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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
May 8, 2020

### Revised Health Order Allows for More Businesses to Reopen

MERCED COUNTY, CA – After careful consideration, Merced County health officials revised the local Health Order (Order) issued on April 24, 2020. The revised Order allows eligible businesses to resume modified operations as long as they follow specific safety measures.

“After careful consideration and thorough discussions with subject matter experts and Merced County health officials, the Public Health Department is starting to implement steps to reopen the County,” said Dr. Rebecca Nanyonjo-Kemp, Director of the Merced County Public Health Department. “The reopening plan will promote public health and safety while allowing for our community to take the necessary steps to start the recovery process. The Department is committed to the well-being of all individuals and want the overall health and economy to thrive while keeping protective measures in place.”

Businesses meeting criteria may resume modified operations. Currently, in accordance with the State, curbside retail and manufacturing of goods are able to open. In addition, cemeteries, preventative medical appointments (inclusive of dentistry), and baptisms are all allowed to reopen or resume, with modifications. All businesses in operation will be required to follow the Order, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements, and the guidelines outlined in the Order. Merced County also developed reopening guidelines in partnership with business sectors. The Order also allows additional businesses to open locally, with modified operations, as the State allows.

The revised Order:

- Directs all businesses open to operate to designate a Safety Officer
- Prohibits all non-essential gatherings (as detailed in the Order)
- Limits activities in public areas
- Encourages outdoor activity with social distancing requirements to the greatest extent possible

Merced County health officials strongly urge everyone to continue following local health orders and practice safety measures in our daily routines. It is crucial that we do not become complacent, because transmission levels will continue to rise.

If you are a Merced County resident who would like to be tested for COVID-19, you will need to register for an appointment either online at [www.lhi.care/covidtesting](http://www.lhi.care/covidtesting) or by phone **1-888-634-1123**.

For additional information pertaining to COVID-19, please visit the Department’s resource website at [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus) or call the Department information line at **209-381-1180** (English, Spanish, Hmong).

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ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER  
OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED ADVISING ALL INDIVIDUALS LIVING  
IN THE COUNTY TO CONTINUE TO STAY AT HOME OR AT THEIR PLACE OF  
RESIDENCE EXCEPT TO PROVIDE OR RECEIVE CERTAIN ESSENTIAL SERVICES OR  
ENGAGE IN CERTAIN ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND WORK FOR ESSENTIAL  
BUSINESSES AND GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES OR TO TAKE PART IN CERTAIN  
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES; DIRECTING SPECIFIED BUSINESSES TO CONTINUE TO  
CEASE CERTAIN NON-ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS AT PHYSICAL LOCATIONS IN THE  
COUNTY; PROHIBITING ALL LARGE NON-ESSENTIAL GATHERINGS OF  
INDIVIDUALS; AND ADVISING CESSATION OF ALL NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL

**DATE OF ORDER: May 8, 2020**

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTIONS 101040, 101085, AND 120175, THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED (“HEALTH OFFICER”) ORDERS:

1. This Order repeals and replaces all previous Stay at Home orders issued by the Health Officer of Merced County, except for the Febrile Respiratory Illness Order issued on April 7, 2020, and incorporates by reference the directive from the California State Public Health Officer designating “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers.” For more information on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers, see <https://www.covid19.ca.gov/essential-workforce/>. This Order does not supersede any conflicting or more restrictive orders issued by local governments, the State of California, or the Federal Government.
2. This Order implements Executive Order N-33-20, issued by Governor Newsom on March 19, 2020, as well as the Order of the State Public Health Officer issued on March 19, 2020, and all subsequent amendments and modifications thereto (“Collectively, “Governor’s Orders”), to ensure that the maximum number of people limit travel from their residences, while enabling essential services to continue, allow the careful reopening of business, and to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19. When people need to leave their homes or places of residence, whether to obtain or perform vital services, or to otherwise facilitate authorized activities necessary for continuity of social and commercial life, they must comply with the Guidance for Individuals as defined in Section 3 of this Order and/or the Operating Requirements for Businesses and Organizations as defined in Section 5 of this Order. Persons under a Public Health quarantine order must comply with such Orders. All provisions of this Order should be interpreted to effectuate these purposes. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Order constitutes an imminent threat to public health.
3. Guidance for Individuals

All public and private gatherings of over 10 people are prohibited, except as otherwise stated herein or authorized by the Health Officer. Individuals may leave their

residence to visit and work for businesses permitted as listed in Appendix A of this Order, or to care for a family member or pet in another household. Individuals may also leave their residence to engage in outdoor activities, including but not limited to walking, hiking, biking, golfing, running or equestrian activities, provided the individuals, or households, comply with Social Distancing Requirements. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.

