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Contact: Jolena Voorhis
(209) 468-2997/ jvoorhis@sjgov.org

San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Receive COVID-19 Updates

More testing throughout the County will help get kids back in school and more businesses reopened

STOCKTON – The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors received updates today related to the COVID-19 pandemic in San Joaquin County.

Dr. Maggie Park, San Joaquin County Public Health Officer, updated the Board on the number of COVID-19 positive cases and hospitalizations in San Joaquin County. Dr. Park said there are currently 17,620 total cases and 331 deaths in the County. Dr. Park said that there are currently 104 COVID-19 patients in the hospital with 34 in the ICU and 21 on ventilators, noting that she was encouraged by the decrease of overall numbers but said there is still much work to be done.

Dr. Park explained the State's new "[Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#)," which is a tiered strategy to address the COVID-19 pandemic in California. She said the new tier system is based on a County's rate of new cases and the positivity rate. San Joaquin County is currently in the purple tier, meaning the risk level is widespread with more than 7 new cases per 100,000 residents over a seven day average and more than 8 percent of those testing being positive for COVID-19. San Joaquin County is at 16.6 new cases per 100,000 and 11.3 percent positivity rate for COVID-19. Dr. Park emphasized that in order to grant waivers to schools to get kids back in schools that the community must do their part to help bring those numbers down from 16.6 to 14 new cases per 100,000 per day.

Per the State's new guidelines, at a minimum, counties must remain in a tier for at least three weeks before moving to a different tier. Data is reviewed weekly and tiers are updated on Tuesdays. To move forward, a county must meet the next tier's criteria for two consecutive weeks. If a county's metrics worsen for two consecutive weeks, it will be assigned a more restrictive tier.

Dr. Park said that the County is collaborating closely with the State's Central Valley Task Force to implement several strategies to lower San Joaquin County's case numbers and positivity rates. Park said the State will be disseminating a mobile testing company throughout the County to help get as many residents tested as possible, especially from disproportionately impacted communities. She said testing would help the County to move from the purple tier to the red tier which could ultimately result in schools and businesses reopening.

Dr. Park stated, "It's taken a long time and a lot of hard work from County residents, but our numbers are getting better. I'm thankful to everyone who are doing the right thing because it is really making a difference. We know the severe impacts this virus has caused to individuals, families, youth and businesses. We are doing everything on our end based on State requirements and guidelines as well as science to continue reducing our numbers. We need

residents to continue stepping up and doing their part to keep COVID-19 cases down. It's the only way to save lives, get kids back in school, help more businesses reopen and resume daily activities."

Specific to testing, the Board also heard a presentation from Greg Diederich, Director of the San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency, about the need for additional testing equipment and community partners who can administer the tests. Mr. Diederich and Dr. Park both emphasized that they have widespread testing available, but that they need residents to actually show up and take advantage of the testing – whether or not they have symptoms.

Kathy Miller, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors said, "If we want to get kids back in school, businesses reopened and our daily activities back on track, go get tested. It's free, easy and something proactive residents can do to help get our numbers down in addition to wearing a mask, social distancing and washing hands."

The Board also heard from Chris Woods, Director of the San Joaquin County Human Services Agency, who gave an update on shelter options for homeless individuals over 65 years of age or who have certain underlying health conditions and individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 or are recovering from COVID-19 and need isolation capacity. He said Project Roomkey has secured 111 hotel rooms for homeless individuals, with 76 rooms at Motel 6 and 35 rooms at the Stockton Stay Inn. There are currently 82 people in motel rooms with more than 110 people who have been served overall, staying an average 61 days. Another 36 beds are available at the Gospel Rescue Mission in two separate housing units for COVID-19 positive homeless. The housing units provide a place to recuperate and properly quarantine outside of the hospital system and has served more than 100 individuals since early June.

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