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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 12, 2020

Merced County Revises Stay-at-Home Order into the Stay Safe Order

MERCED COUNTY, CA – Merced County Health Officials have issued a revised Health Officer Order which is effective immediately. This order is based on state guidance for further reopening of business sectors and will allow additional activities to reopen in Merced County following industry-specific guidelines released under the Statewide Resilience Roadmap to reopen. Further information on specific guidance can be found at: www.reopenmercedcounty.com/guidelines/

The revised order does the following:

- Recommends all members of the public wear face coverings where social distancing is difficult (i.e., during worship, while conducting business, when surrounded by groups of people, etc.) as recommended by the CDC.
- Allows for the reopening of the following sectors, with appropriate safety modifications:
 - Day camps and youth activities
 - Campgrounds, RV parks, and outdoor recreation (including public pools)
 - Hotels for tourism (including public pools)
 - Casinos, cardrooms, and racetracks (without spectators)
 - Film, TV, and music production
 - Professional sports without spectators
 - Gyms and fitness centers (including public pools)
 - Family entertainment centers including bowling, mini-golf, batting cages, and movie theaters
 - Bars and wineries
 - Zoos and museums

On 6/19/2020, the reopening of the following additional sectors will be permitted guidance issued from the state: aestheticians, skin care, and cosmetology services; electrology, waxing, and threading; nail salons; tattoo parlors and piercing shops; and massage therapy.

Private gatherings of over 10 people and mass gatherings remain prohibited. “The Department is committed to the community’s well-being in all aspects of health, including economically. Everyone plays a role in this recovery process and we can do our part by adhering to the preventative safety measures. Our collective action will help keep one another safe and keep Merced County open,” says Dr. Sandoval, County Health Officer.

As a general reminder, EVERYONE SHOULD:

- ✓ Wear a cloth face covering while out and about in the community;
- ✓ Practice social distancing, making sure to maintain at least 6 feet between you and others;
- ✓ Limit your social gatherings. The fewer the people, the lower the likelihood of spread and last, but certainly not least;
- ✓ Wash your hands with soap and water often.

If you are a Merced County resident who would like to be tested for COVID-19, please register for an appointment by calling 1-888-634-1123 or online at www.lhi.care/covidtesting.

For more information on COVID-19 and the Stay Safe Order, please visit the Department’s resource website at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus or call the Department’s information line at (209) 381-1180 (English, Spanish, Hmong).

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ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER
OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED ADVISING ALL INDIVIDUALS LIVING
IN THE COUNTY TO CONTINUE TO STAY SAFE AND CONTINUE SOCIAL
DISTANCING; IDENTIFYING BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES THAT
MAY RESUME OPERATIONS; AND LIMITING OF LARGE GATHERINGS

DATE OF ORDER: June 12, 2020

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTIONS 101040, 101085, AND 120175, THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED (“HEALTH OFFICER”) ORDERS:

1. This Order repeals and replaces all previous Stay at Home orders issued by the Health Officer of Merced County, except for the Febrile Respiratory Illness Order issued on April 7, 2020. This Order does not supersede any conflicting or more restrictive orders issued by local governments, the State of California, or the Federal Government.
2. This Order implements Executive Order N-33-20, issued by Governor Newsom on March 19, 2020, as well as the Order of the State Public Health Officer issued on March 19, 2020, and all subsequent amendments and modifications thereto, including the Resilience Road Map (“Collectively, “Governor’s Orders”). Persons under a Public Health quarantine order must comply with such Orders.
3. Guidance for Individuals

All private gatherings of over 10 people are prohibited, except as otherwise stated herein or authorized by the Health Officer. Individuals are encouraged to engage in outdoor activities, including but not limited to walking, hiking, biking, golfing, running or equestrian activities, provided the individuals, or households, comply with Social Distancing Requirements. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.

- a. For purposes of this Order, “Social Distancing Requirements” includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals not from the same household, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.
- b. All members of the public are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings when leaving their residence, especially when social distancing is not feasible, such as in grocery stores or other businesses. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on proper wear of face coverings should be followed. Face coverings, when combined with social distancing and handwashing, may prevent transmission of COVID-19 by reducing respiratory

droplet exposure. Business owners have the authority to require the use of face coverings for patrons seeking entrance to their business establishments.

