



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Receive COVID-19 Updates and Take Actions
*Testing by Residents - With and Without COVID-19 Symptoms - Will Help Get County Opened Faster***

STOCKTON – The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors received updates and took actions today related to the COVID-19 pandemic in San Joaquin County.

Dr. Maggie Park, San Joaquin County Public Health Officer, updated the Board on the number of COVID-19 positive cases and hospitalizations in San Joaquin County. Dr. Park said there are currently 19,564 total cases and 392 deaths in the County. Dr. Park said that there are currently 59 COVID-19 patients in the hospital with 24 in the ICU, noting that the numbers are progressively coming down and are lower than the County has seen in several weeks.

Dr. Park explained that under the State’s new tiered system, which is based on a County’s rate of new cases and the testing positivity rate, that San Joaquin County remains in the most restrictive purple tier indicating widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the County. This is due to the fact that the County has more than seven new cases per 100,000 per day being identified, and more than 8 percent of tests are positive. According to the State Department of Public Health, San Joaquin County was at 12.6 new cases per 100,000 per day and a 9.1 percent positivity rate on September 8, 2020. Today, the County is at 9.5 new cases per 100,000 per day and has a positivity rate of 7.1%.

Per the State’s new guidelines, at a minimum, counties must remain in a tier for at least three weeks before moving to a different tier. Data is reviewed weekly, and tiers are updated on Tuesdays. To move forward, a County must meet the next tier’s criteria for two consecutive weeks. If a county’s metrics worsen for two consecutive weeks, it will be assigned a more restrictive tier. If a County is not meeting the statewide average for testing, they are penalized for not meeting the metric, which could keep many counties like San Joaquin from moving into the next reopening tier.

Dr. Park emphasized that in order to move from the current purple tier into the red tier that San Joaquin County residents are strongly encouraged to get tested whether or not they have symptoms. “In addition to wearing a mask, limiting gatherings and social distancing, the easiest thing residents can do to help ease the COVID-19 restrictions is to get tested,” Dr. Park said. “We have the testing capacity at many locations throughout the County at no cost. We just need people in both high risk and low-risk communities to take advantage of the testing.”

Dr. Park reported that the County is offering tests to all residents at two free testing sites along with eight local health providers, which are offering tests to their patients. San Joaquin General Hospital is offering 14 pop-up testing sites throughout the County during the month of September. The County is also partnering with the State to offer a Verily Mobile Testing Van that will soon be set up every Monday at a designated location in the County

through December, as well as an Army Corps Civil Support Team mobile testing unit that will be conducting testing at three separate locations in the County September 26 through September 28. The County is also hosting a Family Drive-thru COVID-19 Event with health information, giveaways, and free COVID-19 testing on September 26 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Hamilton Elementary School in Stockton. Testing sites can be found at www.SJReady.org.

Kathy Miller, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, said, “Countywide testing among all residents will provide the State with a clear and accurate picture of our positivity rate. People ask all the time what they can do to get our economy back on track and lives back to normal. Testing is a primary way to do that. The tests are free, convenient, widely available, and present very minor discomfort. We all need to take this message to heart and get tested.”

Dr. Park also reported to the Board that she has granted 17 waivers to schools in the County. She said several schools opened yesterday and many more will open on September 28, 2020. Even though San Joaquin County is still on the State monitoring list, the California Department of Public Health provided guidance to allow a district superintendent, private school principal/head of school, or executive director of a charter school to apply for a waiver from the local health officer to open an elementary school for in-person instruction. The waiver is applicable only for grades TK-6, even if the grade configuration at the school includes additional grades. In order to qualify for a waiver, schools must follow several metrics, which can be found on the [CDPH website](#).

The Board also approved several items related to COVID-19, including:

- Appropriation increase of \$415,838 to the Aging and Community Services budget to reflect additional funds through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act for the Senior Nutrition Program.
- Authorization of the Information Systems Director, or designee, on behalf of the Registrar of Voters, to execute the Help America Vote Act grant funding agreement for COVID-19-related election expenditures through December 31, 2020, for \$1,225,213.
- Authorization to purchase hospital medical equipment related to COVID-19 totaling \$2,254,033.

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