



## Frequently Asked Questions

### General Message

- **Stay Home:** We are recommending all gatherings be postponed or cancelled immediately. This applies to all non-essential professional, social, and community gatherings. Only go out for essential business. Utilize social distancing and return home promptly when your business is complete.
- **Stay Well:** Utilize flu prevention techniques to stay healthy. This means washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or using sanitizer; covering your cough & sneezes; and sanitizing surroundings.
- **Stay Connected:** During this time of uncertainty it's important to stay connected with friends, families, neighbors, and others. Know the signs of anxiety and stress and take care of your emotional health. We encourage you to check on those around you by calling or texting. Stay up to date with current and reliable information by going to trusted sources such as our webpage <http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19> and Facebook
- ***The immediate risk still remains low*** for Madera County residents at this time. This may change rapidly at any time.
- There has been a total of 3 cases in Madera County; 2 currently confirmed and 1 recovered.
- A Health Officer Order has been issued for Febrile Respiratory Illness (FRI) screening, reporting, and containment.
- Colds and flu are common this time of year and share similar symptoms as COVID-19.
- Callers can use the Community Feedback Form on the Public Health website <https://maderacounty.com/publichealth> if they want to be contacted by the department.
- Direct all media to the Public Health Communications Unit
  - (559) 514-4857 (monitored Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 5:00)
  - Email: [phmedia@maderacounty.com](mailto:phmedia@maderacounty.com)
- Encourage callers to look out for these common signs of distress:
  - Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear.
  - Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels.
  - Difficulty concentrating.
  - Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images.
  - Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes.
  - Worsening of chronic health problems.
  - Anger or short-temper.
  - Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.
- Offer these CDC tips to caller to reduce stress and support themselves
  - Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
  - Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
  - Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.



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- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Direct callers to reliable sources such as the MCDPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and California Department of Public Health websites.
- Explain that sharing the facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful.
- Explain that sharing accurate information about COVID-19 you can help make people feel less stressed and allow you to connect with them.

## **General COVID-19 Information**

**What is the 2019 novel coronavirus?** The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that cause respiratory illness. This virus is part of the coronavirus family and should not be mistaken as another coronavirus that causes the common cold. Not all coronaviruses are the 2019 novel coronaviruses.

**How did the novel coronavirus come about?** Many coronaviruses originate from animals. Rarely, these animal coronaviruses will spread from animal to human and even rarer, from human to human. The COVID-19 is suspected to be one of these rare cases.

**Can someone who has the COVID-19 spread the illness to others?** A person who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending all patients who are sick with COVID-19 to be at home or in an isolation room under the monitoring of the local public health department until they are better and can no longer spread to others.

**What is the Department of Public Health doing about COVID-19?** The Madera County Department of Public Health is always in contact with the CDC, California Department of Public Health (CDPH), other local public health departments, and health care providers in Madera County to ensure we are taking all necessary recommended steps to be prepared and protect the Madera County community. The CDC, in constant communication with state and local health departments, have created a notification process to let the state and local health departments know about travelers returning from affected areas. If there are travelers who are residents of Madera County and are coming back from an affected area, the Madera County Department of Public Health will know immediately. Because of this, be assured that the Madera County Department of Public Health is a taking all immediate steps to evaluate and keep persons with risks of COVID-19 away from the community. It is important to note that majority of travelers who will be evaluated will not have COVID-19. The Madera County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) is closely tracking the progress of COVID-19 and providing information to the community.

- You can find that information at [www.maderacounty.com/publichealth](http://www.maderacounty.com/publichealth) or [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19).
- Plans are in place to protect residents and limit exposure to the community.



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- The department is working closely with other County agencies and leaders to get the necessary resources to County residents.

**What is community transmission?** A confirmed case where the patient has had no contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case or travel history to an affected country.

**What does it mean to declare a state of emergency?** The declaration helps the County access resources, reassign staff to new roles, and implement plans that make it easier to get the necessary resources to County residents.

**I have an event, do I have to cancel?** Yes. All public events and gatherings must be cancelled.

**How is food service affected?** All retail and food service will only be open for drive thru or pick up delivery services.

**How does this affect working individuals?** If you have work at one of the locations that have been closed we recommend contacting your employer for guidance.

