



NEWS

August 13, 2020

For Immediate Release

Neighbor Campaign Targets Isolation; Enhanced Access for Remote Learning; COVID-19 Centers of Excellence Named, COVID-19 Case Count

Redwood City – The County of San Mateo continues to work to protect public health and safety in response to the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19.

The County of San Mateo's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) remains open to coordinate countywide response and communications in response to the situation. The EOC's Joint Information Center will provide status reports every Tuesday and Thursday until further notice. Today's report:

Dear Neighbor Postcard Campaign Helps Ease Isolation and Loneliness

The Dear Neighbor Postcard Campaign began in late May to help reduce rising rates of isolation and loneliness due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A partnership between Health Plan San Mateo (HPSM) and the County's Volunteer Corps, the initiative recruited volunteers to write uplifting messages on pre-printed postcards to send to older adults and people with disabling conditions, reaching more than 2,000 residents.

To sign up for HPSM's Dear Neighbor postcard campaign, visit www.hpsm.org/volunteer.

Health Plan of San Mateo Announces COVID-19 Centers of Excellence

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in nursing homes, [Health Plan of San Mateo \(HPSM\)](http://www.hpsm.org) and San Mateo County Health and have designated three nursing facilities, including Pacifica Nursing & Rehab Center in Pacifica, as Centers of Excellence (COE). These nursing facilities have demonstrated expertise in infection prevention and specialize in post-acute care for patients with COVID-19.

HPSM and San Mateo County Health ensure that COEs have everything they need to provide high-quality care while preventing the spread of COVID-19. Learn more about the efforts of Pacifica Nursing & Rehab Center and the Centers of Excellence initiative, which has been named a best practice by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Learn more about Centers of Excellence at www.hpsm.org/community-impact.

Public Private Partnership to Enhance Connectivity for Students in Need

The County of San Mateo this week announced a new and innovative partnership with local school districts that will bring high-speed internet access to thousands of students in rural communities and low-income households. The Board of Supervisors at its Aug. 4 meeting voted unanimously to allocate \$2.879 million toward the project from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds.

The initiative will address inequity issues for students who need to be connected to virtual learning at the start of the school year due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. By working with the school districts and using the latest census tract findings, the County can use data that identifies areas of concern where access is limited or non-existent.

“There is a greater reliance on technology in the home that strains the resources of many families in our County,” said County Chief Information Officer Jon Walton. “We need to be vigilant in our efforts to make sure no student has barriers to accessing education.”

San Mateo County formed a public private Digital Inclusion coalition, composed of government, school districts, property owners, technology service providers and Internet service providers, to deliver on this pilot initiative.

Read news release at <https://cmo.smcgov.org/press-release/aug-12-2020-san-mateo-county-partnership-brings-wireless-connectivity-k-12-students>

SMC Parks Encourages Visitors to Discover “New” Parks, Use Online Services

Now more than ever a record number of visitors are turning to local and regional parks and trails throughout the Bay Area for exercise and relaxation. Visitation to well-known San Mateo County Parks, such as Crystal Springs Regional Trail, Coyote Point Recreation Area and Edgewood Park and Nature Preserve, is double what it was this same time last year.

San Mateo County Park staff encourage seasoned and new visitors to avoid popular locations and use two new services that can help identify a new favorite park.

Before you leave home download [OuterSpacial](#), a free app that shows all San Mateo County Parks, trails and facility information. Trail navigation is accessible even when cell service is not available. Purchase a [park pass](#) online for contact free and unlimited entrance into any open San Mateo County Park for one year.

For a safe and enjoyable visit, please recreate responsibly no matter where your outdoor adventures take you:

- Remember your mask and wear it anytime you are hiking, jogging or cycling and can't socially distance.
- Rethink your plan – verify that your destination is open and identify an alternate location if parking or trails are crowded.
- Rethink your group – keep it to your household only
- Remember to clean up – always use trash receptacles or even better, leave no trace by packing out what you packed in.

Dr. Haddad Shares COVID-19 Safety Advice on Facebook Live Session

Mark Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 3:30 pm. on your calendar for a livestream session on Facebook with Dr. Evelyn Haddad from San Mateo Medical Center who will share how you can protect yourself and your loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Go to: <https://bit.ly/3gWILvI> and follow @SMCHealth on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

County Manager's Media Briefing on YouTube

The Aug. 12, 2020, media briefing on the County of San Mateo's response to COVID-19 hosted by San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/3kSDRT4>

Subscribe to the County's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/sanmateocountygov>

State's Underreporting Reflected in San Mateo County COVID-19 Case Count

A significant problem with the State of California's reporting system for communicable diseases has resulted in significant underreporting of COVID-19 testing results to San Mateo County Health and local health departments statewide. SMC health continues to work with the California Department of Public Health to identify any remaining potential data gaps to investigate, understand, and resolve additional data issues.

San Mateo County Health has updated the number of positive cases to 6,640 as of Aug. 12, 2020.

County Health provides detailed information on cases by age group and date and deaths by age group. Learn more at <https://www.smchealth.org/coronavirus>

Call Center

Residents with non-medical, non-emergency questions about the coronavirus can call 211 or 800-273-6222 at any time, day or night. Callers from landlines and cellular telephones located within San Mateo County are connected with a trained service professional from 211, a confidential service available in 180 languages.

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