

**Message to the Community from Partners – Emergency Declaration**  
**3/16/2020**

As a community, we are working together to reduce risk of illness in Madera County. Recent steps to create physical distancing in the community will limit the spread of illness. We understand school closures, cancellation of events and activities, and home isolation of seniors and other medically vulnerable groups creates challenges for individuals and families that are numerous and inter-related. We are responding quickly to identify these challenges and respond. In the following days and weeks, we will do our best to address these concerns and adapt services to best meet the practical needs of our residents.

This morning, Madera County declared a local health emergency. At this time, the risk of illness has not changed. However, school closures have a cascading effect on other government services. This declaration provides flexibility to County leadership in managing our workforce and other resources as we respond to COVID-19 and maintain other essential government services. The declaration of emergency helps the County access resources, reassign staff to new roles, and implement plans that make it easier to serve the community.

The Department of Public Health, Madera Community hospital, Camarena Health and other local healthcare providers are working together to screen and test residents. If you are sick, call ahead to your regular doctor to be screened and receive instructions. Do not wait until symptoms are severe to seek medical advice and care.

We encourage you to follow the guidance of health officials. Stay connected to family, friends, and colleagues through phone calls, texts, online portals and email. Stay informed and visit [www.maderacounty.com/covid19](http://www.maderacounty.com/covid19) and the Madera County Department of Public Health Facebook page for reliable information. There you will find up-to-date information about COVID-19 in Madera County, what you and your family can do to stay healthy, ways to reduce anxiety and support others experiencing stress, scenarios that will help you understand how COVID-19 spreads and when testing needs to be done, and a community feedback form through which you can communicate directly with the Department of Public Health.