- a. For purposes of this Order, “Social Distancing Requirements” includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals not from the same household, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.
- b. All members of the public are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings when social distancing is not feasible, such as in grocery stores or other businesses. Face coverings, when combined with social distancing and handwashing, may prevent transmission of COVID-19 by reducing respiratory droplet exposure. Business owners have the authority to require the use of face coverings for patrons seeking entrance to their business establishments.

#### 4. Guidance for Businesses and Organizations

All businesses and organizations in the County should refer to Appendix A of this Order for guidance as to whether the business or organization may remain open or reopen. Appendix A is intended to be consistent with the Governor’s Orders, the directive from the California State Public Health Officer designating “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” and/or any State variances granted to the County.

Indoor dining at food facilities will be permitted when authorized by the Governor’s Orders and/or authorized by a State variance granted to the County. Bars without food service and bars inside restaurants shall remain closed. Drive-in and remote worship services may continue so long as compliant with the Worship Safe Distancing Rules provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health. Funeral services are permitted so long as compliant with the Funeral Services FAQs provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health. Baptisms are permitted so long as compliant with the Baptism Guidance provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health. All bingo halls, card rooms, indoor and outdoor concerts, dance floors, sports events, theaters, fairs, carnivals, parades, festivals and other similar events, and summer camps shall remain closed at this time. Businesses such as gyms, bars, barbershops and salons will be authorized to reopen upon receiving further guidance from the Governor and/or a State variance granted to the County.

All businesses and organizations not authorized to open or reopen shall cease activities and shall close their facilities, except for basic minimum operations such as activities

to maintain value of the business's inventory, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or related functions. For clarity, businesses may also continue operations to the extent employees or contractors can perform work from home or place of residence.

Merced County Reopening Guidelines ("Reopening Guidelines") are being developed with input from the local business community and guidance from the State. Once developed, such Reopening Guidelines will be incorporated in and made a part of this Order as applicable.

5. Operating Requirements for All Businesses and Organizations

All business and organizations authorized to remain open, or which are allowed to reopen, shall comply with the following requirements:

- a. Limit the number of people who can enter into the facility/job site at any one time to ensure that people in the facility/job site can easily maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another at all times, except as required to complete business activities; and
  - b. Strongly encourage employees to wear face coverings or use other protective barriers (e.g., plexiglass, cubicles) where six feet of distance is not easily maintained between employees, or between employees and the public; and
  - c. Where lines may form at a facility/job site, mark six-foot increments at a minimum, to establish where individuals should stand to maintain adequate social distancing; and
  - d. Provide hand sanitizer, proper handwashing stations with soap and water, or approved disinfectant at or near the entrance of the facility/job site and other appropriate areas for use by the public and employees, and in locations where there is high-frequency employee interaction with members of the public (e.g., cashiers); and
  - e. Provide for contactless payment systems or, if not feasible to do so, provide disinfectant for all payment portals, pens, and styluses after each use; and
  - f. Regularly disinfect all high-touch surfaces and equipment; and
  - g. Post a sign at the entrance of the facility/job site informing all employees and customers of the requirements set forth in the Febrile Respiratory Illness Order issued on April 7, 2020; and
  - h. Assign a safety officer to ensure compliance with Health Officer Orders, State Guidance, OSHA regulations, and Reopening Guidelines, as applicable.
  - i. To the extent a business or organization otherwise provides for employee and the public's safety within the requirements prescribed by the Governor at <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap/>, such provisions shall satisfy the requirements of this section.
6. Parks and cemeteries are permitted to reopen with limitations. Park picnic areas, playgrounds, and indoor facilities in parks must remain closed until authorized by the Governor's Orders or authorized by a State variance granted to the County.

