

ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED
PROVIDING DIRECTION TO STAY SAFE TO STAY OPEN

DATE OF ORDER: July 20, 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 and Stay Safe 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 incorporates and implements the California State Public Health Officer Order issued on July 13, 2020, viewable at the following link: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/SHO%20Order%20Dimming%20Entire%20State%207-13-2020.pdf>, as well as Executive Order N-33-20, issued by Governor Newsom on March 19, 2020, the Order of the State Public Health Officer issued on March 19, 2020, and all subsequent amendments and modifications thereto (“Collectively, “State Orders”). Persons under a Public Health quarantine order must comply with such Orders.
3. The current data reflects that community spread of infection of COVID-19 in Merced County is of increasing concern. All members of Merced County play a vital role in ensuring our County moves forward to social and economic recovery. Together the actions of the Merced County Community can save lives and keep businesses open. To promote, protect, and preserve a healthy living and safe environment for Merced County, the following direction is given to the Community.
4. Community Guidance to Stay Safe to Stay Open
 - a. All private gatherings of over 10 people are prohibited, except as otherwise provided by State Orders including for places of worship; refer to the Merced County Department of Public Health’s COVID-19 Worship Services Safe Distancing Rules. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.
 - b. To help stop the spread of COVID-19, individuals should maintain at least six-foot distance from other individuals not from the same household, wash hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or use hand sanitizer, cover coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and refrain from shaking hands.
 - c. In accordance with direction from the California Department of Public Health and the Governor, all members of the public are required to wear face coverings when in public or common spaces. Individuals should refer to the California

Department of Public Health's requirement for the use of face coverings, viewable at the following link:

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Guidance-for-Face-Coverings_06-18-2020.pdf for details including all requirements and exceptions. Face coverings, when combined with social distancing and handwashing, may prevent transmission of COVID-19 by reducing respiratory droplet exposure.

5. Guidance for Businesses and Organizations

All businesses and organizations in the County shall adhere to the California Department of Public Health and Governor's Orders for direction as to what businesses may operate in the County and any applicable restrictions, this information can be found at <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap-counties/>. Businesses and organizations should also reference the industry specific guidance provided by the State found at <https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance/>.

6. 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. Consistent with the views expressed by the Governor, the 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 a 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).

7. 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.
8. This Order shall become effective immediately and continue until it is rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.
9. 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.
10. 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: July 20, 2020

ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED DIRECTING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO REPORT PATIENTS SEEN WITH FEBRILE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS TO MERCED COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH; DIRECTING EMPLOYERS TO SCREEN EMPLOYEES FOR FEBRILE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS; AND DIRECTING INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITHIN THE COUNTY TO SELF-MONITOR FOR SIGNS OF COVID-19 AND APPROPRIATELY ISOLATE.

DATE OF ORDER: April 7, 2020

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Sections 101040, 120175, and 120175.5(b) the Health Officer of the County of Merced orders as follows:

1. Whereas the World Health Organization declared a worldwide pandemic of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, and is contained in the droplets that can be sneezed, coughed, or exhaled into the air by infected individuals.
2. Whereas today, there are over 1,381, 014 cases in the world and over 78,269 deaths, in California 16,466, confirmed cases and 391 deaths, 34 cases and 1 death in Merced County, and we can expect the number of cases to increase significantly should further action not being taken to decrease the spread of the disease.
3. Whereas there currently is no available vaccination or treatment for this illness, and despite community mitigation measures that decrease the likelihood of being exposed to the droplets of an infected person (including but not limited to restricting large scale events and mass gatherings, staying at home except for performing or receiving essential services, and practicing social distancing) the numbers of cases of this illness continue to increase at increasing rates.
4. Whereas aggressive containment operations including isolating suspect cases and persons under investigation and quarantining their contacts (critical to reducing the spread of the disease and reducing the impacts of the disease on society) are soon to be exceeded in this County.
5. Whereas within the public health system, every person who meets the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) criteria for disease within Merced County has been and will be tested, there are both locally and nationally limited testing capabilities due to availability and number of laboratory test kits and specimen collection kits.
6. Effective, Tuesday, April 7, 2020, the following will be in effect for Merced County.
 - a. Health Care Providers shall:
 - i. On a daily basis report to the Merced County Public Health Department the number of patients seen in their practice with a febrile respiratory illness and the number of those patients tested for COVID-19 AND
 - ii. Direct those patients without an exclusionary diagnosis to isolate him/herself for-seven days after onset of symptoms or for three days after cessation of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications (whichever is longer) AND to notify all close contacts to quarantine themselves for 14 days from the last known contact with the patient.
 - b. All Employers shall:
 - i. On a daily basis, while conducting business, screen all employees for febrile respiratory illness;

- ii. Exclude from work all employees that report symptoms of febrile respiratory illness for seven days from the day that they are identified as having symptoms; and
 - iii. Direct employees excluded from work to isolate at home for at least seven days ,AND to notify all close contacts to quarantine themselves for 14 days from the last known contact with the patient.
 - c. All Residents shall:
 - i. Self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19; and
 - ii. Isolate themselves if they have signs and symptoms for seven days after onset of symptoms, unless they should require further medical attention, AND notify their close contacts to quarantine for 14 days.
 - d. All residents are strongly encouraged to wear a cloth face covering whenever they must be out of the home to reduce the spread of the illness from infected individuals that have no symptoms. **This is in addition to the continued requirement of at least 6 feet of social distancing.**
- 6. For the purpose of this order:
 - a. Febrile respiratory illness is defined as "a new or worsening episode of either cough or shortness of breath, presenting with fever (temperature 38 degrees C or 100.4 degrees or higher) or chills in the previous 24 hours;"
 - b. Close contact is defined as someone who has spent 15 minutes or more time within 6 feet or less of the person;
 - c. Isolation is defined as "separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick;"
 - d. Quarantine is defined as "separation and restricting the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease during the illness incubation period."
 - e. Social distancing is defined as "maintain a six-foot separation from all persons except for family members;" and
 - f. Symptoms of COVID-19:
 - i. Fever
 - ii. Cough
 - iii. Shortness of breath
 - g. Cloth face covering is defined as any cloth that can be used to cover as tightly as possible the mouth and nose of the wearer. It is NOT a surgical mask or respirator (which must be reserved for health care professionals in their work treating COVID-19 patients). It should be washed at least daily and the wearer should wash their hands before putting it on and after taking it off. Additionally, the wearer should avoid touching the covering as much as possible while wearing it.
- 7. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) may recommend further guidance.

I, as Interim Health Officer for the County of Merced, encourage voluntary compliance with this Health Officer's Order. However, violation of this order is subject to fine, imprisonments or both (California Health and Safety Code Section 120295.)



Kenneth Bird, MD, MPH
Interim Health Officer

**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 July 20, 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>). Indoor services are not allowed at this time. Outdoor attendance numbers are only limited by the ability to provide for proper social distancing; a minimum of six feet between attendees from different households is required.

Drive-in Worship Services Allowed

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

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 Counseling Allowed with Restrictions

Faith-based counseling can reopen within the following parameters:

1. Counseling services are permissible in-person where the service cannot reasonably be practiced remotely.
2. Counseling services shall adopt State guidance on Limited Services, where applicable.
3. This designation does not permit gatherings beyond counseling 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>).