4. Guidance for Businesses and Organizations

All businesses and organizations in the County should refer to Appendix A of this Order for guidance as to whether the business or organization may remain open or reopen. Appendix A is intended to be consistent with the Governor's Orders and Resilience Road Map, the directive from the California State Public Health Officer designating "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers" and/or the State variance granted to the County.

Worship services and funeral services may continue so long as compliant the with Governor's Orders and the Worship Services Safe Distancing Rules provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health.

The following sectors, businesses, establishments, or activities are not permitted to operate in the County of Merced or the State of California at this time: indoor playgrounds such as bounce centers, ball pits and laser tag; live theatre; saunas and steam rooms (including public hot tubs); nightclubs; concert venues (indoor and outdoor); festivals (including fairs, carnivals and parades); theme parks; and higher education. These sectors, businesses, establishments, or activities will be authorized to reopen upon receiving guidance from the Governor and/or permission to reopen through the State variance granted to the County.

All sectors, businesses, establishments, or activities not authorized to open or reopen at this time shall cease activities and shall close their facilities, except for basic minimum operations such as activities to maintain value of the business's inventory, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or related functions. For clarity, businesses may also continue operations to the extent employees or contractors can perform work from home or place of residence.

5. Operating Requirements for All Businesses and Organizations:

- a. Limit the number of people who can enter into the facility/job site at any one time to ensure that people in the facility/job site can easily maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another at all times, except as required to complete business activities; and
- b. Strongly encourage employees to wear face coverings or use other protective barriers (e.g., plexiglass, cubicles) where six feet of distance is not easily maintained between employees, or between employees and the public; and
- c. Where lines may form at a facility/job site, mark six-foot increments at a minimum, to establish where individuals should stand to maintain adequate social distancing; and

- d. Provide hand sanitizer, proper handwashing stations with soap and water, or approved disinfectant at or near the entrance of the facility/job site and other appropriate areas for use by the public and employees, and in locations where there is high-frequency employee interaction with members of the public (e.g., cashiers); and
 - e. Provide for contactless payment systems or, if not feasible to do so, provide disinfectant for all payment portals, pens, and styluses after each use; and
 - f. Regularly disinfect all high-touch surfaces and equipment; and
 - g. Post a sign at the entrance of the facility/job site informing all employees and customers of the requirements set forth in the Febrile Respiratory Illness Order issued on April 7, 2020; and
 - h. Assign a safety officer to ensure compliance with Health Officer Orders, State Guidance, and OSHA regulations, as applicable.
 - i. Businesses and organizations should reference the industry specific guidance provided by the State found at <https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance/>.
6. Parks and cemeteries are authorized to reopen with limitations. Playgrounds, large park picnic areas, and indoor facilities in parks must remain closed until authorized by the Governor's Orders or authorized by the State variance granted to the County.

Individuals utilizing these outdoor spaces shall adhere to the Guidance for Individuals in Section 3 of this Order, which prohibits gatherings of over 10 people, maintaining at least six-foot distance from individuals not from the same household, and frequent hand washing or use of hand sanitizer. Golf courses may remain open if following approved operational guidelines provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health.

7. In the event that the Health Officer determines that hospitalizations, or other factors, indicate an increased transmission of COVID-19 or stresses on critical healthcare infrastructure, the Health Officer may issue an addendum to this order requiring additional prevention measures, such as face coverings, or closure of certain higher risk activities and businesses, including, but not limited to indoor dining at food facilities, public pools, salons and barbershops, and/or fitness facilities. Furthermore, in the event the County no longer meets the epidemiological stability criteria set forth by the State, the County variance may be revoked by the State, which may require closure of some businesses permitted to open under the County's variance.
8. Pursuant to Government Code Sections 26602 and 41601 and Health and Safety Code Sections 101029 and 131080, the Health Officer requests that the Sheriff and all chiefs of police in the County ensure compliance with and enforce this Order, including facility or business closure, to the extent law enforcement, in consultation with the Health Department, believes that businesses or other organizations are operating outside of Social Distancing Requirements or in an otherwise unsafe manner. The violation of any provision of this Order constitutes an imminent threat to public health. Consistent with the views expressed by the Governor and after consulting with the Merced County Sheriff, the Director and Public Health Officer believes that

enforcement through education is preferable but that other means of enforcement may be employed, as deemed appropriate by the law enforcement agency.