**How do I get COVID-19?** The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person when in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

- It may be possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object contaminated with the virus, but to-date, this is not thought to be the main means of virus spread.

**How do I avoid getting it?** There is currently no vaccine for COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being close (within 6 feet) of someone with the virus. Follow these steps every day to prevent getting sick from not only COVID-19 but also other respiratory diseases.

- Don't come close to someone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover or cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hand frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, cough, or sneeze, and after using the restroom. If soap is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Actively discuss hand washing methods with your children and family members.
- Effective use of hand sanitizer requires adequate amount (two full pumps) for the hands to be wet and scrubbed for 20 seconds. Keep rubbing until dry.
- Clean and disinfect items that are regularly touched with cleaning sprays or wipes.
- Flu prevention steps can be used to prevent COVID-19.
- Keep adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans.

**What does social distancing mean?** It is a way to avoid unnecessary physical contact with another person such as:



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- Waving or fist-bumping instead of shaking hands or hugging.
- Not sharing food, drinks, utensils, electronics, etc.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Keeping at least six feet between you and another person.

**Should I be wearing a mask?** The Madera County Department of Public and the CDC do not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from COVID-19. Facemasks should only be used by people who are sick with symptom of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of disease to others. The use of facemasks is also important for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility). Infection happens when people touch their face, and wearing a mask typically increases that behavior.

**Am I at risk for COVID-19 in Madera County?** This is a constantly changing situation; however, at this time the immediate risk for Madera County residents remains low. This may change rapidly at any time

**Should I cancel or postpone my trip?** CDC provides additional recommendation on postponing on canceling trip based on risks. A list of destinations with travel notices is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

**What if I show signs?** If you are experiencing symptoms and feel medical care is needed, call ahead to the doctor for instructions so illness is not spread in waiting rooms.

- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe, e.g., high fever or difficulty breathing. Call ahead to the doctor for instructions to reduce spread of illness in waiting rooms.
- If you don't currently have a doctor contact your local clinic or urgent care. (see attached list of providers)

### **Should I avoid going out in public? YES**

- Follow flu prevention steps while out in public and practicing physical distancing of 6 feet between you and another person when available.
- Avoid attending all mass social gatherings or where physical distancing cannot be achieved.
  - This includes parties, weddings, open air markets, church services, etc.
- Stay home if you are sick and remain at home until fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines
- If you are age 65 or older or medically vulnerable with a compromised immune system you should stay at home.
  - Friends and family are encouraged to call seniors and see them in person if they are free of symptoms.



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**How do I get groceries or other resources if I don't go out in public?** MCDPH is working closely with other County agencies and leaders to get the necessary resources to County residents.

- Ask a low risk family member to go shopping for you.
- Utilize any of the home delivery services available in your area.

### **Events and Gatherings**

**What is an event/gathering?** A “gathering” is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

**Why are events/gatherings no longer allowed?** COVID-19 is contained in the droplets that can be sneezed, coughed, or exhaled into the air by infected individuals. Gatherings provide an opportunity for many people to be close together and allow for the spread of COVID-19 and communicable disease. The best way to prevent COVID-19 is through social distancing and flu prevention methods.

**What type of events/gatherings are allowed?** At this time, due to the State Health Officer's Stay-At-Home order and local Health Officer Large Event order, no public events are allowed. When will events/gatherings be allowed again? At this time, the State Health Officer's order is in effect until further notice. Public Health Officials will continue to monitor the situation to determine when the Order will be lifted.

**What happens if I refuse to cancel my event?** If community members are violating the orders and law enforcement is notified, we will seek voluntary compliance of the orders. Ongoing violation of the orders is considered a misdemeanor. Both civil and criminal enforcement actions are permitted under the Health and Safety Code.

### **Testing and Symptoms**

**What are the symptoms?** COVID-19 symptoms are similar to the flu and involve fever, coughing, or difficulty breathing and either of the following.

- A recent visit to any high risk country or
- Contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case.

Symptoms can be mild or severe. Those who have COVID-19 can have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. People who are very ill with COVID-19 can have pneumonia.

