



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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Healthy People in Healthy Communities

## A Message to the Community #2 from the Health Officer about Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

March 18, 2020

Much has happened since my last message to the community regarding COVID-19. We have all seen the news regarding the continuous spread of this virus around the world and in our own country and our region. Cases are expected to continue to be discovered as more testing is done. But testing alone will not stop the spread of the infection, and for that very reason, our regional counties have taken some pretty aggressive steps to try and slow down the spread of disease. By **all of us staying at home** or as we call it, “sheltering in place,” we can keep from becoming infected. These are hard orders to follow for all of us. It disrupts our daily lives significantly. Children are at home, and most businesses are closed.

We have made sure that all the essential and necessary services remain open. You can still get groceries and your medications at the pharmacies and see your health care provider. Everyone is feeling some panic and rushing to stores, causing long lines and emptying shelves. This is human nature, and things will get better with time. Remember, essential service workers are still on the job, so your water will still flow, your electricity will stay on and your garbage will be collected. You can use grocery delivery services and restaurant pick-up and delivery services if you choose.

This order was made to protect you but not to isolate or disconnect you from others. Families might be spending more time at home together. It’s a good time to talk about what is happening with your children and check in with each other. Telephones and texting still work fine, so check up on friends and relatives, especially the elderly.

Remember to continue practicing good personal hygiene, meaning wash your hands often. Soap and water work fine if you don’t have hand sanitizers. Clean surfaces regularly. The virus is very sensitive to all the disinfectants, as well as the hot water and detergent you use to wash your clothes.

Weather permitting, get outside and get some exercise, just remember to maintain at least 6 feet from others.

We have identified 5 cases of COVID-19 in San Benito County so far. That number is likely to increase as time goes on. But we can all do our part to keep these numbers low by following our public health orders. And if you do become ill, don’t go out; call your doctor if necessary and stay away from others.

Our current order is in place until April 7<sup>th</sup>. We will re-evaluate the situation as we get closer to that date. Be prepared if we must extend the order. The more aggressive we are now, the safer we will all be. Remember it is the virus we are fighting. Be kind to one another.

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