



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USE OF FACE COVERINGS FROM
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER**

***Social distancing and hand washing are still the best actions we can take to combat
COVID-19***

Stockton, CA – (April 11, 2020) - San Joaquin County Public Health Services (PHS) continues to recommend that you stay home as much as possible, avoid unnecessary interactions with people who do not live in your household, practice social distancing (6 feet apart), wash your hands frequently, and disinfect frequently used items and surfaces. “These are the most important steps to stop the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19),” advises Dr. Maggie Park, San Joaquin County Health Officer.

The federal government recently issued guidance on the use of cloth face coverings to help slow the spread of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies). In addition, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released guidance on the use of cloth face coverings for Californians who must leave their homes to conduct essential activities. The guidance does not require people to wear face coverings – and is not a substitute for the state’s current guidance regarding social distancing and hand washing. CDPH does not recommend that we use N-95 or surgical masks, those should be reserved for our health care workers and first responders who will be there when our lives are at risk.

San Joaquin County public health officials are in alignment with the state’s guidance on using face coverings. **It is not an order or required that you wear a face covering; it is voluntary.** They are intended as a precaution to protect others in case you have contracted COVID-19, but don’t yet have symptoms. San Joaquin County residents remain under a Stay at Home Order and people should NOT feel they can go outside more because they are wearing a face covering. A cloth face covering can be made at home and can be any fabric such as a scarf, bandana, towel, or old t-shirt that covers your nose, mouth, and chin securely. To learn how to make your own face covering you can go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

“The CDC and CDPH have made it very clear that the general public should not be buying masks. If you already have a mask, you can use it, but otherwise, stick to a reusable face covering. I know many of you might feel more comfortable wearing a covering, so I provided some tips in a short video made by PHS to assist our residents on how to properly wear face coverings,” says Dr. Park. The video message can be found on the PHS YouTube channel at: <https://youtu.be/dQLJmDjTKrs>

For more information, please visit the San Joaquin County Public Health Services website and social media accounts at www.sjcphs.org. In addition, video messages can be found on the San Joaquin County Public Health Services YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/sjcphs>.

Attachments: Tips for Safe Face Covering Use/ Consejos para uso seguro de Coberturas Faciales

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