



# NEWS

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March 25, 2021

**For Immediate Release**

## **State Expands Vaccine Eligibility to 50+ Starting April 1; Testing Key to Public Health; Vaccine Doses Near 400,000: 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:

### **State to Expand Vaccine Eligibility; County Health Focuses on Equity, Speed**

With supply of vaccines expected to significantly increase in the coming weeks, the State is expanding vaccine eligibility to more Californians. Starting April 1, individuals aged 50+ will be eligible to make an appointment, and individuals 16+ will be eligible to make an appointment to be vaccinated starting on April 15. [Read the news release.](#)

Louise Rogers, chief of San Mateo County Health, issued the following statement on the County's vaccination efforts:

In San Mateo County, we expect to continue to align with the State's eligibility definitions and we look forward to the time when everyone is eligible. Our focus will remain [equity](#), speed and scale in our local approach.

We also look forward to having greater predictability of supply – the State has relayed that they hope to offer a three-week projection. This will help us reach eligible residents with better planning and to give residents more time to schedule or come to a vaccine clinic.

The current supply constraints and limited advance notice make it more difficult to reach those with less flexibility in their work, care-giving, or personal responsibilities.

If the opening of eligibility aligns with much more supply to the County, we would expect to continue to mobilize locally targeted clinics in our most vulnerable communities, as well as offering mass vaccination at high-throughput sites such as the SMC Event Center and the SFO Long Term Parking garage.

Our work during the last several weeks to mobilize both targeted and large-scale vaccine efforts positions us well to scale up and achieve even greater reach more quickly—if there is more supply of the vaccine.

We see all three of the approved vaccines as safe and effective and will continue to use all three across all settings. Since each vaccine has different requirements for handling, we have found it advantageous from a quality management and efficiency perspective to offer only one type of vaccine at a time at each clinic.

### **As Restrictions Ease, Testing Remains Key to Protect Public Health**

San Mateo County public health officials urge residents to continue to follow [health and safety guidance](#) to protect against a COVID-19 resurgence. Testing helps inform the public health response by identifying potential outbreaks and protects overall public health by allowing patients to get treatment sooner.

“As the State eases its restrictions, we hope that you can enjoy activities again in a safe and careful way,” said Dr. Curtis Chan, deputy health officer. “Getting a COVID test when you experience symptoms or concerned about exposure will help your doctor care for you and prevent transmission of COVID-19 to others. Free, quick COVID-19 testing is available and easily accessible throughout San Mateo County.”

For testing locations and times, visit [www.smcgov.org/testing](http://www.smcgov.org/testing)

County Health on Tuesday, March 23, 2021, reported San Mateo County was averaging 4.4 new COVID-19 cases a day per 100,000 of the population. This is far below the high of approximately 60 new cases a day per 100,000 population following a December/January holiday surge, but health officials in San Mateo County and throughout the Bay Area are wary of a potential new surge in cases.

County Health also reported the COVID-19 positivity rate stands at 0.9 percent countywide and 1.8 percent in the [Healthy Places Index](#) census tracts. The positivity rate is the 7-day average of all COVID-19 tests performed that are positive.

These numbers place San Mateo County in the Orange tier in the State's color-coded for loosening and tightening restrictions called the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). COVID-19 is considered "moderate" in Orange where a large number of businesses may resume indoor and outdoor operations typically with modifications.

### **Grants Available for Operators of Shuttered Live Venues, Museums**

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has launched a portal where operators of live performing arts groups, museums and other venues can learn about the new Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) application process.

Applications will be accepted starting April 8, 2021.

Prior to the SVOG application opening, the SBA will host a national informational webinar to highlight the application process for potential eligible entities from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2021. Those interested in participating can [register here](#).

As the SBA prepares to open the SVOG applications, the dedicated SBA website, <http://www.sba.gov/svogrant>, which includes [frequently asked questions](#), [video tutorials](#) (including one on how to get registered in SAM.gov), a [preliminary application checklist](#) and [eligibility requirements](#), is the best source for program information.

### **Vaccine Doses Administered Nears 400,000**

A total of 263,664 individuals have received at least one [COVID-19 vaccine shot in San Mateo County](#) through Wednesday, March 24, 2021, up nearly 50,000 from the prior week.

Of the total, 132,445 individuals have completed the vaccination series, bringing the total number of doses administered to 390,884.

As of March 17, 2021, of all county residents that had received the vaccine, 51.2 percent identify as people of color, 31.5 percent identify as white and 17.3 percent identify as other/unknown.

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

### **Sign Up for Vaccine Notification Tools**

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

The County notification tool is available in Spanish, Chinese simplified and traditional, and Tagalog. Through Google translate, the form is also available in multiple other languages.

Residents should also sign up for the state's [MyTurn](#) tool, which is expected to offer online appointment scheduling in our area in the coming weeks.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Dose Allocation Dashboard**

County Health now [publishes a dashboard](#) showing the pathways COVID-19 vaccine reaches San Mateo County and how those doses are allocated through County Health, health care systems, pharmacies and other distribution systems.

The dashboard provides a summary of doses delivered to San Mateo County Health and partners. Vaccine is allocated for those who live in or work in San Mateo County. As such, the dashboard cannot be directly compared to the vaccine totals dashboard, which reflects only those who live in San Mateo County.

The dashboard will be updated weekly.

### **COVID-19 Rent Relief**

The state's COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program began accepting applications March 15, 2021. Both landlords and renters can apply.

The effort is designed to help low-income Californians through the payment of back rent to landlords.

Eligible landlords may receive 80 percent of an eligible tenant's unpaid rent for the period between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021.

More information is available along with how to apply at [https://housing.ca.gov/covid\\_rr/index.html](https://housing.ca.gov/covid_rr/index.html)

For eligibility and application help, you can call the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Call Center at 833-430-2122.

**COVID-19 Case Counts**

County Health reports a total of 39,992 total cases of COVID-19 as of Wednesday, March 24, 2021. Deaths attributed to COVID-19 stand at 544.

Additional information such as cases by age group, cases by race/ethnicity and deaths by age is available at <https://www.smchealth.org/data-dashboard/county-data-dashboard>

**211 Call Center**

Residents with non-medical, non-emergency questions about the coronavirus can call 211 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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