Violators of this Order may be subject to an administrative fine in the amount of \$100.00 for a first offense, \$200.00 for a second offense, and \$500.00 for a third and subsequent offense (California Government Code Section 8665).

9. In accordance with California Health and Safety Code section 131080, the Health Officer will follow the guidance of the California Department of Public Health and may modify or extend this Order, or issue additional Orders.
10. This Order shall become effective immediately and continue until it is rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.
11. Copies of this Order shall promptly be: (1) made available at the County Administration Building at 2222 M Street, Merced, California 95340; (2) posted on the County Public Health Department's website (countyofmerced.com); and (3) provided to any member of the public requesting a copy of this Order.
12. If any provision of this Order to the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the remainder of the Order, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.

IT IS SO ORDERED:



Salvador Sandoval, MD, MPH
Merced County Health Officer

Dated: June 12, 2020

APPENDIX A

This Appendix is intended to reflect the Governor's Orders, the directive from the California State Public Health Officer designating "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers" and/or the State variance granted to the County.

View State Guidance requirements for the below authorized industry sectors at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance/>. Additional guidelines may be viewed at the Reopen Merced County requirements for business website link: <https://reopenmercedcounty.com/guidelines/>.

- i. Healthcare Operations and Essential Infrastructure;
- ii. Grocery stores, certified farmers' markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of food, pet supply, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products (such as cleaning and personal care products), unless specifically noted to remain closed in Section 5 of this Order. This includes stores that sell groceries and also sell other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences;
- iii. Agriculture, food, and beverage cultivation, processing, testing and distribution, including but not limited to, farming, ranching, fishing, dairies, creameries, wineries and breweries in order to preserve inventory and production (not for retail business), as well as business activities that support production and processing by providing essential agricultural supplies and services, including but not limited to, transportation, manufacturing, chemicals, equipment, and services such as cooling, storing, packing, and distribution of such products for wholesale or retail sale;
- iv. Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;
- v. Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services;
- vi. Gas stations and auto-supply, sales and auto-repair, and related facilities such as drive-thru automatic car washes and detailing services;
- vii. Banks and related financial institutions;
- viii. Hardware stores;
- ix. Animal care facilities that provide food, shelter, veterinary and/or routine care and other necessities of life for animals including grooming, dog day care, rescue, and boarding;

- x. Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, custodial/janitorial workers, handyman services, funeral home workers and morticians, moving services, HVAC installers, carpenters, vegetation services, tree maintenance, landscapers, gardeners, pool maintenance, property managers, private security personnel and other service providers who provide services to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation to properties and other Essential Businesses;
- xi. Businesses providing mailing and shipping services, including post office boxes;
- xii. Schools and school-based programs. Higher education is not permitted to be open for in-person learning at this time; this sector will be permitted to reopen when authorized by the Governor's Orders and/or authorized by the State variance granted to the County;
- xiii. Laundromats, drycleaners, and laundry service providers;
- xiv. Indoor and/or outdoor dining at restaurants and other food facilities, including schools. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food may continue to provide delivery, take-out, and curbside pick-up;
- xv. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home;
- xvi. Businesses that supply other essential businesses with the support or supplies necessary to operate;
- xvii. Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences;
- xviii. Airlines, taxis, and other private transportation providers providing transportation services necessary for Essential Activities and other purposes expressly authorized in this Order;
- xix. Home-based care for seniors, adults, or children;
- xx. Residential facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, and children;
- xxi. Professional services, such as legal or accounting services, when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities;
- xxii. Delivery services that provide transport of essential products, such as water, food and household products;
- xxiii. Childcare facilities;
- xxiv. Retail and related manufacturing and logistics;

