



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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Healthy People in Healthy Communities

PRESS RELEASE

*One Confirmed Case of COVID-19
New School and Provider Guidance
Minimizing Social Contact in the community
With added guidance to students during School Closure*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Benito County, CA – San Benito County Public Health Services (SBC PHS) has confirmed one new case of COVID-19 in San Benito County. “The person is on home isolation and doing fine,” stated Dr. Marty Fenstersheib, San Benito County Health Officer. The new case in San Benito County is not related to the first two confirmed cases, announced on February 2, 2020, both of which have fully recovered.

While the number of cases in San Benito County remains small at this time, the SBC PHS is preparing for those numbers to increase in the coming days and weeks including the probability of community spread. Given the geographical proximity of Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties, where community spread is extensive, many of the residents who commute for work and other reasons are at increased risk of exposure.

In preparation for the continued response, SBC PHS has developed and distributed a physician and provider guidance on COVID-19 to assist the medical community in managing their patients and school guidance to assist the schools in navigating through COVID-19 preventative measures while students are in or out of school. We support the efforts and decisions of the school districts in safeguarding the health of their students and teachers.

For instance, during the school closure, SBC PHS recommends students should minimize social contact to the extent possible. “Protecting public health requires a community-wide response. While children to date have not been shown to be a high-risk group for serious illness from COVID-19, they are still able to transmit the virus to populations who are most vulnerable to serious illness, such as older adults and those with compromised immune systems,” stated Dr. Fenstersheib. Students should continue practicing good personal hygiene and social distancing. For example, avoid large gatherings such as movie theaters, restaurants, gyms or any other confined indoor or outdoor space where you can’t be within an arms’ length of another person.

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SBC PHS reminds residents that the best way to stay healthy and prevent the spread of disease is to avoid contact with others, practice consistent and proper hand washing, coughing or sneezing into your elbow, staying home if you are sick, and getting a flu shot.

Masks do not prevent illness but can be helpful for sick people to wear to reduce the spread germs.

Social distancing includes limiting large gatherings within the community. The Governor has recently directed large gatherings to be limited to no more than 250 people. Santa Clara County lowered that number to 100 people. Organizers should carefully consider cancelling or postponing all large gatherings when possible. Also, as we have stated in previous messages, the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions are at highest risk and thus should further limit themselves to small groups of 10 people or less. As always, practice good personal hygiene and stay at arm's length of others.

Stay informed. For more information on COVID-19, see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and visit the San Benito County Public Health Services website for updated local information at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>.

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