

May 12, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 DAILY STATUS REPORT

PLEASE NOTE: This is an evolving situation. More information will be distributed as it becomes available. For the most up to date information, please visit: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus. Additional information is available at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus. These status reports will be released once a day in the afternoon on weekdays only. Statistics will continue to be updated daily at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirusstats.

CURRENT STATUS:

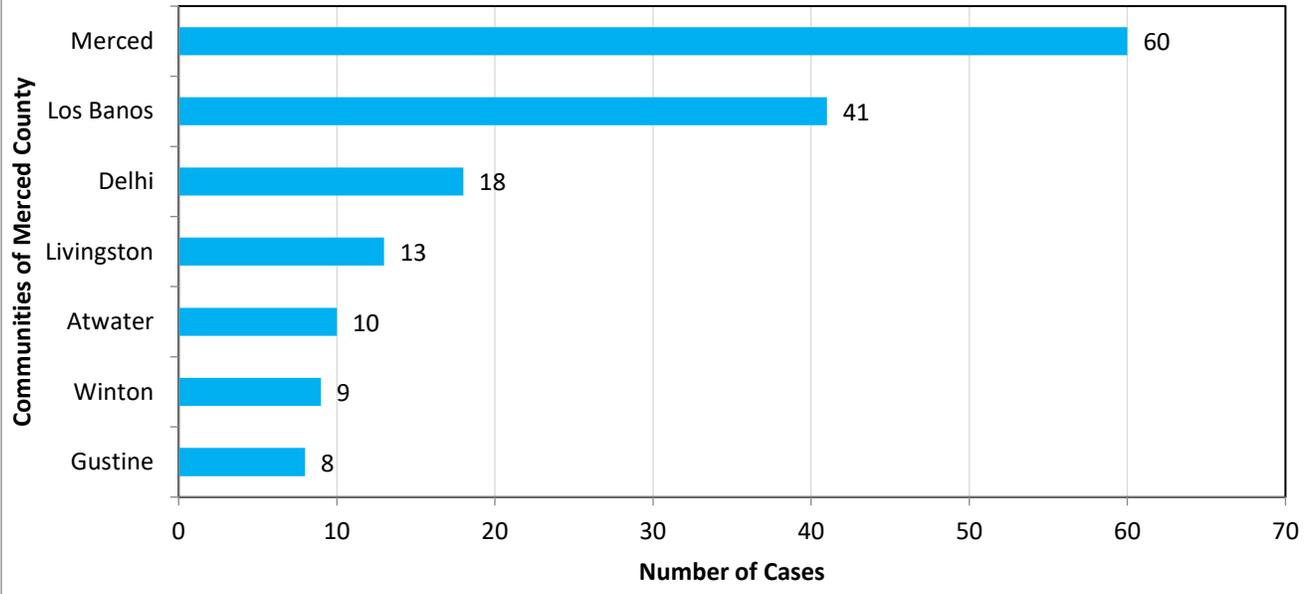
- As of 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 12, 2020, there are 177 confirmed cases (67 active) of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Merced County. Of that number, 106 have recovered and four have died.
- A total of 3,529 tests have been performed in Merced County: 3,305 negatives, 177 positives, and 47 still pending. These figures include testing through both the commercial and public health lab systems.

TOTAL COVID-19 CASE COUNT FOR MERCED COUNTY			
Current as of May 12, 2020, 2 p.m.			
# Confirmed*	# Active	# Recovered**	# Deaths
177	67	East County: 62 West County: 44	4
CASE SUMMARY DETAILS			
EXPOSURE TYPE	East County	West County	
Acquired Out of Jurisdiction	25	8	
Community Spread	28	11	
Healthcare Exposure***	20	21	
Known Exposure	48	14	
Under Investigation	2	0	
GENDER	East County	West County	
Female	66	35	
Male	57	19	
AGE	East County	West County	
<18 years	10	2	
18-49	62	36	
50-64	30	11	
65+	21	5	