- xxv. Hair salons and barbershops;
- xxvi. Destination retail, including shopping malls and swap meets; tanning facilities; office-based businesses;
- xxvii. Casinos, cardrooms, and racetracks;
- xxviii. Wineries and bars;
- xxix. Gyms and fitness centers;
- xxx. Movie theatres, family entertainment centers, zoos, museums, day camps, campgrounds and outdoor recreation, music/film/TV production, professional sports without live audiences, and youth sports/activities. Youth sports/activities shall follow the specific operational guidelines provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health;
- xxxi. Public pools. Saunas and steam rooms (including public hot tubs) are not permitted to be open at this time. These facilities will be permitted to reopen when authorized by the Governor's Orders and/or authorized by the State variance granted to the County;
- xxxii. Hotels (for tourism and individual travel) and short-term rentals;
- xxxiii. Personal care services including facials, electrolysis, waxing, esthetics, skin care, cosmetology, nail salons, tattoo/body art, piercing, and massage therapy in non-healthcare settings; this sector will be permitted to reopen when authorized by the Governor's Orders and/or authorized by the State variance granted to the County no earlier than June 19, 2020;
- xxxiv. Other businesses allowed to reopen pursuant to the Governor's Orders and/or authorized by the State variance granted to the County.

**Merced County Department of Public Health
COVID-19 Worship Services Safe Distancing Rules
(Includes Funeral Services Guidance)
During Effective Dates of Stay Safe Health Officer Order
*Approval of this guidance is effective May 26, 2020.***

Note these guidelines provided are the minimum requirements that must be enforced. Churches and other worship facilities are able to develop policies that are more stringent if they feel they are necessary to ensure the health and safety of persons using their facilities or participating in their services.

Churches and faith-based organizations are responsible for ensuring compliance of individuals utilizing their facilities and participating in their services. Follow the Merced County website for the most up-to-date information at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus.

In-person Worship Services Allowed with Restrictions

Follow the State's *Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies* Industry Guidance (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>).

*Places of worship must limit attendance to 25% of building capacity or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower. This limitation will be in effect for the first 21-days of a county public health department's approval of religious services and cultural ceremonies activities at places of worship within their jurisdictions. Upon 21-days, the California Department of Public Health, in consultation with county Departments of Public Health, will review and assess the impact of these imposed limits on public health and provide further direction as part of a phased-in restoration of activities in places of worship. The current attendance limits remain in effect until the State authorizes less restrictive attendance limits.

Drive-in Worship Services Allowed with Restrictions

Follow the State's *Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies* Industry Guidance (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>).

Remote Access Worship Services Allowed with Restrictions

Remote worship services are strongly recommended to assist individuals with the ability to stay at home whenever possible. Remote access to worship services is allowed through e-mail, video streaming, or teleconference.

Follow the State's *Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies* Industry Guidance (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>).

Faith-based Counselling Allowed with Restrictions

Faith-based counselling can reopen within the following parameters:

1. Counselling services are permissible in-person where the service cannot reasonably be practiced remotely.
2. Counselling services should adopt State guidance on Limited Services, where applicable.
3. This designation does not permit gatherings beyond counselling to members of a single household.

Follow the State's *Limited Services* Industry Guidance (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-limited-services.pdf>).

Funeral Services Allowed with Restrictions

No more than 10 persons, including clergy and technical assistance, shall be present at any given time.

Family shall disclose to clergy if decedent is COVID-19 positive.

Follow the State's *Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies* Industry Guidance (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>).

**Merced County Department of Public Health
COVID-19 Youth Sports/Activities Guidelines
During Effective Dates of Stay Safe Health Officer Order
*Approval of this guidance is effective June 12, 2020.***

Note these guidelines provided are the minimum requirements that must be enforced. Coaches, facilities, and organizations are able to develop policies that are more stringent if they feel they are necessary to ensure the health and safety of staff, volunteers, and children using their facilities or participating in their services.

Coaches, facilities, and organizations are responsible for ensuring compliance of individuals utilizing their facilities and participating in their services. Follow the Merced County website for the most up-to-date information at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus.

Youth Sports and Activities Allowed with Restrictions

No more than 25 persons, including coaches and parents, shall be present for a practice or class at any given time. Meets/games involving participants or coaches that are not a part of a single team or class are prohibited.

Youth sports waivers for participants shall at a minimum inform parents/guardians of the risks for COVID-19 spread and to request an acknowledgement.

Follow the State's *Day Camp* Industry Guidance* (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-daycamps.pdf>), and *Fitness Facilities* Industry Guidance for swimming pools and aquatic venues (viewable at the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness.pdf>) until specific guidance for youth sports/activities is developed by the State and posted at <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap/>.

*Replace the term "day camp" with "youth sports/activities organizer" in the State's *Day Camp* Industry Guidance. Replace the term "camper(s)" with "youth participant(s)" in the State's *Day Camp* Industry Guidance.

