



NEWS

Feb. 25, 2021

For Immediate Release

Nearly 200,000 Vaccine Doses Administered; Free Bus Rides to Vaccination Sites; Fresh FAQs: Update on County Response to COVID-19

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 Thursday until further notice. Today's report:

Shots in the Arm: Doses Administered nears 200,000

A [total of 138,723 individuals](#) have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine shot in San Mateo County through Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2021. Of those, 53,197 individuals have completed the two-dose vaccination series, bringing the total number of doses administered to 191,920.

Beginning Feb. 22, 2021, the County of San Mateo [expanded COVID-19 vaccine eligibility](#) to include teachers, child care providers, first responders and food and agricultural workers who meet the state's Phase 1B criteria, as supply allows.

County Health continues to work with community partners on outreach to groups eligible to receive the vaccine.

While COVID-19 vaccine supply remains limited, you can sign up for the [County's notification tool](#) to receive notification when the State makes you eligible and information about how you may get an appointment.

COVID-19 Vaccines: Frequently Asked Questions

The County of San Mateo is committed to the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccine.

You can find answers to frequently asked questions about who should get the vaccine, how to sign up to learn when you are eligible for the vaccine, what to do if you do not have health and insurance and more.

See the most common [questions and answers on our FAQs page](#). We will continually update this page as new information becomes available.

SamTrans to Provide Free Rides to Vaccination Sites in San Mateo County

Beginning today, Thursday, Feb. 24, 2021, SamTrans will provide free bus rides on existing service to COVID-19 vaccination sites for people who live or work in San Mateo County.

Passengers going to a vaccination site must let the bus operator know when they board the bus and show proof of the vaccine appointment or a vaccination card. Fare payment to vaccination sites will not be required until further notice.

Redi-Wheels and Redi-Coast paratransit services will also offer eligible participants free rides to and from vaccination sites. Riders need to indicate while booking their reservation that the trip is for the purpose of a COVID-19 vaccination. Staff will then alert the driver that the rider is not required to pay the fare. [Learn more](#).

SamTrans operates 70 routes throughout San Mateo County.

Today at 6:30 p.m. – Better Together: Vaccinations and Education A Conversation with Medical and Public Health Experts

Join San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee, Dr. Anand Chabra, San Mateo County Health COVID-19 Mass Vaccination section chief, and UCSF's Dr. Monica Gandhi to discuss the science of vaccines and how the COVID-19 vaccine will impact schools.

Join the discussion today, Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

[Register for the Zoom meeting here](#).

Confronting COVID: State Eases Restrictions in San Mateo County

As San Mateo County's COVID-19 positivity rate and other metrics improve, the state of California this week announced the wider reopening of businesses and certain activities in the county.

The county on Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2021, progressed from the most-restrictive purple Tier 1 to red Tier 2 in the state's [four-tier, color-coded](#) reopening plan.

The move allows changes for numerous types of businesses: restaurants can resume indoor dining with modifications; gyms can open indoors with modifications; and retail and shopping centers can increase capacity. [Learn more.](#)

Rules on Gatherings, State Travel Advisory in Effect

Under the red Tier 2 requirements, small private gatherings are allowed outdoors and indoors with modifications:

- Masks and physical distancing required
- No more than three separate households attend (including the host's)
- Gatherings should be 2 hours or less
- Those with symptoms must not attend
- Those at high risk of severe illness strongly encouraged not to attend
- Singing, shouting, chanting, cheering, or exercising strongly discouraged outdoors and not permitted indoors

See [guidance for gatherings](#).

The state's [Travel Advisory](#) remains in effect:

Californians should remain local (not traveling more than 120 miles from their home or other place of residence) and avoid non-essential travel. Travelers from other states or countries entering into California for tourism and recreation are strongly discouraged.

Grants Available for Struggling Brick-and-Mortar Food and Beverage Industry

San Mateo County restaurants, breweries and wineries that meet eligibility requirements may apply for relief grants.

Qualifying businesses are eligible for grants of up to \$10,000 to help pay employees and rent as well as health and safety modifications and other needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

An online portal to apply for the Restaurant, Brewery and Winery Relief Program closes at noon on Monday, March 8, 2021. The portal is on the San Mateo County Strong Fund website at www.smcstrong.org/restaurantrelief.

The portal includes detailed information regarding eligibility, requirements and responsibilities in English, Spanish, Chinese and Tagalog.

County Continues Prioritizing 65+ Residents

As vaccine access expands this week to eligible essential workers including teachers and law enforcement, the County of San Mateo remains committed to ensuring residents 65 and older receive shots.

Approximately 60 percent of San Mateo County residents in that age demographic have already received the first dose of the vaccine. Achieving the 60 percent vaccination rate for older adults is due in part to large-scale, County-operated vaccination centers at the San Mateo County Event Center and San Francisco International Airport, and smaller, locally accessible clinics. [Learn more.](#)

County Health Urges Vaccination of Seniors and Patients Discharged to Long-term Care Facilities

Bay Area health officers are asking all acute care hospitals in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz Counties to immediately institute protocols to offer COVID-19 vaccine to all unvaccinated patients aged 65 and older before discharge to home as well as to all patients before discharge to a skilled nursing facility or other long-term care facility.

People age 65 and older and residents of long-term care facilities are at the highest risk for severe morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 infection. [Read the Health Advisory.](#)

Board Moves Forward with Senior Housing, New Shelter

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021, cast unanimous votes that advance two separate projects to assist vulnerable residents.

First, the Board selected MidPen Housing Corp. and the Mental Health Association of San Mateo County to operate and manage a new 95-unit development for seniors with extremely low incomes located at 1000 Twin Dolphin Drive in Redwood City and provide onsite services for residents. The location is the former TownePlace Suites hotel in the Redwood Shores neighborhood. The Board also agreed to [provide a loan](#) of \$1.5 million to MidPen to support start-up activities at the property. [Learn more about the project.](#)

Second, the Board approved a [memorandum of understanding](#) with the City of Half Moon Bay regarding a new homeless shelter at the site of the former Coastside Inn, 230 S.

Cabrillo Highway in Half Moon Bay. The MOU, for instance, addresses the creation and operation of a Coastside Shelter Community Advisory Committee intended to improve and promote communications between residents, businesses and community agencies. [Learn more about the project.](#)

Case Counts Down; Deaths Top 500

San Mateo County Health reports a [total of 38,619 COVID-19 cases](#) as of Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2021. Daily reported cases have declined sharply following an all-time high of 546 on Jan. 4, 2021.

Local deaths due to COVID-19 stand at 502. More than three out of every four deaths attributed to COVID-19 are individuals ages 70 and older.

Business Outreach and Compliance

The County's Compliance Team, as part of the Business Engagement and Compliance Program, investigates and responds to reports of alleged violations of state and local health orders related to COVID-19.

The County has received 1,396 complaints as of Feb. 23, 2021. Ninety-three percent of those have been abated, meaning the violation was not found or was corrected on the spot. Other cases are in progress or under further investigation.

A total of 145 warning letters and 36 citations have been issued. Citations issued total \$34,250 in fines. [Learn how to report](#) a violation and the appeals process.

And Don't Forget: Testing Plays a Vital Role in Limiting the Spread of COVID-19 and Allowing Us to Get Back to Doing What We Love

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.

Learn more at <https://smcgov.org/testing>.

###