

July 16, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Mike North, 209-726-2744

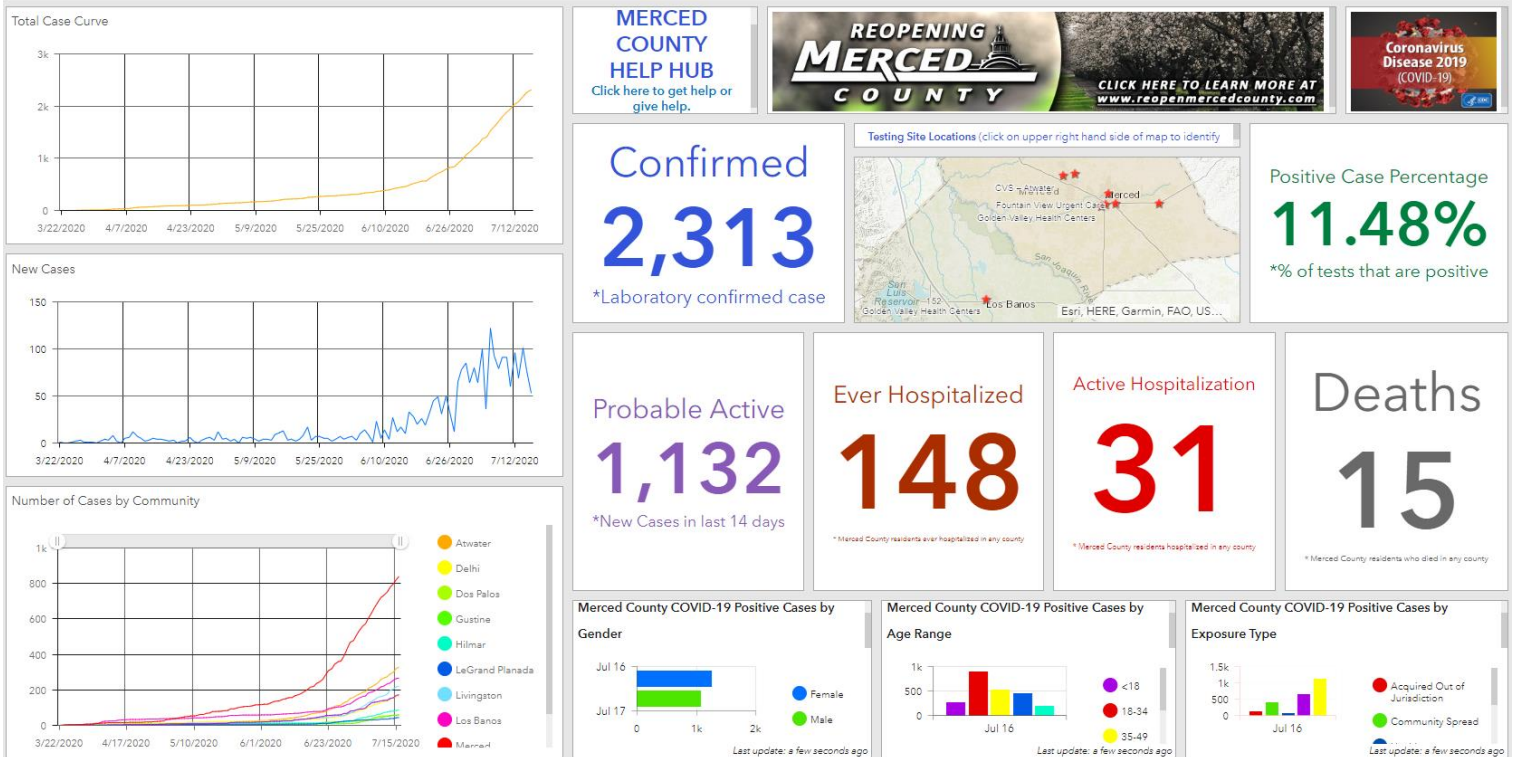
COVID-19 DAILY STATUS REPORT

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. Additional information is available at 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.