Individuals utilizing these outdoor spaces shall adhere to the Guidance for Individuals in Section 3 of this Order, which prohibits gatherings of over 10 people, maintaining at least six-foot distance from individuals not from the same household, and frequent hand washing or use of hand sanitizer. Golf courses may remain open if following approved operational guidelines provided by the Merced County Department of Public Health.

7. In the event that the Health Officer determines that hospitalizations, or other factors, indicate an increased transmission of COVID-19 or stresses on critical healthcare infrastructure, the Health Officer may issue an addendum to this order requiring additional prevention measures, such as face coverings, or closure of certain higher risk activities and businesses, including, but not limited to indoor dining at food facilities (as allowed to reopen by the Governor's Orders and/or any State variances granted to the County), salons and barbershops (as allowed to reopen by the Governor's Orders and/or any State variances granted to the County), and gyms (as allowed to reopen by the Governor's Orders and/or any State variances granted to the County).
8. Pursuant to Government Code Sections 26602 and 41601 and Health and Safety Code Sections 101029 and 131080, the Health Officer requests that the Sheriff and all chiefs of police in the County ensure compliance with and enforce this Order, including facility or business closure, to the extent law enforcement, in consultation with the Health Department, believes that persons, businesses or other organizations are operating outside of the requirements prescribed by this Order in an unsafe manner. The violation of any provision of this Order constitutes an imminent threat to public health. Consistent with the views expressed by the Governor and after consulting with the Merced County Sheriff, the Health Officer believes that enforcement through education is preferable but that other means of enforcement may be employed, as deemed appropriate by the law enforcement agency.

Violators of this Order may be subject to a fine in the amount of \$100.00 for a first offense, \$200.00 for a second offense, and \$500.00 for a third and subsequent offense (California Health and Safety Code Section 120295 and Government Code Section 8665).

9. In accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 131080, the Health Officer will follow the guidance of the California Department of Public Health and may modify or extend this Order, or issue additional Orders.
10. This Order shall become effective immediately and continue until it is rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.
11. Copies of this Order shall promptly be: (1) made available at the County Administration Building at 2222 M Street, Merced, California 95340; (2) posted on the County Public Health Department's website ([countyofmerced.com](http://countyofmerced.com)); and (3) provided to any member of the public requesting a copy of this Order.

12. If any provision of this Order to the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the remainder of the Order, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.

**IT IS SO ORDERED:**



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Salvador Sandoval, MD, MPH  
Merced County Health Officer

Dated: May 8, 2020

## APPENDIX A

This Appendix is intended to reflect the Governor's Orders, the directive from the California State Public Health Officer designating "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers" and/or any State variance granted to the County, including any logical inferences and inclusions therefrom.

- i. Healthcare Operations and Essential Infrastructure, including routine dental services with appropriate protective equipment;
- ii. Grocery stores, certified farmers' markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of food, pet supply, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products (such as cleaning and personal care products), unless specifically noted to remain closed in Section 4 of this Order. This includes stores that sell groceries and also sell other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences;
- iii. Agriculture, food, and beverage cultivation, processing, testing and distribution, including but not limited to, farming, ranching, fishing, dairies, creameries, wineries and breweries in order to preserve inventory and production (not for retail business), as well as business activities that support production and processing by providing essential agricultural supplies and services, including but not limited to, transportation, manufacturing, chemicals, equipment, and services such as cooling, storing, packing, and distribution of such products for wholesale or retail sale;
- iv. Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;
- v. Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services;
- vi. Gas stations and auto-supply, sales and auto-repair, and related facilities such as drive-thru automatic car washes and detailing services;
- vii. Banks and related financial institutions;
- viii. Hardware stores;
- ix. Animal care facilities that provide food, shelter, veterinary and/or routine care and other necessities of life for animals including grooming, dog day care, rescue, and boarding;
- x. Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, custodial/janitorial workers, handyman services, funeral home workers and morticians, moving services, HVAC installers, carpenters, vegetation services, tree maintenance, landscapers, gardeners, pool maintenance, property managers, private security personnel and other service providers who provide services to

maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation to properties and other Essential Businesses.

