



# NEWS

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May 20, 2020

## **For Immediate Release**

### **Health Officer's Phase 2 Order Allows for Childcare with Safety Requirements**

**Redwood City** – San Mateo County's new shelter in place order, issued by Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow, allows childcare facilities of all types to operate with specific safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to the order, licensed and unlicensed childcare facilities, including camps and other programs, must adhere to the following safety requirements:

- Operations must be carried out in stable groups of 12 or fewer children, meaning that the same 12 or fewer children are in the same group each day and for at least four consecutive weeks.
- Children may not change from one group to another or attend more than one childcare establishment, summer camp, other educational or recreational instruction or program simultaneously.
- If more than one group of children is at one facility, each group must be in separate rooms or spaces that cannot be accessed by children or adults outside the stable group. Groups should not mix with each other.
- Providers, educators and other staff cannot serve more than one group of children and must remain solely with that group of children.
- Each group must have its own set of supplies, games, and other equipment and not share it with other groups.

The requirements above serve the purpose of limiting the co-mingling of various households and creating stable childcare groups (a kind of "second household"). To minimize interactions and keep the childcare "households" stable, this order would not allow a child to attend two separate care settings at the same (for example, a morning camp and a different afternoon camp). Similarly, a caregiver could not care for more than one group of children at the same

time, and could not alternate groups (for example, Group A on odd days and Group B on even ones) at the same time.

If children or caregivers move from group to group, the risk of transmission increases and contact tracing becomes more difficult.

The order requires that childcare programs operate for at least four consecutive weeks so that any case of COVID-19 can be identified while keeping the contact group small. Immediately after one four week program, a child could enroll in another four week program. The order does not allow any childcare facility, including camps or other programs, to operate for less than four consecutive weeks.

The new shelter in place order, which came into effect on May 18, 2020, brings the county into alignment with early Phase 2 of Gov. Gavin Newsom's Resilience Roadmap.

## LINKS

- [State of California Resilience Roadmap](#) (website)
- [Text of San Mateo County's Shelter in Place Order](#) (PDF)
- [Social Distancing Protocol \(Appendix A\)](#) (PDF)
- [Small Construction Project Safety Protocol \(Appendix B1\)](#) (PDF)
- [Large Construction Project Safety Protocol \(Appendix B2\)](#) (PDF)
- [Additional Businesses Permitted to Operate \(Appendix C-1\)](#) (PDF)
- [Allowed Additional Activities \(Appendix C-2\)](#) (PDF)

Health Officer orders and statements are found at the San Mateo County Health website:

<https://www.smchealth.org/post/health-officer-statements-and-orders>