUS: UNCONTROLLED**

COVID Exit Strategy ([www.covidexitstrategy.org](http://www.covidexitstrategy.org)), a non-partisan group of public health and crisis experts, has been tracking the progress states have made towards containing COVID-19. On July 10th, as the epidemic worsened, the group added a new color to their grading scale, indicating states with uncontrolled spread of the virus. California is one of 18 states currently in this category – our state is not meeting the CDC recommended benchmarks for reopening, and the situation is getting worse.

**Benchmark: Daily Cases per 100,000 population. STATUS: UNCONTROLLED**

The CDC recommended that states demonstrate a 14-day trend of declining daily COVID-19 diagnoses. Daily infections in California have been rising steadily since late May. The current 7-day rolling average for daily case reports per 100,000 is 21, while many health experts recommend daily case incidence of 5 per 100,000 before reopening. Our rating for this benchmark will be moved to Red, indicating the state is merely “trending poorly,” if daily cases per 100,000 fall below 15 again.
**Recommendations**

While California is close to meeting our benchmark for testing, and the state currently has sufficient hospital capacity, both cases and hospitalizations have been rising rapidly since mid-June. We reopened before we were ready, and now we are seeing the results of that decision: the spread of the virus has reached levels that cannot be contained through a test and trace strategy alone. Accordingly, CALPIRG supports the governor’s decision to close businesses and return to lockdown until things can get under control.

**For more information, contact:**

**Emily Rusch**
Executive Director
erusch@calpirg.org

**Laura Deehan**
Public Health Advocate
laura@calpirg.org

**Abe Scarr**
Open Safe Director
abe@illinoispirg.org

**NOTES AND CITATIONS**

- Color rating is based on the recommendations of COVID Exit Strategy. View current data at www.covidexitstrategy.org.
- CDC recommendations are derived from the CDC’s “Opening Up America Again” framework, and CDC guidance released on 5/19/2020.
- Data for ILI and hospital occupancy based on state reports to the CDC.
- Data for COVID+, test positivity, and hospital / ICU occupancy graph is derived from data collected by the COVID tracking project, at www.covidtracking.com.
- We do not track CDC metrics related to total testing volume, reported symptoms of COVID-like illness, and PPE supply due to a lack of consistent standards and / or publicly available data.