



NEWS

March 16, 2020

For Immediate Release

County of San Mateo Modifies Operations ***Emergency Services Remain Fully Staffed***

Redwood City, Calif. – Following the six-county public health order for residents to stay home for three weeks, the County of San Mateo today announced that it would significantly modify the way public-facing services are provided to help slow the spread of the COVID-19.

The public health order takes effect at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, March 17 and runs through at least April 7, if not beyond. Individuals departments are determining what operations will be completely shut down or significantly modified. The goal is to suspend or severely limit direct contact between County employees and the members of the public with which they interact.

County Manager Mike Callagy said this unprecedented time calls for unprecedented action to stem the community spread of the COVID-19 virus.

“This current health crisis is not anything we ever expected or contemplated, and we know that these unprecedented shutdowns will stretch us every way conceivable. But if nothing else, we are resilient and adapt to even the most challenging of situations,” Callagy said.

Callagy also emphasized that County government will continue providing vital services to the public, albeit in different ways to allow for a reduction of public contact. Those operations which are required by law or which support the public health and safety will remain open but may be modified to better adhere to recommended social distancing practices.

The County anticipates standing up a webpage as soon as possible with a comprehensive list of closures and modifications.

Fire protection, law enforcement and emergency medical services will remain fully staffed. Services for vulnerable populations such as food and shelter programs, road maintenance and certain other functions will continue, with some modifications where appropriate.

County Departments are encouraging residents to conduct business and access services with the County either online or by phone whenever possible.

Examples:

- Register to vote.
Go to <https://www.smcacre.org/register-vote> to register online.
- Pay property taxes.
Pay online at: tax.smcgov.org. You may also call our automated phone system at 866-220-0308.
- Fill out your 2020 Census questionnaire online or on the phone. Go to my2020census.gov to fill out your questionnaire or call 844-330-2020 for assistance or language support, or visit <http://www.SmcCensus.org>.
- Order copies of vital records such as birth and death certificates at <https://www.smcacre.org/certificates-vital-records>
- Check out all of the materials available at your San Mateo County Libraries at <https://smcl.org/>

During this time, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office urges residents to comply with the health order to keep families and communities safe.

“We fully expect the people in San Mateo County to recognize the seriousness of this public health threat and we see this as an opportunity to educate our residents about staying healthy,” Sheriff's spokeswoman Rosemerry Blankswade said.

“While resources are strained during this challenging time for all, we want to remind everyone to please leave the 911 and business phone lines open for real emergencies and truly urgent matters,” she said.

Residents with non-medical, non-emergency questions about coronavirus are asked to call 211 to speak with a trained professional with local information or text “coronavirus” to 211211.

Call 911 only in the case of emergency.

County Health has reported 41 cases of coronavirus through this morning. This total includes one death.

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