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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Infant Tests Positive for COVID-19

MERCED COUNTY, CA – Merced County health officials confirmed its first infant-related COVID-19 exposure case in Merced County.

Health officials confirmed that a five-month-old infant recently tested positive for the virus. The infant is doing well and recovering at home. Due to protected health information requirements and to maintain the patient’s confidentiality, Public Health is not able to disclose further information about this case.

County Public Health officials have noticed an increase in children’s cases over the past two weeks. There have been nine confirmed cases of children under 18 years of age, making it 12 confirmed cases to date (a four-fold increase in two weeks). Pediatric cases have increased from 3% of the caseload to 7% of the caseload. As of May 12, 2020, there are 180 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 67 of which are active cases, 109 recovered and four deaths. This is an increase of 49 cases within a two-week span for the County.

“This case highlights the importance of following local health orders and practicing safety measures in our daily routines,” said Merced County Public Health Officer Dr. Salvador Sandoval. “It is crucial that we protect the vulnerable populations in our community, which includes young children. Now is not the time to become complacent. Transmission levels will continue to rise and will affect our loved ones unless we make a difference by doing our part.”

As the spread of COVID-19 continues to increase locally, Merced County health officials strongly urge the community to continue following health orders and exercising the following measures to help slow the spread of the virus:

EVERYONE SHOULD:

- ✓ Stay home, especially if you’re sick
- ✓ Limit your time and trips out of your home
- ✓ Wear a cloth face covering when you leave home; particularly when social distancing is not possible, as in enclosed places.
- ✓ Practice social distancing, which means keeping at least 6 feet between you and any person when outside of your home
- ✓ Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds as often as possible
- ✓ Not touch your eyes, nose or mouth
- ✓ Call your health care provider first if you think you have COVID-19

All Merced County residents interested in being tested for COVID-19, can register for an appointment online at www.lhi.care/covidtesting.

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

To schedule a phone interview, please contact the Public Health Communication Office from Monday—Friday, 8 a.m.—5 p.m. at **209-381-1187**.

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