Notes:

- *Total confirmed cases include total recovered and total deaths.
- **Recovered defined as symptom free with no medication for 72 hours.
- ***Healthcare exposure includes exposure in and out of jurisdiction.
- East Merced County includes: Atwater, Ballico, Bear Creek, Calpack, Cressey, Delhi, El Nido, Hilmar, Irwin, Le Grand, Livingston, Merced, Planada, Snelling, Stevinson, Tuttle, and Winton
- West Merced County includes: Dos Palos, Gustine, Los Banos, Santa Nella, and Volta

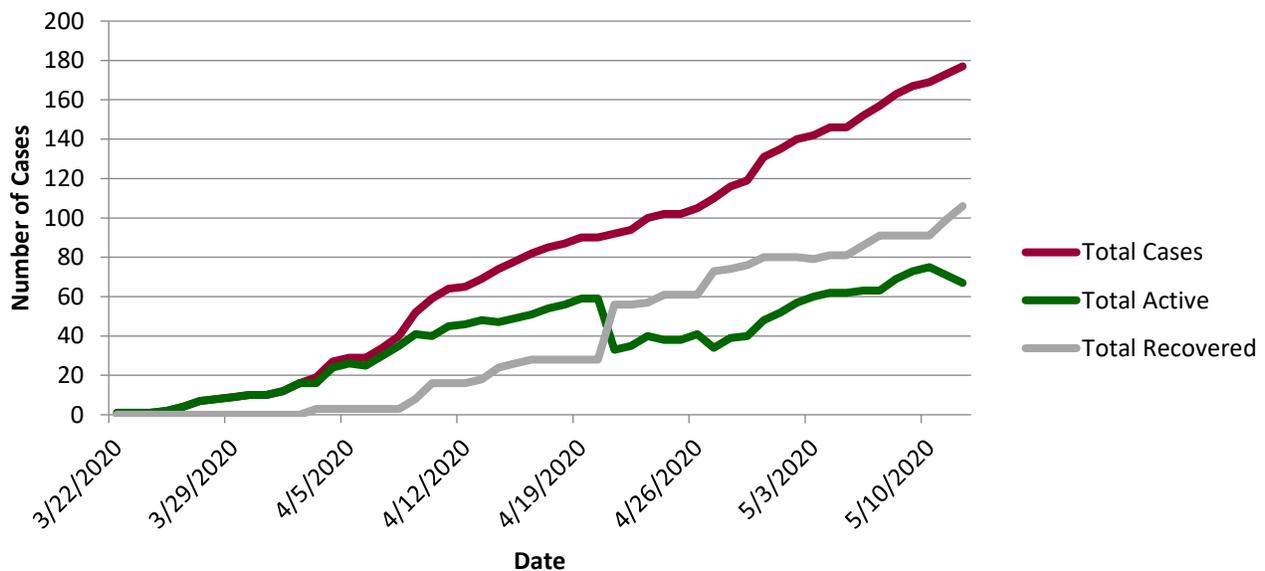
Merced County COVID-19 Positive Cases by Community* as of 5/12/2020, 2 p.m.



Note: *Only communities with five or more cases are reported in this graph.

The figures in the top chart on this page represent confirmed cases, which includes active cases, recoveries, and deaths.

Merced County COVID-19 Case Curve as of 5/12/2020, 2 p.m.



- Based on information provided by individuals who test positive, Public Health staff will continue to assess risks of exposure and contact any affected individuals.
- Due to privacy laws, the Public Health Department cannot release identifying information related to positive cases.
- In California, there are 69,453 confirmed cases and 2,794 deaths.