- xi. Businesses providing mailing and shipping services, including post office boxes;
- xii. Educational institutions—including public and private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities—for purposes of facilitating distance learning or performing essential functions;
- xiii. Laundromats, drycleaners, and laundry service providers;
- xiv. Indoor dining at food facilities will be permitted when authorized by the Governor’s Orders and/or authorized by a State variance granted to the County. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, may continue to provide delivery, take-out and curbside pick-up. Schools and other entities that typically provide free food services to students or members of the public may continue to do so under this Order on the condition that the food is provided to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. Schools and other entities that provide food services under this exemption shall not permit the food to be eaten at the site where it is provided, or at any other gathering site;
- xv. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home;
- xvi. Businesses that supply other essential businesses with the support or supplies necessary to operate;
- xvii. Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences;
- xviii. Airlines, taxis, and other private transportation providers providing transportation services necessary for Essential Activities and other purposes expressly authorized in this Order;
- xix. Home-based care for seniors, adults, or children;
- xx. Residential facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, and children;
- xxi. Professional services, such as legal or accounting services, when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities;
- xxii. Delivery services that provide transport of essential products, such as water, food and household products;
- xxiii. Childcare facilities providing services that enable employees exempted in this Order to work as permitted. To the extent possible, childcare facilities must operate under the following mandatory conditions:

1. Childcare must be carried out in stable groups of 12 or fewer (“stable” means that the same 12 or fewer children are in the same group each day).
2. Children shall not change from one group to another.
3. If more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room. Groups shall not mix with each other.
4. Childcare providers shall remain solely with one group of children.

xxiv. Retail (curbside) and related manufacturing and logistics.

xxv. Destination retail, including shopping malls and swap meets; tanning facilities; office-based businesses; outdoor museums and open gallery spaces will be permitted when authorized by the Governor’s Orders and/or authorized by a State variance granted to the County.

xxvi. Other businesses allowed to reopen pursuant to the Governor’s Orders and/or authorized by a State variance granted to the County.

ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF MERCED DIRECTING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO REPORT PATIENTS SEEN WITH FEBRILE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS TO MERCED COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH; DIRECTING EMPLOYERS TO SCREEN EMPLOYEES FOR FEBRILE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS; AND DIRECTING INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITHIN THE COUNTY TO SELF-MONITOR FOR SIGNS OF COVID-19 AND APPROPRIATELY ISOLATE.

**DATE OF ORDER: April 7, 2020**

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Sections 101040, 120175, and 120175.5(b) the Health Officer of the County of Merced orders as follows:

1. Whereas the World Health Organization declared a worldwide pandemic of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, and is contained in the droplets that can be sneezed, coughed, or exhaled into the air by infected individuals.
2. Whereas today, there are over 1,381, 014 cases in the world and over 78,269 deaths, in California 16,466, confirmed cases and 391 deaths, 34 cases and 1 death in Merced County, and we can expect the number of cases to increase significantly should further action not being taken to decrease the spread of the disease.
3. Whereas there currently is no available vaccination or treatment for this illness, and despite community mitigation measures that decrease the likelihood of being exposed to the droplets of an infected person (including but not limited to restricting large scale events and mass gatherings, staying at home except for performing or receiving essential services, and practicing social distancing) the numbers of cases of this illness continue to increase at increasing rates.
4. Whereas aggressive containment operations including isolating suspect cases and persons under investigation and quarantining their contacts (critical to reducing the spread of the disease and reducing the impacts of the disease on society) are soon to be exceeded in this County.
5. Whereas within the public health system, every person who meets the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) criteria for disease within Merced County has been and will be tested, there are both locally and nationally limited testing capabilities due to availability and number of laboratory test kits and specimen collection kits.
6. Effective, Tuesday, April 7, 2020, the following will be in effect for Merced County.
  - a. Health Care Providers shall:
    - i. On a daily basis report to the Merced County Public Health Department the number of patients seen in their practice with a febrile respiratory illness and the number of those patients tested for COVID-19 AND
    - ii. Direct those patients without an exclusionary diagnosis to isolate him/herself for-seven days after onset of symptoms or for three days after cessation of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications (whichever is longer) AND to notify all close contacts to quarantine themselves for 14 days from the last known contact with the patient.
  - b. All Employers shall:
    - i. On a daily basis, while conducting business, screen all employees for febrile respiratory illness;

