



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Receive COVID-19 Updates and Take Actions
With COVID-19 rates at the lowest rate in a year, state mandate restrictions are lifting

STOCKTON – San Joaquin County Health Care Services Director Greg Diederich told the Board of Supervisors yesterday that COVID-19 case rates, hospitalizations, and ICU admissions are on the decline allowing the lifting of additional statewide mandates. He noted that COVID-19 case rates are dramatically decreasing from 22.3 to 5 cases per 100,000 since March 2, 2022.

San Joaquin County COVID-19 latest statistics as of March 21, 2022:

- 166,879 total COVID-19 cases; 2180 deaths; 25 people hospitalized; 5 COVID-19 positive people in ICU with 2 of those patients on ventilators.
- 63.6% of San Joaquin County's total population are fully vaccinated. An additional 187,848 residents have received a booster or extra dose.
- County hospital ICU's are 65% full, with 4% of hospital ICU beds occupied by COVID-19 patients which is down from 101% on March 2.

To view weekly updates of the County's COVID-19 statistics, visit:

<http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/Epidemiology.aspx>

Mr. Diederich told the Board that the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) informed COVID testing vendors who have made claims against a Federal COVID fund for uninsured that beginning March 22, HRSA will stop accepting claims for testing and treatments due to a lack of sufficient funds. On April 5, HRSA will stop accepting claims for COVID tests provided to uninsured individuals. Moving forward, people without insurance will be charged a \$100 fee at most testing sites, with a few exceptions. Please see the COVID testing page at SJReady.org for updated information.

Mr. Diederich said that while there are still many testing and vaccination events occurring throughout the County, many sites will be closing or reducing hours in the coming weeks. He said residents can receive free at-home COVID-19 tests at www.COVIDtests.gov. Residents are also encouraged to check www.MyTurn.ca.gov for information about testing and vaccine locations and hours of operation. They can also visit this [link](#) to learn about COVID-19 treatments available in the community.

Mr. Diederich also overviewed the recent state guidance regarding state COVID-19 mandates including the following:

- March 11 - Ending of State Public Health Order requiring masking for K-12 students but remaining a strong recommendation.
- March 15 - California lawmakers voted against ending Governor Newsom's emergency powers.

- March 17 - Effective April 1, 2022, requirements for vaccine verification or proof of negative test for Indoor mega events of over 1,000 people will be lifted and will move to a strong recommendation.

Mr. Diederich announced that a nationwide Test to Treat Initiative will launch this week. Through this program, at-risk people who test positive for COVID-19 can visit participating local pharmacy-based clinics, federally-qualified community health centers and long-term care facilities to be assessed by a health care provider. At this assessment, the provider can prescribe antiviral medications which may eventually be provided at certain testing sites. For more information regarding available COVID-19 treatments, visit www.aspr.hhs.gov.

Diederich noted, "The goal of this program is to quickly identify COVID-19 positive individuals that might be at higher risk for severe disease and then immediately prescribing the appropriate oral anti-viral treatment to prevent decomposition and hospitalization. This program ensures that if people who are at high risk for developing severe disease test positive, they can get treatment quickly and easily."

Supervisor Chuck Winn, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors stated, "We've been living through this COVID-19 crisis for two years now. County residents and businesses have sacrificed everything since the pandemic began and we greatly appreciate their perseverance and courage in addressing the unending challenges. It's time to let schools, businesses and residents to get back to a normal life. It's time to embrace our family and friends. It's time to be grateful for what we have, yet not forget our losses and the obstacles we have overcome. It's time to remember today is the beginning of a new tomorrow."

Consent Items

- Recertification of AB 361 teleconferencing requirements.
- Authorized reallocation of \$2,321,000 from the Small Business Assistance Grant Program to fund Round 3 of the Relief Across Downtown Card Program and approved related budget adjustments.
- Approved an Emergency Investigational Supply Agreement with Zoetis, LLC for the donation of SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine for animal use only at the Micke Grove Zoo.

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