

July 7, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

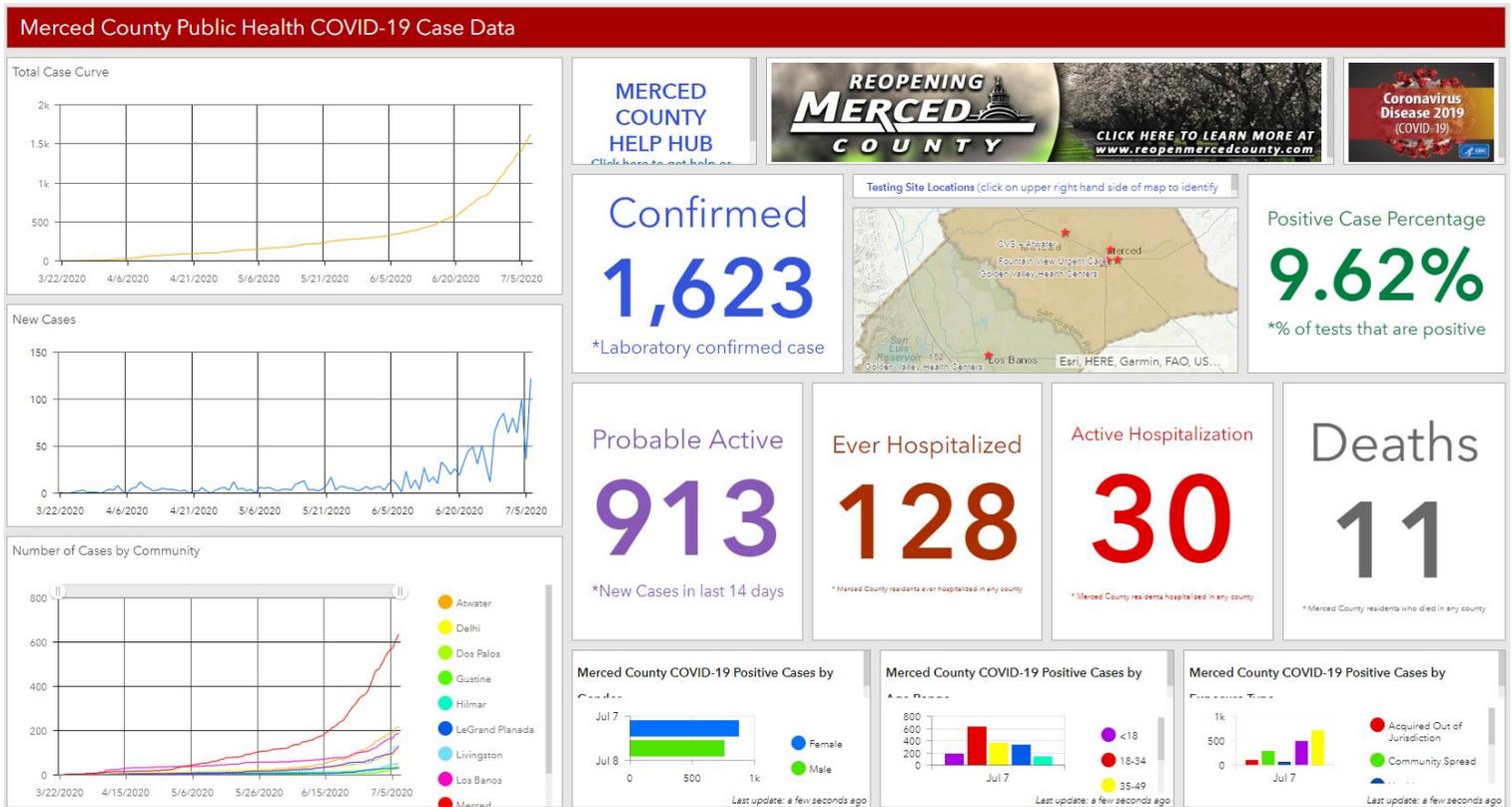
CONTACT: Mike North, 209-726-2744

**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](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus). Additional information is available at [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus). These status reports are released daily on normal business days. Statistics will continue to be updated on weekdays at [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirusstats](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirusstats).

**CURRENT STATUS:**

- As of 4 p.m. Tuesday, July 7, 2020, there are 1,623 confirmed cases (+93 from Monday) of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Merced County. Approximately 913 of those cases are active, and 11 have died.
- Please see "COVID-19 Testing Update" section for the most recent testing figures.



