

## Frequently Asked Questions

### General Message

- **Stay Home:** All gatherings are to be postponed or cancelled immediately. This applies to all professional, social, and community gatherings. Only go out for essential business. Utilize social distancing and return home promptly when your business is complete.
- **Stay Well:** Utilize flu prevention techniques to stay healthy. This means washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or using sanitizer; covering your cough & sneezes; and sanitizing surroundings.
- **Stay Connected:** During this time of uncertainty it's important to stay connected with friends, families, neighbors, and others. Know the signs of anxiety and stress and take care of your emotional health. We encourage you to check on those around you by calling or texting. Stay up to date with current and reliable information by going to trusted sources such as our webpage <http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19> and Facebook
- ***The immediate risk still remains low*** for Madera County residents at this time. This may change rapidly at any time.
- Colds and flu are common this time of year and share similar symptoms as COVID-19.
- The public is encouraged to use the Community Feedback Form on the Public Health website <https://maderacounty.com/publichealth> if they want to be contacted by the department.
- The public is encouraged to look out for these common signs of distress:
  - Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear.
  - Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels.
  - Difficulty concentrating.
  - Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images.
  - Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes.
  - Worsening of chronic health problems.
  - Anger or short-temper.
  - Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.
- These CDC tips can be used to reduced stress and support themselves
  - Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
  - Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
  - Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
  - Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
  - Use reliable sources such as the MCDPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and California Department of Public Health websites.
  - Share the facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful.



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- Accurate information about COVID-19 can help make people feel less stressed and allow you to connect with them.

### **General COVID-19 Information**

**What is the 2019 novel coronavirus?** The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that cause respiratory illness. This virus is part of the coronavirus family and should not be mistaken as another coronavirus that causes the common cold. Not all coronaviruses are the 2019 novel coronaviruses.

**How did the novel coronavirus come about?** Many coronaviruses originate from animals. Rarely, these animal coronaviruses will spread from animal to human and even rarer, from human to human. The COVID-19 is suspected to be one of these rare cases.

**Can someone who has the COVID-19 spread the illness to others?** A person who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending all patients who are sick with COVID-19 to be at home or in an isolation room under the monitoring of the local public health department until they are better and can no longer spread to others.

**What is the Department of Public Health doing about COVID-19?** The Madera County Department of Public Health is always in contact with the CDC, California Department of Public Health (CDPH), other local public health departments, and health care providers in Madera County to ensure we are taking all necessary recommended steps to be prepared and protect the Madera County community. The CDC, in constant communication with state and local health departments, have created a notification process to let the state and local health departments know about travelers returning from affected areas. If there are travelers who are residents of Madera County and are coming back from an affected area, the Madera County Department of Public Health will know immediately. Because of this, be assured that the Madera County Department of Public Health is a taking all immediate steps to evaluate and keep persons with risks of COVID-19 away from the community. It is important to note that majority of travelers who will be evaluated will not have COVID-19. The Madera County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) is closely tracking the progress of COVID-19 and providing information to the community.

- You can find that information at [www.maderacounty.com/publichealth](http://www.maderacounty.com/publichealth) or [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19).
- Plans are in place to protect residents and limit exposure to the community.
- The department is working closely with other County agencies and leaders to get the necessary resources to County residents.

**What is community transmission?** A confirmed case were the patient has had no contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case or travel history to an affected country.



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**What does it mean to declare a state of emergency?** The declaration helps the County access resources, reassign staff to new roles, and implement plans that make it easier to get the necessary resources to County residents.

**How is food service affected?** All retail and food service will only be open for drive thru or pick up delivery services.

**How does this affect working individuals?** If you have work at one of the locations that have been closed we recommend contacting your employer for guidance.

**How do I get COVID-19?** The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person when in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

- It may be possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object contaminated with the virus, but to-date, this is not thought to be the main means of virus spread.

**How do I avoid getting it?** There is currently no vaccine for COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being close (within 6 feet) of someone with the virus. Follow these steps every day to prevent getting sick from not only COVID-19 but also other respiratory diseases.