RECENT ACTIVITIES & UPDATES:

- Merced County Public Health continues to coordinate with federal, state and local partners to further prepare us for future impacts. This includes working with the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor COVID-19.
- In coordination with the Merced County Office of Emergency Services, situational status calls continued this week with local government agencies, schools, and healthcare professionals in our community.
- Today, the Merced County Department of Public Health confirmed the fourth death related to COVID-19. The Merced County resident was a male over the age of 65 with underlying health conditions.
- Rumor Alert: Please be aware that there is a fake letter and other rumors circulating on social media falsely stating that COVID-19 testing is mandatory for anyone receiving public assistance (CalFresh, MediCal, CalWORKS, etc.), and failure to receive a test will result in suspension of benefits. The letter also falsely claims that if someone tests positive for COVID-19, his/her children may be removed from the home and placed into foster care. The fake letter that started these rumors was placed on what appears to be official letterhead from the California Department of Social Services. Merced County and the State have confirmed this letter to be counterfeit. If you see the letter on social media, please disregard it. Should you have any questions regarding social services or child welfare, please contact the Merced County Human Services Agency child welfare hotline at 209-385-3104.
- Worknet Merced County has partnered with the California Employers Association (CEA) to provide Merced County businesses with ongoing training opportunities. Let the CEA help you prepare to get employees back to work when operations can resume during the COVID-19 pandemic. CEA will cover the 3 R's of how to plan and successfully bring your employees back to work—Reconstruct, Reinstate, and Reconnect.
 - Learning Objectives:
 - Reconstruct—Determine what your workplace will look like under this "new normal." Learn how to bring people back and what to do if some of the workforce cannot be reinstated.
 - Reinstate—Evaluate the effectiveness of remote work for your team and if it can or should continue. Be prepared for a variety of federal, state, and local requirements regarding testing employees, PPE, physical distancing and more.
 - Reconnect—How to welcome employees back and ensure a safe working environment.
 - The webinar will take place Wednesday, May 13, from 12 to 1 p.m.
 - Registration Link: <https://www.employers.org/events/webinars/the-three-r-s-to-getting-back-to-work-during-covid-19/05/13/2020/>
- During a special meeting last week, the Merced County Board of Supervisors took unanimous action to request that the Governor accelerate the reopening Merced County's economy and provide more control for local jurisdictions. Specifically, the Board authorized a letter in support of the Health Officer's attestation stating that Merced County meets California Public Health criteria for a "variance process." This would allow Merced County to relax restrictions on retail, education services, child care, offices, and limited hospitality services. The letter also calls for more local control over the process. The State recently entered into Stage 2 of its reopening process, which allows for the gradual reopening of curbside retail, manufacturing, and logistics. If the Board's variance request to accelerate through Stage 2 is granted, it will allow Merced County to open additional factions of the economy as previously mentioned.

- An updated Health Order was released last week by the Public Health Department and is available on www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus.
- The Merced County Office of Emergency Services and Merced County Department of Public Health proclaimed a local and public health emergency March 13 in order to help address the outbreak. The Board of Supervisors ratified those actions during a March 16 special meeting.
- On March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom announced Executive Order N-33-20, asking California residents to stay at home. On March 20, Merced County's Health Officer also issued an Order directing County residents to remain in their places of residence except to perform or receive essential services.
- The Merced County Public Health Department Operations Center was activated Jan. 27, 2020 (107 days) in order to prepare for COVID-19 in and around our community. The Merced County Emergency Operations Center and Human Services Agency Department Operations Center are also currently active.

COVID-19 TESTING UPDATE:

- COVID-19 Testing Available for All Merced County Residents:
 - Merced County Fairgrounds: 900 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Merced
 - 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday—Friday
 - Register at www.lhi.care/covidtesting or by calling 1-888-634-1123
 - Due to expected high demand, testing availability is by appointment only in order to prevent unnecessarily-long wait times for clients. Walk-ins will not be accepted at this time.
- Within the public health system, every person who has met CDC criteria for severe disease within Merced County has been tested.
- Public Health is actively identifying other methods to enhance testing capability for providers throughout the community and increase testing county-wide. We will continue to be notified should positive tests come through either system (public health or commercial).
- In late March, Merced County opened two “mobile specimen collection sites” for COVID-19 in order to streamline testing capabilities. Initially, there will be two collection days per week, one on the westside of the County, and one on the eastside of the County. Each site will remain open for four hours per day. Additional hours per day and days per week may become more frequent if supply and personnel availability increase.
 - **PLEASE NOTE:** Use of these mobile specimen collection sites are by appointment only, and you must have a prescription from a physician and prior approval from the Merced County Department of Public Health. If you do not have a provider and have symptoms call 209-381-1180 for a phone consultation. Anyone without prior approval will not be tested. Locations will be provided to clients once appointments are made. Call 209-381-1180 for more information.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND PRECAUTIONS:

