



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

MARTIN FENSTERSHEIB, MD, MPH
INTERIM HEALTH OFFICER

TRACEY BELTON
AGENCY DIRECTOR

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

PRESS RELEASE

NEW EXTENDED AND MORE RESTRICTIVE SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER ISSUED BY SAN BENITO COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2020

Contact:

David Westrick, Public Information Officer
Tel: 831-801-2574

San Benito County, CA-San Benito County has extended a more restrictive [Shelter in Place Order](#) effective at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until Sunday, May 3, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer, Dr. Marty Fenstersheib. The previous order was set to expire on April 7, 2020.

While the [prior order](#) has been effective in reducing the rate of transmission of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), it is not enough. There has been a significant increase in the number of positive cases from COVID-19, which is beginning to strain healthcare resources. "This new extended Order is more restrictive than the previous order due increase number of cases in our county and the absolute need for us to maintain safe physical differences," stated Dr. Fenstersheib. As of today there have been 21 confirmed cases in San Benito County.

Dr. Fenstersheib, along with county officials determined that more and stricter social distancing is needed to slow the rate of spread, prevent deaths, and stop our health care system from becoming overwhelmed. "Extending the stay-at-home order should reduce the number of sick patients seeking care at one time, giving us time to acquire more medical supplies for providers who will be providing care to people sick with COVID-19," stated Dr. Fenstersheib. "The extension will allow doctors and nurses to better treat those who do get sick and save countless lives." This order complements the indefinite statewide stay-at-home order issued by Governor Gavin Newsom earlier this month.

Like the previous local order, the new order requires people to stay at home except for doing essential activities, such as grocery shopping. Essential business will be required to post and enforce physical distancing protocols for their establishments in order to protect the health and safety of the workers and patrons. Non-essential businesses will remain closed.

The new order adds some clarifying language around essential businesses and activities, as well as some new directives, including:

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite A-202
Hollister CA 95023
831-637-5367

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-1
Hollister CA 95023
831-636-4035

MEDICAL THERAPY UNIT
761 South Street
Hollister CA 95023
831-637-1989

- Use of playgrounds, dog parks, public picnic areas, and similar recreational areas is prohibited. These areas must be closed to public use.
- Use of shared public recreational facilities such as golf courses, tennis and basketball courts is prohibited. These facilities must be closed for recreational use.
- Sports requiring people to share a ball or other equipment must be limited to people in the same household
- Requires essential businesses to develop a social distancing protocol before April 3, 2020
- Funerals limited to no more than 10 people attending
- Essential businesses expanded to include service providers that enable residential transactions (notaries, title companies, Realtors, etc.); funeral homes and cemeteries; moving companies, rental car companies and rideshare services that specifically enable essential activities
- Essential businesses that continue to operate facilities must scale down operations to their essential component only

“Social distancing is the most powerful tool to slow the spread of COVID-19, a virus so new that it has no approved medicines or vaccines,” stated Dr. Fenstersheib. “What we need now, for the health of all our community, is for people to stay home. Even though it has been difficult, we have stepped up to the challenge so far, and we need to reaffirm our commitment. We need more time to flatten the curve, to prepare our local hospital for a surge, and to do everything we can to minimize the harm that the virus causes to our community.”

Similar orders are also in effect across the six most populous counties of the Bay Area, including in Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, and Alameda Counties. Additional counties may issue the same or similar orders.

This Order is a legal Order issued under the authority of California law. All residents of San Benito County are required to comply, and it is a crime (a misdemeanor) not to follow the Order.

Frequently asked questions will be posted in English and Spanish on the San Benito County Public Health Services website at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/> by Thursday, April 2, 2020.

Stay informed. To watch a video from our county Health Officer on preventing the spread of COVID-19 please go to <https://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/communicable-disease/coronavirus/>. For more information about COVID-19, see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>, call 211 or text “COVID19” to 211211 or visit the San Benito County Public Health Services website for updated local information at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>.

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