



NEWS

Oct. 29, 2020

For Immediate Release

Update on County Response to COVID-19: Project Homekey Funding, Safe & Secure Elections, Low-Risk Celebrations, Schools Reopening Status, 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:

State Awards County \$33 Million to House Homeless, Seniors

The County of San Mateo will be able to provide long-term housing and shelter to vulnerable residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness — including those who lost shelter due to COVID-19 — in two converted local hotels thanks to Project Homekey funding announced by the governor today.

“We are grateful to the governor and our local legislative delegation in Sacramento who lobbied successfully for the County to receive these additional funds to help our unsheltered residents,” said Board of Supervisors President Warren Slocum. “Ending homelessness was already a top priority for the Board when COVID-19 hit and the pandemic only magnified the need to provide permanent housing and shelter opportunities for those who will accept our help.”

The County will use the more than \$33 million award to purchase two projects totaling 170 rooms. The County is not yet releasing the property names because negotiations are ongoing. One project will provide service-enriched interim housing to individuals experiencing homelessness and highly vulnerable to COVID-19. The on-site services and

connection to off-site services will help residents stay successfully housed both in the interim and in the transition to permanent affordable housing. The second project will provide permanent housing for seniors who meet certain criteria, including qualifying as extremely low income, below 30 percent of median family income for the area, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

See full press release [here](#)

SMC Elections Office Ensures Safe, Secure and Convenient Voting

No matter how you choose to cast your vote in the upcoming election, the San Mateo County Registrations and Elections Office is taking every step possible to ensure that voting is safe, secure and convenient for all.

This year, all registered San Mateo County residents received a Vote by Mail ballot. Yet, you have the choice in how to return your ballot -- by mail, ballot drop box, or in person at a vote center. Find the vote center or ballot drop box near you at <https://www.smcacre.org/vote/all>

For each returned ballot, an election official will compare the voter's signature on the outside of the envelope to the signature on the voter's original registration application or other updated signatures on file. Learn more about election security in San Mateo County at <https://www.smcacre.org/election-security-and-accuracy>

Forty-five vote centers will be open beginning Oct. 31 where you can register to vote, vote in person, return a voted ballot or request a replacement ballot.

Vote center staff will follow all San Mateo County Health Department and CDC COVID-19 safety standards, including wearing gloves and face shields or masks. Voters are also required to wear masks and adhere to all social distancing requirements. On Nov. 3, centers will open, 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m.

If you intend to vote by mail, be aware that Vote by Mail ballots must be postmarked by election day, Nov. 3. This year, you can track your Vote by Mail ballot by subscribing to WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov or check your ballot status at smcacre.org/VoterLookup

Health Provides Low-Risk, Fun Halloween and Día de los Muertos Ideas

Bay Area health officials remind residents that many commonly celebrated Halloween and Día de Los Muertos activities carry high risk for spreading COVID-19. This year, San Mateo County Health is providing guidance for safer ways to celebrate during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that are fun and in the spirit of the holidays.

Some low-risk activities that are home based and small, include:

- Celebrate Halloween traditions like carving pumpkins or a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members in your home.
- Participate in a virtual pumpkin carving contest. See San Mateo County Parks' pumpkin carving ideas and submit your creation for a chance to win prizes [here](#)
- Host a virtual costume contest
- Dress up your house, apartment, living space, yard or car with Halloween decorations or decorate homes with images and objects to honor deceased loved ones.
- Prepare traditional family recipes with members of your household and celebrate a deceased loved one by playing their favorite music

For more holiday celebration ideas at <https://www.smchealth.org/health-officer-updates/halloween-safety-guidance>

County's Status Won't Impact Office of Education's Reopening Process

The San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) announced today that while the move of San Mateo County to the Orange Tier of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy allows additional sectors of the economy to reopen and will likely increase confidence in returning students to campus for in-person instruction, it does not have a direct impact on schools and the process for reopening them to in-person instruction.

Schools in the county will continue to follow the guidance included in the [Pandemic Recovery Framework](#) and provided by [San Mateo County Health](#) (SMCH) and the California Department of Public Health. They will also continue to submit their reopening plans to the SMCOE and SMCH for review.

"By carefully following the safety protocols of the Pandemic Recovery Framework, including wearing face coverings, physical distancing, screening, testing, and contact tracing, schools are demonstrating that in-person learning can occur safely for students and staff," explained Superintendent Nancy Magee.

See full [press release](#)

Easy, Accessible COVID-19 Testing Available for Adults and Children

It's a smart to consider if you, family members and friends should be tested for COVID-19. Whether you're concerned because of your job or your living situation, or you're afraid you've been exposed, or if you're just worried about COVID-19, testing is a wise choice and is available in San Mateo County.

Testing for Children

The County and its testing partner Curative Inc. are offering no-cost, self-administered oral swab COVID-19 testing for children age 5 and older at the San

Mateo County Event Center.

Testing is open by appointment to all families that live in San Mateo County with children ages 5 and older. Appointments for the drive-through testing are available weekdays from 1 to 8 p.m. and can be made [here](#).

Adult Testing

Testing for COVID-19 is available to everyone 18 and older 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 which testing site you choose.

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>.

Mobile Testing

Testing at sites served by a mobile operation is available Monday through Friday. See the schedule below for Oct. 30 - and make an appointment at least seven days in advance at [Project Baseline](#).

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

Stanford Parking Lot
2685 Bay Road

Daly City, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Jefferson Union High School District Office
699 Serramonte Boulevard

San Bruno, Nov. 3, 9 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.

San Mateo County COVID-19 Case Count

San Mateo County Health has updated the number of positive cases to 11,278 as of Oct. 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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