

News Release

March 19, 2020

For Distribution at 11:00 a.m.

Contact: Brenda Bongiorno, Public Information Officer
BongiornoB@SacCounty.net / 916-216-5825

Sacramento County Health Officer Issues COVID-19 Order

Sacramento, Calif. – Sacramento County has 45 confirmed COVID-19 cases, and three who have died from complications of COVID-19. It is also clear that Sacramento County has community transmission of this virus.

In order to slow the spread of COVID-19, we have been taking significant steps, first focusing on containment strategies. Containment strategies pinpoint the exposure and employ quarantine or isolation in places such as nursing homes, group homes and the justice system.

However, with community transmission, we must protect the most vulnerable from exposure to this virus. On March 9, Sacramento County began undertaking strong mitigation measures intended to reduce the risk of death and illness among the most vulnerable population. These measures were intended to do two things: decrease virus exposure of seniors and chronically ill individuals, while keeping less vulnerable populations from exposing the high-risk population. This evolution to mitigation has also allowed our health care system in Sacramento County to plan resources to take care of severely ill patients.

On March 12, state and federal health agencies issued guidance that supported our efforts on mitigation.

On March 17, the Governor's Office provided details that strengthened those directives even further, prohibiting all gatherings – including dining in restaurants – and directed closures of group settings such as gyms and card rooms. That same afternoon, the County announced its support of these State directives and issued strong directives specific to our county. These

News Release

directives urged those in the Sacramento region to stay home in pursuit of the ultimate goal – protecting those most at risk.

In 11 days, the United States has learned a lot about this virus and a lot has happened which has deeply affected our infrastructure and us personally – but we are all in this together.

Today, Board Chair and First District Supervisor Phil Serna, District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert, Sheriff Scott Jones, Department of Health Services Director Dr. Peter Beilenson and Ronald Fong, President and CEO of the California Grocers Association gathered – six feet apart – to announce the Sacramento County Public Health Order to combat the spread of this virus.

Sacramento County Public Health Order

As of March 19, 2020, at 11:59 p.m., the Sacramento County Health Officer is directing all individuals living in the county to stay at their place of residence except for essential activities. The legal order is based on the same directives of social distancing issued this week to slow the transmission of the disease, but it provides more detail and enforcement ability. The legal order limits activity, travel and business functions to only the most essential needs and is intended protect those most vulnerable to the disease, slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, and preserve local healthcare capacity.

The intent of this Order is to ensure that the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible, while enabling essential services to continue, to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the maximum extent possible.

All individuals currently living within the County of Sacramento are ordered to stay at home or place of residence. To the degree individuals are using shared or outdoor spaces, they must at all times as reasonably possible maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any other person when they are outside their residence. All persons may leave their residences only for Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, or to operate Essential Businesses. All businesses with a facility in the County, except Essential Businesses, are required to cease all activities at facilities located within the County except Minimum Basic Operations. For definitions, please see the Public Health Order.

News Release

All public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited purposes as expressly permitted. All bars, wineries and brew-pubs should be closed, all in-dining at restaurants should cease, with the exception of home delivery and takeout, and all gyms, bingo halls, and card rooms should close. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.

All travel, including, but not limited to, travel on foot, bicycle, scooter, motorcycle, automobile, or public transit, except Essential Travel and Essential Activities.

Essential activities are defined as:

- Engaging in activities or perform tasks essential to health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members, such as, obtaining medical supplies or medication, visiting a health care professional, or obtaining supplies they need to work from home.
- Obtaining necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members, or to deliver those services or supplies to others, such as food and other grocery and cleaning products.
- Engaging in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined, such as walking, hiking, biking, running or equestrian activities.
- Performing work to provide essential products and services at essential businesses and government entities as well other nonprofit organizations.
- Caring for a family member or pet in another household.
- Attending private gatherings of not more than six nonrelatives in a home or place of residence. Social distancing should be practiced at all time at such gatherings.

This Order shall become effective at 11:59 p.m. on March 19, 2020, and will continue to be in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 7, 2020, or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.

“Each successive day for the past two weeks, local jurisdictions across Northern California have issued additional guidance and direction to limit the spread of COVID-19. Sacramento County has been no different,” said Phil Serna, Chairman of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. He continued by stating, “With today’s announcement, we have in place a well-

News Release

planned enforceable “order,” and this latest step represents the conclusion of several sequential actions that have deliberately slowed virus transmission to date, and that will continue doing so well into the future.”

“The steps we have taken have brought us to the day where we must issue a legal Public Health Order in Sacramento County. We know we have far more “assumed” positive cases than we have tests. As testing capacity increases, the number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases is expected to increase,” said, Dr. Peter Beilenson.

In short, what the order means is to take all reasonable means, whether as individuals, schools, businesses, government or nonprofit organizations, to stay home, only venture out to public spaces when it is absolutely essential, and take any means to help others to do the same. The goal is to comply with social distancing, and limit groups from congregating together in a way that could further spread the virus.

Full details of the Public Health Order are available: www.saccounty.net/COVID-19

###