- Don't come close to someone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover or cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hand frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, cough, or sneeze, and after using the restroom. If soap is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Actively discuss hand washing methods with your children and family members.
- Effective use of hand sanitizer requires adequate amount (two full pumps) for the hands to be wet and scrubbed for 20 seconds. Keep rubbing until dry.
- Clean and disinfection items that are regularly touched with cleaning sprays or wipes.
- Flu prevention steps can be used to prevent COVID-19.
- Keep adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans.

**What does social distancing mean?** It is a way to avoid unnecessary physical contact with another person such as:

- Waving or fist-bumping instead of shaking hands or hugging.
- Not sharing food, drinks, utensils, electronics, etc.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Keeping at least six feet between you and another person.

**Should I be wearing a mask?** Yes. As a way to further strengthen the current public health stay-at-home orders in place in California, residents going out into public areas for essential business are encouraged to use face coverings to lower the risk of COVID-19 spread. Knowledge



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about COVID-19 is changing rapidly, and recent studies have identified the use of face coverings as a possible benefit

**Should I use an N95 or surgical mask?** Do not purchase masks designed for health care professionals. N95 and surgical masks are in limited supply and designed to protect those who are working in high risk situations with a likelihood of exposure.

**What type of face covering should I use?** Face coverings can be created with the use of any dense fabric that covers the nose and mouth such as scarves, bandanas, neck gaiters, or other fabric coverings. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face to cover the nose and mouth. Fabric must be dense, without holes, reusable after washing, and can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen.

**I am an employer; should my employees be wearing masks?** Non-medical essential businesses that serve the public are expected to comply with the face covering guidance. These businesses should have their employees that directly interact with the public wear face coverings, during their entire shift in order to increase the safety of the public they serve. Businesses may consider purchasing homemade or cloth masks for their employees as part of their uniform.

**Am I at risk for COVID-19 in Madera County?** This is a constantly changing situation; however, at this time the immediate risk for Madera County residents remains low. This may change rapidly at any time

**Should I cancel or postpone my trip?** CDC provides additional recommendation on postponing on canceling trip based on risks. A list of destinations with travel notices is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

**What if I show signs?** If you are experiencing symptoms and feel medical care is needed, call ahead to the doctor for instructions so illness is not spread in waiting rooms.

- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe, e.g., high fever or difficulty breathing. Call ahead to the doctor for instructions to reduce spread of illness in waiting rooms.
- If you don't currently have a doctor contact your local clinic or urgent care.

**Should I avoid going out in public?**

- Yes, based on the Governor's order you should stay at home except for essential business.
- Follow flu prevention steps while out in public and practicing physical distancing of 6 feet between you and another person when available.
- Avoid attending all mass social gatherings.
  - This includes parties, weddings, open air markets, church services, etc.



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- Stay home if you are sick and remain at home until fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines
- If you are age 65 or older or medically vulnerable with a compromised immune system you should stay at home.
  - Friends and family are encouraged to call seniors and see them in person if they are free of symptoms.

**How do I get groceries or other resources if I don't go out in public?** MCDPH is working closely with other County agencies and leaders to get the necessary resources to County residents.

- Ask a low risk family member to go shopping for you.
- Utilize any of the home delivery services available in your area.

## **Events and Gatherings**

**What is an event/gathering?** A “gathering” is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

**Why are events/gatherings no longer allowed?** COVID-19 is contained in the droplets that can be sneezed, coughed, or exhaled into the air by infected individuals. Gatherings provide an opportunity for many people to be close together and allow for the spread of COVID-19 and communicable disease. The best way to prevent COVID-19 is through social distancing and flu prevention methods.

**What type of events/gatherings are allowed?** At this time, due to the State Health Officer’s Stay-At-Home order and local Health Officer Large Event order, no public events are allowed. When will events/gatherings be allowed again? At this time, the State Health Officer’s order is in effect until further notice. Public Health Officials will continue to monitor the situation to determine when the Order will be lifted.

**Can we hold drive through events instead of gathering?** Drive-through/drive-in events are not recommended. This applies to all mass gatherings other than for essential businesses of more than 10 people including funerals, worship services, and social gatherings. We recognize the need for people to connect and offer support and comfort, however gatherings are a major contributor to the spread of COVID-19. We suggest that organizers consider other methods for “virtual” group meetings that can be held online, on conference calls, or by other means.