- ii. Exclude from work all employees that report symptoms of febrile respiratory illness for seven days from the day that they are identified as having symptoms; and
    - iii. Direct employees excluded from work to isolate at home for at least seven days ,AND to notify all close contacts to quarantine themselves for 14 days from the last known contact with the patient.
  - c. All Residents shall:
    - i. Self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19; and
    - ii. Isolate themselves if they have signs and symptoms for seven days after onset of symptoms, unless they should require further medical attention, AND notify their close contacts to quarantine for 14 days.
  - d. All residents are strongly encouraged to wear a cloth face covering whenever they must be out of the home to reduce the spread of the illness from infected individuals that have no symptoms. **This is in addition to the continued requirement of at least 6 feet of social distancing.**
- 6. For the purpose of this order:
  - a. Febrile respiratory illness is defined as "a new or worsening episode of either cough or shortness of breath, presenting with fever (temperature 38 degrees C or 100.4 degrees or higher) or chills in the previous 24 hours;"
  - b. Close contact is defined as someone who has spent 15 minutes or more time within 6 feet or less of the person;
  - c. Isolation is defined as "separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick;"
  - d. Quarantine is defined as "separation and restricting the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease during the illness incubation period."
  - e. Social distancing is defined as "maintain a six-foot separation from all persons except for family members;" and
  - f. Symptoms of COVID-19:
    - i. Fever
    - ii. Cough
    - iii. Shortness of breath
  - g. Cloth face covering is defined as any cloth that can be used to cover as tightly as possible the mouth and nose of the wearer. It is NOT a surgical mask or respirator (which must be reserved for health care professionals in their work treating COVID-19 patients). It should be washed at least daily and the wearer should wash their hands before putting it on and after taking it off. Additionally, the wearer should avoid touching the covering as much as possible while wearing it.
- 7. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) may recommend further guidance.

I, as Interim Health Officer for the County of Merced, encourage voluntary compliance with this Health Officer's Order. However, violation of this order is subject to fine, imprisonments or both (California Health and Safety Code Section 120295.)



Kenneth Bird, MD, MPH  
Interim Health Officer

**Merced County Department of Public Health  
COVID-19 Worship Services Safe Distance Rules  
During Effective Dates of Stay at Home Order**

Note these guidelines provided are the minimum requirements that must be enforced. Churches and other worship facilities are able to develop policies that are more stringent if they feel they are necessary to ensure the health and safety of persons using their facilities or participating in their services.

**Churches and faith-based organizations are responsible for ensuring compliance of their individuals utilizing their facilities and participating in their services. For all activities, CDC Guidance shall be followed in order to prepare and respond appropriately to COVID-19; see the following CDC link and follow the recommendations for “Substantial Community Spread” as well as all Merced County Health Officer Orders and guidance documents: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>. Follow the Merced County website for the most up-to-date information at [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus).**

**Drive-in Worship Services Allowed with Restrictions**

1. Drive-in worship services utilizing technology are allowed only if all of the following occurs:
  - a. Vehicles must be parked in every other parking space, leaving an empty parking space in between each vehicle.
  - b. Each vehicle must contain only members of the same household/residence.
  - c. Choirs or singing groups are prohibited.
  - d. As few as possible, but no more than 10 people are allowed to participate in the providing of each service for worshippers, including a pastor, facilitator, greeter, musician/singer, technical assistance for equipment, etc.
  - e. All speakers must be 10 feet apart. Speakers should be limited, and shall disinfect podiums/microphones in between speakers. Microphones shall not be passed off hand to hand between persons.
  - f. Individuals integral to the services outside of vehicles shall maintain a 10-foot distance from vehicles.
  - g. There shall be no person-to-person contact between individuals outside of their vehicles.
  - h. Printed materials, or any other items, shall not be passed out to or exchanged between worshippers. Electronic applications or e-mail may be used for viewing of materials or song script.
  - i. When a vehicle window(s) is open, all occupants of the vehicle must wear masks, except that cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing per CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.
  - j. Music shall be limited to one instrument plus one singer, who must be more than 10 feet apart from anyone else. Singing is a higher risk activity for transmission of COVID-19. Microphones used by singers shall not be shared with anyone else during the service, and shall be properly disinfected before next use.
  - k. There shall be no collection plate passing. Collection boxes can be set up that are accessible via drive-thru, but must not be held by a person.

