



NEWS

March 12, 2020

For Immediate Release

Health Officer Bars Gatherings of 250 or More Persons

Redwood City, Calif. – San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow has issued a legal order prohibiting mass gatherings of 250 or more persons. Effective at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2020, the order applies to public and private gatherings and includes exceptions for houses of worship, museums, malls, hospital and medical facilities, and the normal operations of hotels and airports.

The order will remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 3, 2020, or until it is rescinded, superseded, or amended by the health officer or by the state public health officer.

The text of the order is available here: <https://bit.ly/3b2pC8z>

Dr. Morrow says that these steps are necessary to slow the spread of the virus, safeguard the public, and attempt to conserve healthcare resources as an influx of new patients is expected. Persons over 60 and those with chronic health conditions are at higher risk of infection and death from COVID-19. The goal is to reduce the number of patients potentially requiring hospitalization and other medical resources.

“I don’t take these measures lightly,” said Dr. Morrow. “San Mateo County is following the guidance from Governor Newsom and is in line with our neighboring counties in acknowledging that limiting mass gatherings is critical in slowing the spread of the disease and protecting the most vulnerable members of our community.”

Dr. Morrow says that while the legal order refers to gatherings of 250 and over, his guidance is still to cancel all non-essential gatherings of any size and practice social distancing—keeping six feet away from others.

San Mateo County has 20 cases of COVID-19 with over 100 cases in the Bay Area.

San Mateo County Health continues to advise the following steps to guard against the spread of COVID-19: cover your cough and sneeze, wash your hands frequently, avoid shaking hand and touching your face with unwashed hands, and if you are not feeling well or are experiencing cold, flu, or other symptoms, stay home from school or work. If you are

mildly ill, there is no need to contact your primary care provider as they are very busy right now. If you are significantly ill, contact your primary care provider.

For more information, visit smchealth.org/coronavirus. For updates from the San Mateo County Emergency Operations Center, subscribe here: cmo.smcgov.org/eoc.

Media Contact:

County of San Mateo's Joint Information Center
650-779-9939
smc_jic@smcgov.org