**I have an event, do I have to cancel?** Yes. All public events and gatherings must be cancelled.

**What happens if I refuse to cancel my event?** If community members are violating the orders and law enforcement is notified, we will seek voluntary compliance of the orders. Ongoing violation of the orders is considered a misdemeanor. Both civil and criminal enforcement actions are permitted under the Health and Safety Code.



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### **Testing and Symptoms**

**What are the symptoms?** COVID-19 symptoms are similar to the flu and involve fever, coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, and either of the following.

- A recent visit to any high risk country or
- Contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case.

Symptoms can be mild or severe. Those who have COVID-19 can have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. People who are very ill with COVID-19 can have pneumonia.

**Should I get tested?** If you are experiencing symptoms and feel medical care is needed, call ahead to your doctor for instructions so illness is not spread in the waiting rooms.

- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe such as high fever or difficulty breathing.
- Even if you are experiencing symptoms, your medical provider may not elect to test you based on testing availability.

**What should I do if I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19?** For these instances:

- If you are certain that you have been in close contact (within 6ft) with someone who is positive for COVID-19

OR

- If you don't know if someone has the COVID-19 but is still concerned because the person has travel history to affected areas AND is sick with fever or cough,

Please complete the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Community Feedback Form to report the incident to us and your report will be reviewed accordingly.

**When will I receive my test results?** It depends.

- If the testing was facilitated by the Department of Public Health, you will be contacted by a member of the Communicable Disease investigation team within 72 hours.
- If the testing was facilitated by someone other than the Department of Public Health, it may take up to 7 days to receive your results.

### **Health Officer's Order**

**What is a Health Officer's Order?** It is official action authorized under the health and safety code taken by the state or local health officer to control the spread of a communicable disease.

**What health orders are in effect?** There are five health orders currently affecting Madera County. Note that there were five however the large scale order expired on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

- State Health Officer's Stay-At-Home Order
- Febrile Respiratory Illness Order



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- Health Officer Isolation Order
- Health Officer Quarantine Order

**Do these orders affect everyone in Madera County?** Yes. The State Health Officer's Order and local health orders affect everyone including the cities of Madera and Chowchilla, as well as the unincorporated communities of Ahwahnee, Bass Lake, Coarsegold, Fairmead, Madera Ranchos, North Fork, Oakhurst, and Raymond. The Governor's order is in effect throughout the State of California. The isolation order affects anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and the quarantine order anyone identified as a direct contact of a positive case during a contact tracing.

**What prompted these health orders?** The State Health Officer's Order was issued to protect the public health of Californians and to establish consistency across the state in mitigating the impact of COVID-19. The local orders come on the heels of the two new confirmed cases of community transmission (3/19/2020) in Madera County. By issuing these order we can greatly slow the spread of the disease.

**How long are the health orders in effect?** All of the orders are effective as of March 19, 2020. The Governor's order is in effect until further notice. The local Febrile Respiratory Illness (FRI) order and Large Events Order were originally in effect until April 30, 2020 however the FRI order has been extended until May 30, 2020.

**Can the orders be extended?** Yes. The local Febrile Respiratory Illness (FRI) order has been extended from April 30, 2020 until May 30, 2020.

**What will be done to ensure people are following these orders?** If community members are violating the orders and law enforcement is notified, we will seek voluntary compliance of the orders. Ongoing violation of the orders is considered a misdemeanor. Both civil and criminal enforcement actions are permitted under the Health and Safety Code.

**What should I do if I notice a large gathering in progress?** Call appropriate agency's non-emergency dispatch based on location.

- Madera County Sheriff – (559) 675-7770
- City of Madera Police – (559) 675-4200
- City of Chowchilla Police – (559) 665-8600

**What does the State Health Officer's Order mean?** This order is referred to as the Governor's Stay-at-Home Order issued 3/19/2020. This directs all Californians to stay at home except for essential business.

