

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Health Officials Confirm Two More Cases of COVID-19 in Merced County

MERCED COUNTY, CA – The Merced County Department of Public Health (Department) has confirmed two more cases of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Merced County, bringing the total to four confirmed cases. The new cases are currently under investigation. Based on information provided by the individuals, Public Health staff will assess risks of exposure and contact any affected individuals. To date, three of the four confirmed Merced County cases are all individuals under the age of 40.

According to statistics compiled by the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), individuals in the age range of 18-45 years of age comprise 51% of the 2,535 positive cases in California.

The Department wants to strongly urge all of our residents, especially those in the 18-45 age range, to comply with the Stay at Home Order issued by Governor Gavin Newsom and Merced County’s Health Officer, Dr. Kenneth Bird. Residents should only be leaving their homes to perform or receive essential services and should not be participating in any non-essential gatherings.

“Although all of the cases of COVID-19 in our county, to date, can be traced to exposures outside of our county, we must consider the very likely possibility that exposure to an unrecognized case within our community can occur. Now, more than ever, we must take every possible measure to slow the spread of this illness.” Says Merced County Public Health Officer, Dr. Kenneth Bird

“It’s going to take each of us doing our part to ensure that we minimize the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic here in our own community. We each have a responsibility to rise to the call. My fear is that mixed messaging has lessened the seriousness of COVID-19 which leads to misunderstanding the critical importance of adhering to simple and effective preventative measures”, says Public Health Director, Dr. Rebecca Nanyonjo-Kemp.

EVERYONE SHOULD:

- ✓ Stay home, especially if you’re sick and no visitors
- ✓ Only leave home for essential services
- ✓ Practice social distancing which means keeping at least 6 feet between you and any person, especially when outside of your home
- ✓ Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds as often as possible.
- ✓ Not touch your eyes, nose or mouth
- ✓ Call your health care provider first if you think you have COVID-19

Press releases will no longer be issued for each new positive case in Merced County. Please check the Department’s webpage at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus for the most-up-to date information.

For general information pertaining to COVID-19, please contact the Department information line contacted at (209) 381-1180 (English, Spanish, Hmong)

To schedule a phone interview, please contact the Public Health Communication Office from Monday-Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm at (209) 381-1187.

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