- l. No food consumption will be allowed, including when related to religious practices (e.g., communion).
- m. On-site restroom facilities shall not be used by individuals attending drive-in worship services.

### **Remote Access Worship Services Allowed with Restrictions**

1. To assist individuals with the ability to stay at home whenever possible, remote access to worship services is allowed through e-mail, video streaming, or teleconference; there is no in-person attendance of worshippers allowed for remote access services.
  - a. Services held at a church, synagogue, mosque, or other public place of worship shall involve as few people as possible, but not allow more than 10 people to participate in the providing of remote services for worshippers, including a pastor, facilitator, greeter, musician/singer, technical assistance for equipment/video, etc.
    - i. Choirs or singing groups are prohibited.
    - ii. All speakers must be 10 feet apart. Speakers should be limited, and shall disinfect podiums/microphones in between speakers. Microphones shall not be passed off hand to hand between persons.
    - iii. There shall be no person-to-person contact between individuals.
    - iv. Music shall be limited to one instrument plus one singer, who must be more than 10 feet apart from anyone else. Singing is a higher risk activity for transmission of COVID-19. Microphones used by singers shall not be shared with anyone else during the service, and shall be properly disinfected before next use.
    - v. No food consumption will be allowed, including when related to religious practices (e.g., communion).
  - b. Services held at a private home to provide remote access for worshippers shall only allow individuals living within the household to participate in providing the remote services for worshippers.

**Merced County Department of Public Health  
COVID-19 Funeral Services FAQs  
During Effective Dates of Stay at Home Order**

**I operate a funeral home. Are funeral services allowed?**

Yes, with restrictions. Gatherings are a significant contributor to the spread of COVID-19, requiring restrictions to allow for a balance between safety and beliefs, rituals, and traditions. If the following guidelines cannot be followed, visitors will not be allowed.

Funeral services or viewings are not allowed to take place off-site or in a private home.

While direct burial or direct cremation with no persons in attendance is preferred, funeral services may take place by remote access through video streaming, cemetery graveside, or cemetery drive-through with as few people present as possible.

- No more than 10 persons including clergy and technical assistance shall be present for funeral services; no rotation of those 10 persons is allowed.
- Family shall disclose to clergy if decedent is COVID-19 positive.
- No ill persons shall be in attendance of funeral services or viewings.
- All persons must wear a face covering, except that cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing per CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>, and maintain social distancing of 6 feet from other individuals.
- Mortuary visitation or viewing shall be no more than 30 minutes.
- Graveside visits shall be for no more than 15 minutes.

**Merced County Department of Public Health  
COVID-19 Baptism FAQs  
During Effective Dates of Stay at Home Order**

**Are baptism services allowed?**

Yes, with restrictions. Gatherings are a significant contributor to the spread of COVID-19, requiring restrictions to allow for a balance between safety and beliefs, rituals, and traditions. If the following guidelines cannot be followed, visitors will not be allowed.

Baptisms with as few persons in attendance as possible is preferred. Baptisms may be supplemented by remote access through video streaming with a physical presence no more than of 10 persons in attendance, supplemented with video for viewing by more than 10 people if desired, and is considered the safest option by the Public Health Department, or in-person is allowed with no more than 10 people present.

- No more than 10 persons including clergy and technical assistance shall be physically present for baptism services; no rotation of those 10 persons physically present is allowed.
- Wherever possible, all baptismal fonts are to be drained to discourage parishioners from dipping their hands in the water. Use blessed water only from a single-use bottle for baptisms.
- Use only new water for each person being baptized.
- Participants from different households should avoid direct physical contact.
- No ill persons shall be in attendance of baptism services.
- All persons must wear a face covering, except that cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing per CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>, and maintain social distancing of 6 feet from other individuals.
- Baptism services shall be no more than 30 minutes.

