



# County of Santa Cruz

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## Health Services Agency

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### March 9, 2020 COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Interim Guidance for Social Distancing

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These recommendations are effective immediately through March 22, 2020 and may be updated before that time upon further evaluation and public health need.

COVID-19 needs people to spread. Although these measures will cause disruption to the local economy and our daily lives, they are intended to interrupt and slow the spread of the virus and protect overall community health. By limiting opportunities for transmission, we can slow its spread.

Each of us must do our part to protect our older citizens and vulnerable individuals at risk of serious outcomes should they be exposed.

These recommendations have been made in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), based on the best information we have at this time. They are also in line with actions taken by other counties and states with community spread of COVID-19.

#### 1. Vulnerable Populations: Limit Outings

- People who are 60 years of age and older. The risk increases significantly thereafter and escalates with age, with persons over age 80 in the highest risk category.
- People, regardless of age, with underlying health conditions including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, or chronic lung diseases like COPD, as well as those with severely weakened immune systems.
- For vulnerable populations, don't go to gatherings (of about 50 people or more) unless it is essential. Avoid people who are sick.

#### 2. Workplace and Businesses: Minimize Exposure

- Reduce nonessential, work-related employee travel.
- Minimize the number of employees working within arm's length of one another, including minimizing or canceling large in-person meetings and conferences of about 50 or more.
- Urge employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave or other leave benefits.

- Do not require a doctor's note for employees who are sick.
  - Consider use of telecommuting options.
  - Some people need to be at work to provide essential services of great benefit to the community. They can take steps in their workplace to minimize risk.
3. Large Gatherings: Cancel Non-essential Events
- Recommend cancelling or postponing large gatherings of about 50 or more, such as concerts, sporting events, conventions or large community events.
  - Do not attend any events or gatherings if sick.
  - For events that aren't cancelled, we recommend:
    - Having hand washing capabilities, hand sanitizers and tissues available.
    - Frequently cleaning commonly touched surface areas like counter tops and handrails.
    - Finding ways to create physical space to minimize close contact as much as possible.
  - Please see California Department of Public Health Mass Gatherings Guidance (3/07/2020)
4. Schools: Safety First
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at a school, the Santa Cruz County Public Health Division will work with the school and the district to determine the best measures, including potential school dismissal.
  - Do not go to school if sick.
  - If you have a child with chronic health conditions, consult your doctor about school attendance.
  - Equip all schools and classrooms with hand sanitizers and tissues.
  - Recommend rescheduling or cancelling medium to large events that are not essential.
  - Recommend cancelling field trips.
  - Explore remote teaching and online options to continue learning.
  - Families should prepare for potential closures.
5. Public and Commercial Transportation: Cleaning and Protection
- Increase cleaning of vehicles paying special attention to commonly touched surface areas.
  - Provide hand washing supplies in stations and hand sanitizers and tissues in vehicles.

**6. Health Care Settings: Avoid as possible, protect the vulnerable**

- All health care facilities including long term care facilities, must have a COVID-19 plan in accordance with CDPH guidelines.
- All health care facilities, including long term care facilities, must screen all staff and visitors for illness and turn away those with symptoms.
- The general public should avoid going to medical settings such as hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facilities. If you are ill, call your health care provider ahead of time, and you may be able to be served by phone or receive other instructions.
- Do not visit emergency rooms unless it is essential.

**7. Everyone: Do your part**

The best way for all community members to reduce the risk of getting sick, from many illnesses including colds, flu and COVID-19 are:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not your hand, or use a tissue and discard.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Avoid shaking hands.
- If you have recently returned from a country, state or region with ongoing COVID-19 infections, monitor your health and follow the instructions of public health officials.
- There is no recommendation for healthy people to wear masks to prevent themselves from getting sick.

You can also prepare for the possible disruption caused by an outbreak. Preparedness actions include:

- Prepare to work from home if that is possible for your job, and your employer.
- Make sure you have a supply of all essential medications for your family.
- Prepare a childcare plan if you or a caregiver are sick.
- Make arrangements about how your family will manage a prolonged school dismissal.
- Plan for how you can care for a sick family member without getting sick yourself.
- Take care of each other and check in by phone with friends, family and neighbors that are vulnerable to serious illness or death if they get COVID-19.
- Keep common spaces clean to help maintain a healthy environment for you and others. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly with disinfecting sprays, wipes or common household cleaning products.

For general information on COVID-19 please call 211, or text coronavirus to 211211, or visit [www.santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus](http://www.santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus) for updates and links to state and federal guidance.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### CDC links:

- For Healthcare Professionals - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html>
- For Schools and Communities - [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fpreparing-individuals-communities.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fpreparing-individuals-communities.html)
- For Higher Risk & Special Populations - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/index.html>

### California Department of Public Health (CDPH) links:

#### Health Care Plans:

- [Access to care- Screening & Testing \(Department of Managed Health Care - All Plan Letter\)](#)
- [Access to care- Screening & Testing \(California Department of Insurance - Bulletin\)](#)

#### Guidance documentation by category:

- [Community care facilities, including assisted living facilities and child care](#)
- [Education: Schools \(PDF\)](#)
- [Education: Colleges and universities \(PDF\)](#)
- [Mass Gatherings Guidance - event organizers \(PDF\)](#)
- [First responders, including paramedics and EMTs \(PDF\)](#)
- [Employers and workers](#)
- [Health care facilities, including long-term care facilities](#)
- [Health care facilities from Cal/OSHA](#)
- [Health care workers and workers in general industry](#)
- [Home cleaning with COVID-19 positive individuals \(PDF\)](#)
- [Laboratories \(PDF\)](#)