



NEWS

May 11, 2020

For Immediate Release

Health Officer Allows Vehicle-based Gatherings *Limited to 200 or fewer vehicles, with many restrictions*

Redwood City – San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow has issued a new order permitting certain “highly regulated” gatherings of vehicles, designed to allow schools to host modified graduation ceremonies. The order takes effect at 11:59 PM on May 11.

The text of the order is here: <https://bit.ly/2SVqhC5>

For gatherings of ten or more vehicles, the order requires the occupants of the vehicle to be members of the same household, not to exit the vehicle at the gathering except to use a restroom or collect an item such as a diploma, and if the windows are open to wear face coverings. Since the vehicles must be enclosed, the order does not permit motorcycles, convertibles with the top open, vehicles with no doors, or bicycles to attend the gatherings.

The order makes the organizers of the gathering responsible for ensuring compliance with this order and the Shelter in Place Order, which includes the social distancing measures. Hosts must limit the gathering to no more than 200 invited vehicles, and the event can last no more than three hours. Hosts must provide security, in the form of local law enforcement, a private company, or personnel whose job duties include campus security, to ensure compliance with the order and address any traffic and safety issues. Hosts must also prepare a Gathering Plan, which is included as an appendix to the order: <https://bit.ly/2YVaMhk>

In addition to limiting the gathering to its invited attendees, security must also ensure that only the occupants of one vehicle exit at a time during the gathering, except for bathroom use and in an emergency, and that the social distancing requirements described in the Shelter in Place Order [<https://bit.ly/35SmYR3>] and the Face Covering Order [<https://bit.ly/2WQkMWa>] are maintained at all times.

Attending a Highly Regulated Vehicle-Based Gathering will be considered an Essential Activity, and travel to and from the event will also be considered essential.

The order notes that the COVID-19 risk to public health remains significant. As of May 10, 2020, there were 1,464 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the county and 56 deaths. The cumulative number of confirmed cases continues to increase, though the rate of increase has slowed in recent days. Evidence suggests that the restrictions on mobility and the social distancing requirements of the March 16 and prior Shelter in Place orders are slowing the rate of increase in community transmission and confirmed cases.

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