**Merced County Department of Public Health  
COVID-19 Golf Safe Distance Rules  
During Effective Dates of Stay at Home Order**

Note these guidelines are a compilation of many clubs' best practices. These are the minimum requirements that must be enforced; Clubs are able to enforce policies that are more stringent if they feel they are necessary to ensure the health and safety of persons using their facilities.

**Clubs are responsible for ensuring compliance of their individuals utilizing their facilities.**

**Facilities**

1. All clubhouse and indoor facilities are and shall remain closed, including, but not limited to the Pro Shop, Bar, and in-dining at Restaurants.
2. Driving ranges may remain open only if automatic ball cleaners are utilized and a person does not directly conduct the golf ball cleaning.
3. If restrooms remain open, cleaning must be increased to all touch points at least 4 times per day.
4. Check in, if required, must be completed outside, with social distancing of at least 6 feet while both golfer and staff are masked, or through a Plexiglas-type shield.
5. Expand tee time intervals to ensure social distancing.

**Persons Allowed on Courses**

1. Outdoor areas of golf clubs are open only by tee time appointment for appropriate outdoor activities, including the playing of golf pursuant to COVID-19 Golf Safe Distances Rules.
2. Persons who are symptomatic with cough, fever, or shortness of breath, or are housed with anyone symptomatic are prohibited from being on site until those symptoms have subsided for at least fourteen (14) days. A negative COVID-19 test result does not overrule the recommended quarantine, due to potential testing false negatives.
3. Any person who is quarantined by order of a medical or governmental official is prohibited from being on site until the quarantine is lifted.
4. Except for persons of the same household, persons who drive their vehicle to the site should do so alone and park, if possible, at least one space apart. At all times, those who are not persons of the same household using the course, including parking areas, shall stay at least ten (10) feet away from all other users.
5. Those golfing must have no more than 4 players in any group. Social distancing MUST be maintained around the green.
6. Only one person per golf cart.

7. Patrons must wait in their cars until their designated tee times. No social gathering while waiting for the round to begin. Patrons must go directly from hole 18 to their car. No social gathering following the round.
8. Any and all contact with golf course staff, including payment processing, will be done telephonically or electronically, with the exception of check in, if required (see facility rules, above). No cash payments.
9. Limited staff may remain on site for basic facility/grounds maintenance, security, and to ensure compliance with these rules. However, staff must remain 6 feet from all patrons, and wear a mask during interactions.

## **Equipment**

1. No rental clubs or balls may be used and all patrons must bring and use their own equipment.
2. If patrons wish to pick up golf clubs or pull carts from the bag/cart storage, arrangements to do so must be made electronically in advance with staff who will remove the equipment and leave it outside in a designated location. The equipment will not be returned to storage until regular play is resumed (the patrons must then take their equipment with them). This equipment must be the patron's personal equipment.
3. Golf cart rentals should be limited whenever possible, and arranged in advance, electronically or over the phone.
  - a. When possible, if the requesting patron does not have a personal cart, a cart number will be assigned to the requesting patron and that cart shall be used only by that patron and the patron's household during the duration of these rules.
  - b. Golf carts must be picked up and dropped off outside by masked staff maintaining 6 feet or more social distance from any patrons.
  - c. Golf carts must be cleaned and sanitized between each use, and before staff move them back into storage.
  - d. Only one person per golf cart.
4. All rakes, ball washers, and sand bottles must be removed to avoid cross-contamination. If a ball lands in a spot that would otherwise have been raked (e.g. a footprint or divot), the ball can be placed in the nearest undamaged portion of the bunker.
5. The golf cups and flags must be modified to prevent the ball from going into the cup. Flagstick or the base holding the flagstick in place must not be touched or removed. Courses must provide alternative ways to remove balls from holes that do not require human contact, or alternative rules (e.g., putts within two feet are to be conceded to minimize the possibility of contact with the hole and stick.)
6. Except for persons of the same household, players should not touch another player's ball, equipment, or cell phone, including scorecards and pencils.