



NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Update on County Response to COVID-19: Health Officer Statement, County Reporting Method Change, Shop Local -- Support Local, More Outdoor Spaces; and COVID-19 Testing and 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:

Health Officer's New Statement: Actions of Individuals Impact Loved Ones and Community

The surge in new cases in San Mateo County and throughout the region prompted San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow yesterday to issue a new statement asking individuals to think beyond themselves when making decisions about the upcoming holiday.

[Tips for healthier holiday season](#) have been issued by the California Department of Public Health which advises against travel and encourages celebrations to be limited to just your household.

If you decide to see others, it is recommended that you do so outdoors for less than two hours and with no more than three households that are socially distanced and wear face coverings.

“While there is an enormous infrastructure stood up to try to protect and inform people, if individuals don’t pay attention to their own actions during the holiday season, those they care about will be impacted during this surge in COVID-19 cases, said Dr. Morrow.

We, as a community, were able to maintain a stable, manageable COVID case rate for almost two months, from early September ending with Halloween. I know we can do it again. It is in your hands.”

Read Dr. Morrow’s full statement [here](#).

Health’s Revises Method of Showing Data, Aligns with State

Cassius Lockett, PhD, County Health’s director of Public Health, Policy and Planning, has announced a change in its method of presenting data to align with the state’s methodology. Cases will now be reported using the episode date, which places cases at the earliest date available based on one of three criteria:

- the date the lab result was collected,
- the date of a resident’s death, or
- the earliest date an individual diagnosed as COVID-19 positive had a sample collected or reported symptoms to a contact tracer or healthcare provider.

Previously, County Health had reported cases on the date of a positive test. The result is that case days have been reassigned to reflect the new methodology. The overall numbers have not shifted, but the timing has changed. In implementing a new methodology on the dashboard, County Health expects there to be some inconsistencies that will resolve over time.

“This shift in data reporting should not be interpreted as reflecting a decrease in cases in the last week,” said Lockett. “San Mateo County is experiencing among the highest level of cases we have seen since the pandemic’s beginning, and the curve information you will see on the dashboard displays this third peak of cases for which all our collective actions, such as wearing face coverings and avoiding gatherings, are necessary.”

You can see COVID-19 health data for San Mateo County [here](#).

Additional Drop-in Picnic Sites Open at Seven County Parks

San Mateo County Parks is opening additional drop-in picnic areas in seven parks for use by single household and small household groups while adhering to the California Department of Public Health [Guidelines](#).

The sites provide an outdoor alternative for up to three households to see each other while also maintaining physical distance and wearing face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Park visitors are reminded that they can keep family and loved ones safe when outdoor visits are small, short and stable:

- **Small in size:** No more than 3 households (at separate tables) and no more than 30 people
- **Short in length:** Visits should last no longer than 2 hours
- **Stable:** Don't participate in multiple gatherings with different households

Reservations and use fees are not required for these drop-in picnic sites which are marked by special signs at San Bruno Mountain, Junipero Serra, Coyote Point, San Pedro Valley, Quarry, Friendship and Flood parks. Some parks do require a vehicle entrance fee. See more information [here](#).

Shop Local and Safe for Your Holidays

The San Mateo County Recovery Initiative is urging residents to “Shop Local for Your Holidays” with a new campaign aimed at encouraging residents to patronize businesses in their community during the holiday season. San Mateo County’s small businesses are struggling to survive the economic impacts of the pandemic, especially after the Nov. 16, 2020 rollback to the more restrictive Red Tier.

Every dollar spent locally at retailers, restaurants and other small businesses will help save them and keep people employed. The County, SAMCEDA and partners including cities and Chambers of Commerce want residents to shop local but also safe. Check with your local businesses to ask if they offer online or curbside services and remember to wear your mask and remain six feet apart when shopping in person.

Graphics advertising the “Shop Local for your Holidays” campaign will be available for download and use at <https://cmo.smcgov.org/covid-19-outreach-toolkit> and <https://www.samceda.org/business-continuity-resources>

COVID-19 Testing for Adults and Children Available

Testing for COVID-19 is one way to slow the spread, receive early care, and protect loved ones. The test is safe, easy, and available at various locations in San Mateo County at no-cost to you regardless of which testing site you choose.

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 listed below.

Testing for children ages 5 to 17 is also available at the San Mateo County Event Center. Learn more and register for appointments [here](#)

Adult Testing at Neighborhood Locations

Testing for COVID-19 is also available at mobile operations that rotate among five communities Monday through Friday for everyone 18 and older who lives or works in San Mateo County.

See the schedule below for Nov. 25 – Nov. 30 and make an appointment at least seven days in advance at [Project Baseline](#).

Half Moon Bay, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Nov. 25

Our Lady of the Pillar
565 Kelly Avenue

North Fair Oaks, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., Nov. 30

Stanford Parking Lot
2685 Bay Road

Remember: If you don't have access to the internet, an on-site volunteer may be able to help you register and get tested. The County STRONGLY recommends advance registration as you cannot be guaranteed a test otherwise.

Information on testing options, including at the San Mateo Event Center and at neighborhood mobile sites in San Mateo County, can be found at <https://www.smcgov.org/testing>.

San Mateo County COVID-19 Case Count

San Mateo County Health has updated the number of positive cases to 13,561 as of Nov. 23, 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.

NOTE: There will be no EOC Update sent on Thursday, Nov. 26. Have a happy and safe Thanksgiving!

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