



NEWS

Dec. 8, 2020

For Immediate Release

Update on County Response to COVID-19: Messages from County Officials and Health Officer, CARES Act Funding, Coastside Hotel Purchase; 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:

County Officials Reinforce Message to Follow All COVID-19 Health and Safety Measures

As other Bay Area Health officials on Dec. 4 announced that they would impose new local stay-at-home orders, the County of San Mateo remains focused on following the state's existing metrics and process, while reinforcing the public's responsibility to comply with existing safety measures.

While the County understands and appreciates the measures taken by the other Bay Area counties, a new local stay at home order, for now, will not be issued by San Mateo County.

The County will continue to work with business and community leaders on adherence to existing guidelines and urge all residents to act assertively to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 by stepping up vigilance about all health and safety measures — especially avoiding gatherings — to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The County remains in the purple Tier 1 on the state's [four-tier, color-coded system](#) for

restricting and loosening activities.

“We know our residents have sacrificed and patience is growing thin, but we need you to know that you have the power to curb the spread and preserve hospital capacity for those who will need care in the coming weeks. We can get through this together if each of us takes action now to social distance, wear face coverings and avoid gatherings,” said County Manager Michael Callagy.

County officials will continue to collaborate and work with the other Bay Area counties on coordinating and facilitating the availability of hospital capacity and health officials will continue to closely scrutinize County and regional hospitalization data, including the number of available and staffed intensive care unit beds, to determine whether additional local measures should be mobilized

Read full Dec. 4 news release [here](#).

New Health Officer Statement: Why No Preemptive SAH Order, What We Must Do Now

San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow issued a new health statement Dec. 7 which focused on his shared concern with the state and fellow Bay Area health officers regarding the risks associated with gatherings during the holiday season and that we should all stay home as much as possible.

Read Dr. Morrow’s [full statement](#) in which he provides reasons for why at this time San Mateo County will not join the preemptive stay-at-home order other counties have implemented. “I certainly understand reasonable people trying different approaches to the unimaginable dilemmas that face us. I’m trying to make the best public health decisions for all of you,” says Dr. Morrow.

According to Dr. Morrow, modeling data show there are an estimated 8-15,000 active cases in San Mateo County capable of transmitting the infection to others. Based on modeling data, the overwhelming majority (80-90 percent) of people in this county are still susceptible and at risk of contracting the virus.

For this reason, Dr. Morrow asks everyone to:

- Stop moving around, stay at home except for essential activities, avoid all travel that is not essential
- Don’t enter an indoor environment without a mask if that environment has people outside your household
- Get tested if you have symptoms or are concerned and isolate yourself immediately from your family and others if you have symptoms.

Board Bolsters Aid to Child Care Providers, Small Businesses and Arts Groups

The Board of Supervisors today allocated \$1.6 million to help local small businesses, child care providers and arts groups continue to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board voted 5-0 to allocate:

- \$1 million to provide small-business grants in targeted zip codes
- \$450,000 to the Child Care Relief Fund
- \$150,000 to nonprofit arts organizations

Funding comes from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security ([CARES](#)) Act.

The Board in October [launched a program](#) to provide funding to small-business owners who live in low-income areas, are adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and meet eligibility requirements. The relief program, operated by the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, provides grants of up to \$25,000.

Eligibility for the [Child Care Relief Fund](#) is limited to licensed child care centers and family child care homes as well as license-exempt public recreation and school-district operated programs in the county that have been adversely impacted by COVID-19.

Arts organizations eligible for funding are those that previously applied for relief under [SMC Strong](#), a fund seeded by the Board of Supervisors to provide emergency relief to individuals, organizations and businesses impacted by COVID-19. Applicants to the County Arts Commission COVID grant programs are also eligible for this additional funding.

The available funding was initially allocated to a relief program for the owners of small residential properties negatively impacted by COVID-19. With the need less than expected, the Board agreed to reallocate the funds to the three programs with an additional \$200,000 potentially available.

[Read the full staff report.](#)

Providing Housing and Services: Board Agrees to Buy Coastside Hotel

The Board of Supervisors today voted 5-0 to buy a coastside hotel to provide temporary shelter that supports residents' while they seek long-term housing.

The Board allocated up to \$8,035,000 in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to purchase the Coastside Inn, 230 S. Cabrillo Highway (Highway 1) in Half Moon Bay.

The County expects to prioritize local area populations who are highly vulnerable to COVID-19 for participation in the program as feasible. The County will work with an operator to provide extensive services to residents.

The property includes 52 rooms within a half mile of grocery stores, pharmacies and a farmer's market. San Mateo County Health also has a dental clinic and a Behavioral Health and Recovery Services clinic less than 1,000 feet away.

The property could potentially be converted to permanent affordable housing in the future depending on the County's shelter and housing needs. [Read the full staff report.](#)

The [County's 2019 one-day count](#) of unsheltered individuals found 230 homeless people on the coast from Pacifica south, an area that lacks a permanent homeless shelter.

COVID-19 Testing Available in County for Adults and Children

Safe, easy and no-cost testing is widely available at County-sponsored locations for everyone who works or lives in San Mateo County — regardless of symptoms.

Follow these steps to see how to get a COVID-19 test:

- San Mateo County residents should first contact their health care provider for a COVID-19 test.
- If you cannot get a timely test through your health care provider, select from the testing options listed at <https://www.smcgov.org/testing> for a no-cost (free) COVID-19 test at a County-sponsored location.
- Once you select the best option for you, make an appointment. Appointments at ALL TEST SITES are STRONGLY encouraged as there is no guarantee you will be seen without one.

Testing for Children and Adults

Testing for children ages 5 to 17 as well as adults is available at the San Mateo County Event Center and at the Jefferson Union High School District office in Daly City. Testing is available at no cost to you, but insurance may be billed. Learn more about testing dates and the process [here](#) and register for an [appointment](#).

Testing for Adults

Appointments are available Tuesdays through Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the San Mateo County Event Center. [Make an appointment](#)

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 mobile operation locations, Dec. 9 – Dec. 15, and make an

[appointment](#) at least seven days in advance.

South San Francisco, Dec. 9, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
398 B Street

East Palo Alto, Dec. 10 & 11, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
2160 Euclid Avenue

San Bruno, Dec. 14 & 15, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
975 Sneath Lane

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.

San Mateo County COVID-19 Case Count

San Mateo County Health has updated the number of positive cases to 16,371 as of Dec 6, 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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