**Should I get tested?** If you are experiencing symptoms and feel medical care is needed, call ahead to your doctor for instructions so illness is not spread in the waiting rooms.

- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe such as high fever or difficulty breathing.



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- Even if you are experiencing symptoms, your medical provider may not elect to test you based on testing availability.

**What should I do if I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19?** For these instances:

- If you are certain that you have been in close contact (within 6ft) with someone who is positive for COVID-19

OR

- If you don't know if someone has the COVID-19 but is still concerned because the person has travel history to affected areas AND is sick with fever or cough,

Please complete the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Community Feedback Form to report the incident to us and your report will be reviewed accordingly.

## **Health Officer's Order**

**What is a Health Officer's Order?** It is official action authorized under the health and safety code taken by the state or local health officer to control the spread of a communicable disease.

**What health orders are in effect?** There are three health orders currently affecting Madera County:

- State Health Officer's Stay-At-Home Order
- Madera County Large Scale Events Order
- Febrile Respiratory Illness Order

**Do these orders affect everyone in Madera County?** Yes. The State Health Officer's Order and local health orders affect everyone including the cities of Madera and Chowchilla, as well as the unincorporated communities of Ahwahnee, Bass Lake, Coarsegold, Fairmead, Madera Ranchos, North Fork, Oakhurst, and Raymond. The Governor's order is in effect throughout the State of California.

**What prompted these health orders?** The State Health Officer's Order was issued to protect the public health of Californians and to establish consistency across the state in mitigating the impact of COVID-19. The local orders come on the heels of the two new confirmed cases of community transmission (3/19/2020) in Madera County. By issuing these order we can greatly slow the spread of the disease.

**How long are the health orders in effect?** All of the orders are effective as of March 19, 2020. The local health orders are effective through April 30, 2020. The Governor's order is in effect until further notice.

**Can the orders be extended?** The local orders are effective until April 30, 2020 and may be extended.



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**What will be done to ensure people are following these orders?** If community members are violating the orders and law enforcement is notified, we will seek voluntary compliance of the orders. Ongoing violation of the orders is considered a misdemeanor. Both civil and criminal enforcement actions are permitted under the Health and Safety Code.

**What does the State Health Officer's Order mean?** This order is referred to as the Governor's Stay-at-Home Order issued 3/19/2020. This directs all Californians to stay at home except for essential business.

**What does Febrile Health Order mean?** A Febrile Respiratory Illness is a new or worsening episode of either cough or shortness of breath with fever of 100.4F or higher, or chills in the previous 24 hours. This order mandates the following:

- Health Care Providers, to send daily report to MCDPH the number of patients with febrile respiratory illness
- Employers, on a daily basis, screen all employees for febrile respiratory illness
- Residents, on a daily basis, to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19
- What is the difference between Isolation and Quarantine?
- Isolation: separation of sick people from non-sick people
- Quarantine: separation and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick

**What is Febrile Respiratory Illness?** A new or worsening episode of either cough or shortness of breath with a fever of 100.4F or higher, or chills in the previous 24 hours.

**Does the State Health Officer's Order affect events?** Yes, all public events and gatherings must be cancelled. In addition, based on the stay-at-home order private events should also be cancelled. This supersedes the local health order put in place on March 19, 2020.

**What is considered an essential business/service?** The following are named as essential businesses/services on the state's official website: (pull link from SHO)

- Gas stations
- Pharmacies
- Food: Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and deliver restaurants
- Banks
- Laundromats/laundry services

Essential state and local government functions will also remain open, including law enforcement and offices that provide government programs and services. As the situation changes, this list of essential businesses and services may narrow.

**What businesses are closed?**

- Dine-in restaurants
- Bars and nightclubs



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- Entertainment venues
- Gyms and fitness studio
- Public events and gatherings
- Convention Centers

### **Where can I get more information?** Get information from a trusted source:

- MCDPH website or COVID-19 page: [www.maderacounty.com/publichealth](http://www.maderacounty.com/publichealth) or [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19).
- MCDPH phone: (559) 675-7893
- Community feedback form
- CDC latest updates: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>
- California Dept. of Public Health updates: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCoV2019.aspx>
- California Dept. of Public Health Guidance page: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx>