

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

March 11, 2025

Proclaiming March 24th as World Tuberculosis Day in Los Angeles County

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is a global observance dedicated to raising awareness about TB, the world’s deadliest infectious disease. March 24th marks the anniversary of Dr. Robert Koch’s discovery of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the bacteria that causes TB. In 2023 alone, an estimated 10.8 million people worldwide developed TB disease. In Los Angeles County (County), at least one person dies from TB weekly, and more than 680,000 residents are estimated to have a latent TB infection. In the County, 40% of TB cases occur among Asians and 51% occur among Latinx individuals. In the Second District, communities like Watts, South Los Angeles, Vermont Vista, and Florence-Firestone, have the highest TB rates, with Latinx and Black residents being the most vulnerable populations.

World TB Day serves as a crucial reminder of the ongoing presence and fight against this disease and the need to strengthen efforts toward its elimination. TB is an airborne disease, which spreads when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or sings, releasing bacteria into the air that others can inhale. There are two forms of TB: TB Infection: the bacteria are present in the body but inactive, causing no symptoms, and TB Disease: the bacteria becomes active, leading to severe illness. Symptoms of TB disease include cough, coughing up blood, fever, night sweats, and weight loss.

About 5-10% of people with untreated TB Infection will develop TB Disease; however, this risk is much higher in people living with HIV, diabetes, or other immune compromising medical conditions. Risk factors for TB Infection include birth in a country

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with high TB incidence¹, close contact with someone who has had TB Disease, experiencing homelessness, and history of incarceration. TB Infection and TB Disease are preventable and curable. TB Infection can be treated with medication regimens of only 3 or 4 months. Completing treatment of TB Infection prevents TB from becoming active and deadly. TB Disease requires longer treatment regimens with many more drugs.

The County can support the efforts of World TB Day by acknowledging the commitment of all public, community, and allied healthcare professionals to eliminating TB in the County. The theme for World TB Day 2025 is “Yes! We can End TB: Commit, Invest, and Deliver.” In this vein, as of January 1, 2025, the State of California enacted a new law (Assembly Bill 2132) that requires healthcare providers in primary care settings to assure that all adult patients have had a risk assessment for TB, and if a TB risk is identified, patients are offered a TB test, with linkage to services for those who test positive for TB. The TB Control Program, along with the Coalition to End TB in Los Angeles and the newly launched Southern California Regional TB Elimination Community of Practice, will educate and provide tools for healthcare providers to adhere to this law. This effort, which embodies this year’s World TB Day theme, will ultimately facilitate in ending the TB epidemic through organized elimination efforts, increased testing of persons at-risk for TB, and adequate treatment of all patients with TB Infection and TB Disease.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Proclaim March 24th as World Tuberculosis (TB) Day throughout the County of Los Angeles (County).
2. Direct the Director of the Department of Public Health (DPH) to commemorate World TB Day by participating in various activities such as:
 - a. “Light Up the World” campaign in which County landmarks (Union Station, LAX pylons, and Los Angeles City Hall) will be lit up in red (the symbolic color of TB) on the evening of March 24th;

¹ This includes Mexico, and many countries in Asia, Africa, Central America, Eastern Europe, and South America.

- b. Collaborating with local community partners to conduct a TB testing event on April 8th;
- c. Posting TB awareness materials on DPH's social media pages on March 24th; and
- d. Nominating the Harbor-UCLA Pediatric Infectious Disease team for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention TB Elimination Champions Award and the California TB Controllers Association's TB Elimination Heroes Award for their outstanding dedication to treating TB infection in new arrival children in the County.

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