



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES UPDATE ON COVID-19:
NUMBER OF RESIDENTS CONFIRMED AS POSITIVE CASES INCREASES TO EIGHT (8),
NEW LOCAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS RELEASED**

*INFORMATION ON THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK IS RAPIDLY CHANGING, THE MOST UP-TO-DATE
GUIDANCE ON ISSUES SUCH AS MITIGATION STRATEGIES IS AVAILABLE AT
[HTTP://WWW.SJCPHS.ORG/CORONAVIRUS.ASPX#RES](http://www.sjcphs.org/coronavirus.aspx#res)*

STOCKTON, CA (March 13, 2020) –San Joaquin County Public Health Services (PHS) confirmed today that five (5) more County residents have been diagnosed with COVID-19, bringing the total to eight (8). This number includes travel-related cases and their contacts, and we are now seeing some evidence of community spread – meaning, cases of unknown origin.

With the number of COVID-19 infections steadily rising and evidence of community transmissions, PHS announced yesterday that it is the appropriate time to move from containment efforts to implementing community mitigation strategies. Mitigation activities are used to both minimize illness and death as well as social and economic impacts of COVID-19. Individuals, communities, businesses, and healthcare organizations are all part of a community mitigation strategy.

The distinction is important because it shifts the focus from labor-intensive "contact-tracing"—the process of identifying every person that a known COVID-19 infected person has had contact with since contracting the virus—to focusing on protecting the most vulnerable populations from contracting the virus. Mitigation strategies now hinge on whether a person is showing symptoms or not.

The goals for using mitigation strategies in communities with local COVID-19 transmission is to slow the spread of disease and protect individuals at increased risk for severe illness, including older adults and persons of any age with underlying medical conditions such as COPD, heart, lung or kidney disease, and other respiratory conditions.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are thought to appear within two to 14 days after exposure to the virus and consist of fever, cough, runny nose, and difficulty breathing. COVID-19 causes mild illness in roughly 80% of cases. Approximately 20% of people develop more severe symptoms, typically among individuals that have higher risk factors such as older adults and those with chronic medical conditions. COVID-19 is mainly spread by droplets from close person-to-person contact. If you have any of these symptoms, call your healthcare provider first before seeking medical attention so that appropriate precautions can be taken. If you would like to speak to a public health nurse, call (209) 468-3411.

San Joaquin County Public Health Services has taken the following initial mitigation steps to prepare the community and minimize the spread of COVID-19:

- Increased Department Operations Center (DOC) activity level and staff support;
- Increased phone bank staff to accommodate high call volumes;
- Updated and disseminated guidance documents on website, social media, and to key stakeholders;

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- Provided presentations and guidance to school administrators, government leaders, and healthcare providers;
- Worked with county departments and outside organizations to provide guidance on employee health related inquiries; and
- Actively working with high-risk community partners to provide updates/education.

As the situation evolves and when new information is received, PHS will provide regular updates through news releases and information sharing via PHS [website](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#) accounts.

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