



COVID-19 UPDATE

MARCH 9, 2020

Updated Recommendations for Community-Based Organizations

In light of significantly increasing rates of COVID-19 in Santa Clara County, the Public Health Department is taking further steps to protect the health of our community. Public Health is making these recommendations in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and they are based on the best information we have at this time. These recommendations are effective immediately and may be updated upon further evaluation and public health need.

NEW GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Community-based organizations should immediately take steps to protect both the clients they serve and their employees. The specific details of your plan should be based on the size of your organization and workforce, complexity of your day-to-day operations, and type of services your organization provides to vulnerable populations.

People at higher risk for severe disease include those over the age of 50, individuals with underlying health conditions and people with a compromised immune system.

ENSURE EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE SICK DO NOT COME TO WORK

All staff should stay home if they feel sick. Sick leave policies should be flexible and consistent with public health guidance and employees should be made aware of these policies. Don't require sick employees to have doctors' notes as health care offices may be very busy and unable to provide that documentation right away.

SEPARATE PEOPLE THAT ARE SICK

Clients that are sick should be separated from healthy people and contact with them should be kept to a minimum. Designate a space and if possible, a separate bathroom just for sick people. Have them wear a mask if they have cold or flu-like symptoms such as a cough, sneeze or shortness of breath. Monitor their symptoms and refer or provide additional medical care if needed.

CANCEL EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

The Public Health Department is announcing a mandatory order issued by the Public Health Officer requiring the cancellation of mass gatherings in the County. This order will take effect at 12:00 a.m. on March 11, 2020 and will remain in place for three weeks as more widespread testing becomes available and we are able to learn more about the spread of COVID-19. A "mass gathering" is any event or convening that brings together one thousand (1,000) or more people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, theater, or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space.

Hosting Gatherings and Community Events of Less than 1,000 People

At this time, we strongly urge postponing or canceling gatherings and community events where large numbers of people (less than 1000 people) are within arm's length of one another. The novel coronavirus is more likely to spread when a lot of people gather together closely.

If you can't avoid bringing groups of people together, it is your responsibility to:

- Stop anyone who is sick with fever or respiratory symptoms from attending.
- Encourage those who are at higher risk for serious illness to not attend.
- Find ways to give people more physical space so that they aren't in close contact as much as possible.



- Ensure that there are enough supplies of hand hygiene materials and urge attendees to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used.

Direct attendees to:

- ♦ Avoid close contact with other people.
 - ♦ Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - ♦ Cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue - if available - or into their elbow.
- Clean surfaces with disinfecting wipes and other standard cleaners before, during, and after the event.

ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Employers are responsible for taking steps to make it more feasible for their employees to work in ways that minimize close contact with large numbers of people.

Employers should immediately:

- Ensure employees who are sick do not come to work
- Suspend nonessential employee travel
- Minimize the number of employees working within arm's length of one another
- Cancel all large in-person meetings and conferences, or hold them via telephone or video conference
- Maximize flexibility in granting sick leave so that sick employees are able to stay home
- Stop requiring a doctor's note for sick employees, as healthcare offices may be very busy and unable to provide that documentation right away
- Consider use of telecommuting options for appropriate employees
- Consider staggering start and end times to reduce large numbers of people coming together at the same time

REGULAR CLEANING

Organizations are responsible for ensuring that frequently touched surfaces should be regularly cleaned. Doorknobs, tabletops, counters, phones, keyboards and fixtures should be disinfected several times throughout the day. Exposure is thought to mostly occur through respiratory droplets but surfaces can still transfer the virus from person to person.

ENHANCED HYGIENE

Everyone needs to follow increased hygiene measures that include:

- Frequently wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used in a pinch if soap and water are not available
- Avoid close contact with other people
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue

STAY INFORMED

Information is changing frequently. Check and subscribe to Public Health's website and social media pages:

Public Health Website: <http://sccphd.org/coronavirus>

Public Health Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sccpublichealth/>

Public Health Instagram: @scc_publichealth

Public Health Twitter: @HealthySCC