CURRENT STATUS:

- As of 3:30 p.m. Thursday, July 16, 2020, there are 2,313 confirmed cases (+53 from Wednesday) of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Merced County. Approximately 1,132 of those cases are active, and 15 have died.
- Please see "COVID-19 Testing Update" section for the most recent testing figures.

Merced County Public Health COVID-19 Case Data



- View this interactive dashboard online at: 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 352,931 confirmed cases and 7,358 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 an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the Merced County Department of Public Health continues to conduct contact tracing as required by the State. This includes contacting all positive cases and providing them verbal instructions and available resources on how they can notify others they've come into contact with and care for themselves. Public Health is still contacting affected employers. Resources are also provided to individuals who test positive and their places of employment. If it's determined that there's a high potential for an outbreak, Public Health will notify secondary contacts of positive cases in addition to places of employment. Due to the high volume of cases, the notification of secondary contacts is done only for high-risk situations and high-risk environments.
- On Wednesday, the Merced County Department of Public Health confirmed the 14th and 15th deaths related to COVID-19. The 14th death was a male Merced County resident between the ages of 50 and 64 with no underlying health conditions. Information on the 15th death is not available as of the publication of this report.
- On Tuesday, the Merced County Department of Public Health confirmed the 13th death related to COVID-19. The Merced County resident was a male between the ages of 50 and 64. It is unknown at this time whether the individual had underlying health conditions.
- The Merced County Department of Public Health provided a COVID-19 update to the Board of Supervisors during its regular meeting on Tuesday, July 14. That update can be viewed here: <https://mercedcountyca.new.swagit.com/videos/73600?ts=559>
- Merced County has been placed on the State monitoring 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>
- Mask Up Merced County: Due to a rapid increase of COVID-19 cases, Merced County and its six cities launched a campaign last week encouraging residents to wear face coverings to slow the spread of COVID-19 and reopen the economy. The use of face coverings is now mandated by the State and County. Wear a face covering whenever you're out in public—it's the safe thing to do, it's the courteous thing to do, and it's the right thing to do. Face coverings are a proven way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and are required to be worn:
 - Inside of, or in line to enter, any indoor public space;
 - When obtaining healthcare services;
 - Waiting for or riding on public transportation or while in any private or ride-sharing vehicle including operators of the transportation;
 - When at the workplace or performing work off-site;
 - While outdoors in public spaces when physical distancing is not feasible.The more face coverings are used, the faster we can collectively stem the spread of COVID-19 and reopen parts of the economy. The alternative is the State imposing an extended shutdown on more sectors of our economy due to the rising infection rate. Please do your part so we can stop the spread and reopen.
 - More information: www.countyofmerced.com/news
- In an effort to protect customers and employees amidst increasing COVID-19 infections, Merced County and its six cities are working with local businesses on a self-certification safety process. Branded as "Ready2Open," the process allows local businesses to complete an online checklist to verify that they've taken steps to ensure the safety of customers and

employees. Steps include safety signage, employee training, employee health screening, physical distancing measures, and routine sanitation. This campaign officially began this week.

- More information: www.countyofmerced.com/news
- 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.
- 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 (172 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 14, a total of 19,885 tests have been performed in Merced County: 17,403 negatives, 2,183 positives, and 299 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 www.gvhc.org
Golden Valley Health Centers	857 W. Childs Ave., Merced	1-866-682-4842 www.gvhc.org
OptumServ Site	900 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr, Merced	1-888-634-1123 or online at www.lhi.care/covidtesting .
CVS – Merced	1970 Yosemite Pkwy, Merced	https://bit.ly/3e9kaS4
CVS – Atwater	1651 Bellevue Rd, Atwater	https://bit.ly/3e9kaS4
Fountain View Urgent Care	374 W. Olive Ave. # A, Merced	209-384-5766
Castle Family Health Urgent Care	3605 Hospital Rd, Atwater	209-381-2000
San Joaquin Drug	9215 E, CA-140, Planada	209-382-1291

- 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
- 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
- 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
 - COVID-19 Reopen Merced County Fund: www.ReopenMercedCounty.com/RMCFund

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