It is also required to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Considerations for Youth Sports* (viewable at the following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>).

Merced County Department of Public Health
COVID-19 Golf Safe Distance Rules
During Effective Dates of Stay Safe Health Officer Order

Note these guidelines are a compilation of many clubs' best practices. These are the minimum requirements that must be enforced, along with the *Campgrounds, RV Parks, and Outdoor Recreation* State Industry Guidance viewable at the following link:

<https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-campgrounds.pdf> ; Clubs are able to enforce policies that are more stringent if they feel they are necessary to ensure the health and safety of persons using their facilities.

Clubs are responsible for ensuring compliance of their individuals utilizing their facilities.

Facilities

1. All clubhouse and indoor facilities are and shall remain closed, including, but not limited to the Pro Shop, bar, and in-dining at restaurants.
2. Driving ranges may remain open only if automatic ball cleaners are utilized and a person does not directly conduct the golf ball cleaning.
3. If restrooms remain open, cleaning must be increased to all touch points at least 4 times per day.
4. Check in, if required, must be completed outside, with social distancing of at least 6 feet while both golfer and staff are masked, or through a Plexiglas-type shield.
5. Expand tee time intervals to ensure social distancing.

Persons Allowed on Courses

1. Outdoor areas of golf clubs are open only by tee time appointment for appropriate outdoor activities, including the playing of golf pursuant to COVID-19 Golf Safe Distances Rules.
2. Persons who are symptomatic with cough, fever, or shortness of breath, or are housed with anyone symptomatic are prohibited from being on site until those symptoms have subsided for at least fourteen (14) days. A negative COVID-19 test result does not overrule the recommended quarantine, due to potential testing false negatives.
3. Any person who is quarantined by order of a medical or governmental official is prohibited from being on site until the quarantine is lifted.
4. Except for persons of the same household, persons who drive their vehicle to the site should do so alone and park, if possible, at least one space apart. At all times, those who are not persons of the same household using the course, including parking areas, shall stay at least ten (10) feet away from all other users.
5. Those golfing must have no more than 4 players in any group. Social distancing **MUST** be maintained around the green.

6. Only one person per golf cart.
7. Patrons must wait in their cars until their designated tee times. No social gathering while waiting for the round to begin. Patrons must go directly from hole 18 to their car. No social gathering following the round.
8. Any and all contact with golf course staff, including payment processing, will be done telephonically or electronically, with the exception of check in, if required (see facility rules, above). No cash payments.
9. Limited staff may remain on site for basic facility/grounds maintenance, security, and to ensure compliance with these rules. However, staff must remain 6 feet from all patrons, and wear a mask during interactions.

Equipment

1. No rental clubs or balls may be used and all patrons must bring and use their own equipment.
2. If patrons wish to pick up golf clubs or pull carts from the bag/cart storage, arrangements to do so must be made electronically in advance with staff who will remove the equipment and leave it outside in a designated location. The equipment will not be returned to storage until regular play is resumed (the patrons must then take their equipment with them). This equipment must be the patron's personal equipment.
3. Golf cart rentals should be limited whenever possible, and arranged in advance, electronically or over the phone.
 - a. When possible, if the requesting patron does not have a personal cart, a cart number will be assigned to the requesting patron and that cart shall be used only by that patron and the patron's household during the duration of these rules.
 - b. Golf carts must be picked up and dropped off outside by masked staff maintaining 6 feet or more social distance from any patrons.
 - c. Golf carts must be cleaned and sanitized between each use, and before staff move them back into storage.
 - d. Only one person per golf cart.
4. All rakes, ball washers, and sand bottles must be removed to avoid cross-contamination. If a ball lands in a spot that would otherwise have been raked (e.g. a footprint or divot), the ball can be placed in the nearest undamaged portion of the bunker.
5. The golf cups and flags must be modified to prevent the ball from going into the cup. Flagstick or the base holding the flagstick in place must not be touched or removed. Courses must provide alternative ways to remove balls from holes that do not require human contact, or alternative rules (e.g., putts within two feet are to be conceded to minimize the possibility of contact with the hole and stick.)
6. Except for persons of the same household, players should not touch another player's ball, equipment, or cell phone, including scorecards and pencils.