



Tuolumne County Public Health Department

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PRESS RELEASE **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 26, 2020

Update on Modification to State Stay-at-Home Order

Governor Newsom and State Health Officer Dr. Sonia Angell, have announced that additional activities are now included in the roadmap to modifying the statewide stay-at-home order. Dr. Liza Ortiz, Interim Tuolumne County Health Officer, has also issued an updated local Health Officer Order to be in alignment with the state orders.

Major updates from the state include guidance for:

- Hair salons and barbershops for limited services (haircuts, color services) in counties with a Stage 2 variance. Specifics can be found in the state guidance.
- Constitutionally protected gatherings, which include places of worship, at 25% of a building's capacity – or up to 100 attendees, whichever is lower.

Facilities that are open need to review and follow the industry-specific guidelines, complete the checklist, submit a copy to Tuolumne County Public Health, post the state checklist in their facility and make it available for people to review. Links to the guidance documents can be found here: <https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance/> and here for industries allowed in counties with a variance: <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap-counties/>

While these activities are now allowed with modifications, the public must understand that they are not risk-free.

People are advised that leaving their household and having close contact with other people may lead to disease transmission. The more people mix with other households, the more disease transmission will occur. If people mix with large numbers of others, the public health department may not be able to completely perform testing, tracing, and isolation activities. We may not be able to stay in 'containment' phase.

There have been many documented outbreaks of COVID-19 in places of worship, including choir practices and singing during services. We advise the following for places of worship and other constitutionally protected gatherings:

- It appears that singing is a high-risk activity for disease transmission, and we urge people to strictly maintain physical distance to prevent spread of the virus. People may need more than 6 feet of distance when singing.
- As much as possible, people should limit the size of gatherings and conduct gatherings outdoors. The state guidelines are to allow for 25% of a building's capacity or up to 100 people, whichever is less.
- Facilities should be prepared to assist with contact tracing investigations should a case be identified. We encourage facilities to maintain sign-in documentation with contact information, so these may be utilized as needed.
- Facilities should consider increasing the number of services they offer so that people can attend in smaller numbers, which may slow the spread of the disease.

A frequent concern we hear from the public is that shopping at crowded stores is allowed and presumed to be safe, so they should be allowed to engage in other activities. It should be made clear that shopping in crowded stores is not recommended. We advise people to remove themselves from situations where they cannot maintain physical distancing, especially individuals who are most vulnerable to serious illness from COVID-19. Many stores have been open throughout the stay-at-home order, and most people who are shopping do not make close contact with other people in the store. Surveillance data and testing shows that modified retail shopping has not led to an increase in cases in Tuolumne County at this time.

Some of the facilities that are now permitted to open with modifications present a different risk than modified retail shopping. They involve prolonged time among those from different households, and often indoors. We will monitor our surveillance data and trigger points closely in the coming weeks. We are prepared to respond to identified cases and conduct contact tracing. As a reminder, the state testing site in Angels Camp will be open to the public on Friday May 29th.

We urge Tuolumne County residents to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and not increase the risk for disease transmission for themselves, their loved ones, and their community.