- View this interactive dashboard online at: [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirusstats](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirusstats)
- 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 271,889 confirmed cases and 6,446 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.
- Merced County has been placed on the State watch list due to rapidly increasing disease transmission, increased hospitalizations, and a rise in the percentage of individuals testing positive for COVID-19, indicating increased circulation throughout the community. Further details can be found at: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/CountyMonitoringDataStep2.aspx>
- In response to the high rate of transmission locally, the State directed the Merced County Department of Public Health to amend the “Stay Safe Health Order.” The Order was amended Thursday, July 2, and again on Friday, July 3. The current version of the Order (with guidance) can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/2ZzcnrD>. At the direction of the Governor, Merced County health officials are mandating the closure of higher risk business sectors, effective immediately. All bars, brew pubs and breweries must cease operations (indoor and outdoor). In addition, the following business sectors must close all indoor operations:
  - Restaurants (socially-distanced outdoor dining still permissible)
  - Wineries and Tasting Rooms
  - Family Entertainment Centers (e.g., bowling, movie theaters, etc.)
  - Zoos and Museums
  - Cardrooms
- This closure is for an expected minimum of three weeks. If numbers continue to rise, that closure timeframe could be extended by the State and additional business sectors could be closed. If numbers trend downward in the coming days, the three-week closure could potentially be reduced. The current Order will continue until it is rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.
- In response to the current spike of COVID-19, face coverings are now mandated by the State and County. The amended Order recommends that businesses post face covering requirements at entrances. Businesses have the authority to refuse entrance for failure to wear a face covering. Stay home if you’re sick, and wear face coverings when:
  - Inside of, or in line to enter, any indoor public space;
  - Obtaining healthcare services;
  - Waiting for or riding on public transportation or while in any private or ride-sharing vehicle including operators of the transportation;
  - At the workplace or performing work off-site;
  - Outdoors in public spaces where physical distancing is not possible.
- In an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 by preventing large group gatherings, the County’s regional parks (Lake Yosemite, Hagaman Park and Henderson Park) will be closed on Saturdays and Sundays until further notice. The parks will remain open on weekdays, but physical distancing must be adhered to and large group gatherings will continue to be prohibited.
- A new “Outbreaks” tab was added to the County’s COVID-19 webpage, [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus). The page provides information on current outbreaks in Merced County using the California Department of Public Health’s definition of an outbreak, which includes:
  - Three or more individuals with no linkage outside of the workplace, working in the same facility and shift; or
  - One resident of a skilled nursing facility.

When a facility is determined to be in an outbreak protocol, the Merced County Department of Public Health works closely with the facility to mitigate the spread of disease. Affected close contacts are contacted by the facility/employer.

- Worknet Business Funding Opportunity: In order to support small business employers facing financial impacts and potential layoffs from the novel-coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), Worknet Merced County has opened a second round of funding through the COVID-19 Reopen Merced County Fund. The fund provides grants to small employers experiencing economic stresses in order to prevent potential layoffs or facility closures during COVID-19. Funding is open to Merced County businesses only, with up to \$1,000 available for businesses that employ 1-25 people, and \$2,000 available for businesses that employ 26-50 people. Funding can pay for items that allow the business to maintain operations during this time, including the purchase of remote access equipment, services or tools to convert to online sales, cleaning or sanitation supplies that are needed to reduce virus exposure, or other items the business needs to invest in so as to avoid the need for employee layoffs. Please note that funding cannot be spent directly on employee wages or benefits. Apply online now at [www.ReopenMercedCounty.com/RMCFund](http://www.ReopenMercedCounty.com/RMCFund).
- 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 (163 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:**

- As of July 7, a total of 17,136 tests have been performed in Merced County: 15,242 negatives, 1,623 positives, and 271 still pending. These figures include testing through both the commercial and public health lab systems. (Testing figures reported on a weekly basis.)

Testing Site	Location	Registration
Golden Valley Health Centers	645 Seventh St, Los Banos	1-866-682-4842 <a href="http://www.gvhc.org">www.gvhc.org</a>
Golden Valley Health Centers	857 W. Childs Ave., Merced	1-866-682-4842 <a href="http://www.gvhc.org">www.gvhc.org</a>
State Site	900 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr, Merced	1-888-634-1123 or online at <a href="http://www.lhi.care/covidtesting">www.lhi.care/covidtesting</a> .
CVS – Merced	1970 Yosemite Pkwy, Merced	<a href="https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing?WT.ac=cvs-storelocator-searchpilot-header-covid-7206">https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing?WT.ac=cvs-storelocator-searchpilot-header-covid-7206</a>
CVS – Atwater	1651 Bellevue Rd, Atwater	<a href="https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing?WT.ac=cvs-storelocator-searchpilot-header-covid-7206">https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing?WT.ac=cvs-storelocator-searchpilot-header-covid-7206</a>

- 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).

#### **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.
  - Wear a face covering when in public.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- **Sign up for COVID-19 alerts:** [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus](http://www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus)
- Merced County Public Health COVID-19 **Information Webpage:**
  - [www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus](http://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](http://www.covid19.ca.gov)
- Report **Price Gouging:**
  - <http://www.countyofmerced.com/3381/Price-Gouging>
- Report **Consumer Fraud:**
  - [www.countyofmerced.com/2322/Consumer-Fraud](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.gethelpgivehelpmerced.com)
- **Donations**—help community members impacted by COVID-19:
  - [www.countyofmerced.com/donations](http://www.countyofmerced.com/donations)
- Exclusive **Shopping for Vulnerable Populations:**
  - [www.countyofmerced.com/3396/Exclusive-Shopping-for-Vulnerable-Popula](http://www.countyofmerced.com/3396/Exclusive-Shopping-for-Vulnerable-Popula)
- 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](http://www.getcalfresh.org) (CalFresh only)
  - [www.C4yourself.com](http://www.C4yourself.com) (CalWORKs and MediCal)
  - 1-855-421-6770
- **Unemployment Insurance** questions to local Merced County EDD Office:
  - [WSBModestoFieldOffice@edd.ca.gov](mailto:WSBModestoFieldOffice@edd.ca.gov)
- Information regarding **tenant protections:**
  - [www.countyofmerced.com/3412/Real-Estate](http://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](http://www.countyofmerced.com/3395/Behavioral-Health-Resources)
- **Reopen Merced County:**
  - [www.reopenmercedcounty.com](http://www.reopenmercedcounty.com)
  - [www.reopenmercedcounty.com/survey](http://www.reopenmercedcounty.com/survey)
  - COVID-19 Reopen Merced County Fund: [www.ReopenMercedCounty.com/RMCFund](http://www.ReopenMercedCounty.com/RMCFund)

###