**What does Febrile Health Order mean?** A Febrile Respiratory Illness is a new or worsening episode of either cough or shortness of breath with fever of 100.4F or higher, or chills in the previous 24 hours. This order mandates the following:



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- Health Care Providers, to send daily report to MCDPH the number of patients with febrile respiratory illness
- Employers, on a daily basis, screen all employees for febrile respiratory illness
- Residents, on a daily basis, to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19
- What is the difference between Isolation and Quarantine?
- Isolation: separation of sick people from non-sick people
- Quarantine: separation and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick

**What is Febrile Respiratory Illness?** A new or worsening episode of either cough or shortness of breath with a fever of 100.4F or higher, or chills in the previous 24 hours.

**Does the State Health Officer's Order affect events?** Yes, all public events and gatherings must be cancelled. In addition, based on the stay-at-home order private events should also be cancelled. This supersedes the local health order and is still in effect even though the local large gathering order expired on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Businesses**

**What is considered an essential business/service?** The following are named as essential businesses/services on the state's official website.

- Gas stations
- Pharmacies
- Food: Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and deliver restaurants
- Banks
- Laundromats/laundry services

Essential state and local government functions will also remain open, including law enforcement and offices that provide government programs and services. As the situation changes, this list of essential businesses and services may narrow. A full Essential Critical Infrastructure Worker/Business list can be found on our website at [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19).

### **What businesses are closed?**

- Dine-in restaurants
- Bars and nightclubs
- Entertainment venues
- Gyms and fitness studio
- Public events and gatherings
- Convention Centers



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**What should I do if a non-essential business is still operating?** Call 311 with the following information.

- Name of business
- Address or location of business
- Your name, phone number, and email address (optional)

**What is the business checklist and is it required?** The business checklist is a tool/poster developed by the Madera County Department of Public Health to help businesses in Madera County re-open safely. It contains a list of recommendations by the Health Officer to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Businesses can check the items that they choose to implement. While all items are encouraged they are not required.

**Where should it be posted?** It should be posted in a prominent location near the entrance for customers to see. This allows customers to know what your business is doing to keep them safe.

**Where can I get a copy?** Pre-printed color copies are available in English and Spanish are available in 8 1/2 x 11 and 11 x 17 for pick up at your local chamber of commerce office or Madera County Public Health at 1604 Sunrise Madera, Ca 93637. They are also available for download on our website at [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19)

**I've heard businesses can re-open on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. Is this true?** The Stay-at-Home order is still in place. However, Governor Newsom announced that based on the state's progress in meeting metrics tied to indicators, the state can begin to move into Stage 2 of modifying the stay at home order this Friday, May 8.

Stage 2 includes an early and later stage. All of California is taking the first step to early stage 2 together on May 7th. In the early phases of stage 2 only expanded retail and associated manufacturing and supply chains can re-open with curbside pickup and delivery ONLY.

**What is Stage 2?** Phase 2 allows gradual reopening of lower-risk workplaces with adaptations including bookstores, clothing stores, florists and sporting goods stores, with modifications.

There is an early and later age stage 2. In the early phase of Stage 2, expanded retail and associated manufacturing and supply chains can re-open with curbside pickup and delivery ONLY. Examples are bookstores, florist, clothing stores, sporting goods, etc. The first step of phase 2 does not include in-store retail shopping, offices (that can telework), seated dining at restaurants, and shopping malls. However offices and dine-in restaurants, will be part of a later Phase 2 opening.

**What businesses can re-open in Stage 2?** In the early phase of Stage 2, expanded retail and associated manufacturing and supply chains can re-open with curbside pickup and delivery ONLY. Examples are bookstores, florist, clothing stores, sporting goods, etc. The first step of phase 2 does not include in-store retail shopping, offices (that can telework), seated dining at



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restaurants, and shopping malls. However offices and dine-in restaurants, will be part of a later Phase 2 opening.

**When can non-essential businesses not identified in Stage 2 re-open?** At this time, we do not know the details or have specific timelines for when other sectors can re-open. We are awaiting information on Phase 3 and Phase 4.

**Where can I get more information?** Get information from a trusted source:

- MCDPH website or COVID-19 page: [www.maderacounty.com/publichealth](http://www.maderacounty.com/publichealth) or [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19).
- MCDPH phone: (559) 675-7893
- Community feedback form
- CDC latest updates: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>
- California Dept. of Public Health updates: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCoV2019.aspx>
- California Dept. of Public Health Guidance page: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx>
- California Stay-At-Home FAQ website: [www.covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/](http://www.covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/)