- Coronavirus symptoms include: mild to severe respiratory illness, fever, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell. If symptoms develop, individuals should stay at home to limit exposure to others.
- Anyone who has had contact with a person with possible COVID-19 infection and has the above symptoms should call his/her local health department/health care provider immediately.
- Do not go to your provider's office without calling ahead. Do not call 911 for suspected COVID-19 unless you are having a medical emergency.

- During the flu season, there are steps you can take to protect your health and the health of those around you:
 - Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Stay away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms such as fever and cough.
 - Cover sneezes or coughs with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- **Sign up for COVID-19 alerts:** www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus
- Merced County Public Health COVID-19 **Information Webpage:**
 - www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus
- Merced County Public Health **Information Line:**
 - 209-381-1180 (English, Spanish, and Hmong. Live reps. available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- **Email** COVID-19-specific questions to Merced County Public Health:
 - COVID19@countyofmerced.com.
- Updated **CDC Information:**
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/whats-new-all.html>
- **CDC Resources for Households:**
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/index.html>
- How to **talk to your kids** about the coronavirus:
 - <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>
- Guidance for **Businesses and Employers:**
 - <https://bit.ly/2IH2G2u>
 - www.covid19.ca.gov
- Report **Price Gouging:**
 - <http://www.countyofmerced.com/3381/Price-Gouging>
- Report **Consumer Fraud:**
 - www.countyofmerced.com/2322/Consumer-Fraud
- Report **non-essential business activity** and large group gatherings that violate the Stay-at-Home Order:
 - Hotline: 209-381-1100 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday)
 - Email: COVIDcomplaint@countyofmerced.com
- **Free Virtual Care** options through Dignity Health for those with COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Patients can receive a free Virtual Care Anywhere visit if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Symptoms can include fever, cough, or shortness of breath.
 - To access a free virtual urgent care visit, visit www.dignityhealth.org/virtualcareanywhere, download the Virtual Care Anywhere app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or call 855-356-8053 and use the coupon code COVID19.
- **Get Help/Give Help:**
 - www.gethelpgivehelpmerced.com
- **Donations**—help community members impacted by COVID-19:
 - www.countyofmerced.com/donations
- Exclusive **Shopping for Vulnerable Populations:**
 - www.countyofmerced.com/3396/Exclusive-Shopping-for-Vulnerable-Popula
- Make and donate **face masks:**
 - www.rccmercedcounty.org

- Apply for **benefits**— Individuals experiencing financial hardship may qualify for cash assistance through CalWORKs, food nutrition assistance through CalFresh, and medical assistance through MediCal:
 - www.getcalfresh.org (CalFresh only)
 - www.C4yourself.com (CalWORKs and MediCal)
 - 1-855-421-6770
- **Unemployment Insurance** questions to local Merced County EDD Office:
 - WSBModestoFieldOffice@edd.ca.gov
- Information regarding **tenant protections**:
 - www.countyofmerced.com/3412/Real-Estate
- **24/7 Warm Line for Youth** (emotional support):
 - 209-381-6800 or 1-888-334-0163 (toll free)
 - Additional Behavioral Health resources: www.countyofmerced.com/3395/Behavioral-Health-Resources
- **Reopen Merced County**:
 - www.reopenmercedcounty.com
 - www.reopenmercedcounty.com/survey

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