



NEWS

Sept. 29, 2020

For Immediate Release

Update on County Response to COVID-19: Focus on Vulnerable Communities; Testing Sites Added; Pandemic Weighs Heavily on Budget

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:

Supervisors Adopt Budget: COVID-19 Impacts Weigh Heavily on Expenditures and Revenues

The Board of Supervisors today adopted a \$3.7 billion budget for the 2020-21 fiscal year that includes an additional \$160 million to help pay for the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board's 5-0 vote followed a public hearing held via videoconference.

The adopted budget authorizes 5,597 positions for all County funds and includes General Fund Reserves of \$179.1 million for Non-Departmental Services, and \$109.2 million for General Fund departments. As anticipated, these levels are a reduction from the Reserves included in the Recommended Budget, as Reserves have been used to backfill shortfalls in various funding sources due to COVID-19.

[Learn more](#) about the budget and the County's response to COVID-19.

County Focuses on Vulnerable Communities

As the COVID-19 pandemic moves past the half-year mark, local data reveal patterns that will influence the public health response:

- Latino/Hispanic residents account for 51 percent of the 9,950 COVID-19 cases yet comprise 24 percent of the population.
- The 20 to 29 age group accounts for more than one-quarter of total cases (2,028) yet comprises 8 percent of the population.
- Residents age 80 and older account for 88 of the 150 reported COVID-19 related deaths or nearly six in 10, despite accounting for less than 5 percent of the population.

In a report Tuesday to the Board of Supervisors, Louise Rogers, chief of San Mateo County Health, said, “People of color have been the most impacted” by the pandemic.

Rogers said a “culturally competent” approach for “reducing disparate impacts” on communities is a focus of the ongoing local health effort. This includes providing increased access to no-cost [COVID-19 testing](#) as well as public health and social service resources to under-served communities.

Data dashboards related to COVID-19 and San Mateo County can be found here: <https://www.smchealth.org/data-dashboard/county-data-dashboard>

San Mateo County Health Joins Other Health Systems in Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis

Through the Health Anchor Network, San Mateo County Health has joined 38 other health systems to declare racism a public health crisis. The measure amplifies the County’s commitment to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion, which was affirmed in a Board of Supervisors resolution on August 4, 2020. Read more here:

<https://www.smchealth.org/news/county-health-joins-38-health-systems-declare-racism-public-health-crisis>

COVID-19 Testing: Mobile Sites, More Dates Added

[Testing](#) for COVID-19 is available for everyone who lives or works in San Mateo County regardless of symptoms or increased risk of exposure. The COVID-19 diagnostic test is safe, easy and at no-cost to you regardless of where you receive it.

Adults age 18 and over can schedule a test Tuesdays through Saturdays at the San Mateo County Event Center or at a rotating series of neighborhood locations.

To make an appointment, visit the County’s testing partner, [Project Baseline’s website](#).

- Registration opens 72 hours before testing dates
- Remember to bring your photo ID and the reference ID from your confirmation email

If you don't have access to the internet, there may be a volunteer on site who can assist you. See testing dates and times for the following locations:

San Mateo: Sept. 29 – Oct. 3 (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

San Mateo County Event Center
1346 Saratoga Drive

Half Moon Bay: Sept. 29 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Our Lady of the Pillar
565 Kelly Avenue

San Bruno: Sept. 30 (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
975 Sneath Lane

North Fair Oaks: Oct. 1 & 2 (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

Stanford Parking Lot
2685 Bay Road

Make Plans for Safe Halloween & Día de Los Muertos Celebrations During COVID-19

The safest way to celebrate Halloween and Día de Los Muertos is to spend time with people in the same household or to celebrate virtually.

Some alternatives that are low risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19 and are still fun and meaningful, include:

- Creating a haunted house or candy scavenger hunt in your home for members of your household, rather than going house-to-house.
- Participating in online parties or contests (e.g., costume or pumpkin carving).
- Participating in a Halloween scavenger hunt in your neighborhood looking for Halloween-related objects (e.g. witches, spiderwebs, black cats) while maintaining social distance from people from outside your household.

Honor loved ones by:

- Decorating your home with images and objects to honor your deceased loved ones.
- Preparing traditional family recipes.
- Visiting and decorating graves of loved ones with household members only and keeping more than 6 feet away from others who may be in the area.

See more Halloween and Día de Los Muertos safety guidance at <https://bit.ly/30gQyy4>

San Mateo County COVID-19 Case Count

San Mateo County Health has updated the number of positive cases to 9,950 as of Sept. 28, 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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