

**For Immediate Release**  
**March 17, 2020**

## **Monterey County Public Health Officer Issues Shelter in Place Order**

With the confirmation of Monterey County's first two cases of COVID-19 and increasing cases statewide, Public Health Officer Dr. Ed Moreno is issuing a Shelter in Place Order for all residents of Monterey County to enhance measures already being taken to slow the spread of novel coronavirus in our county and preserve critical health care capacity.

The order announced by Moreno will begin at 12:01 AM on Wednesday, March 18 and last for three weeks, until Midnight on April 8, 2020.

"Temporarily making these drastic changes to our lives and routines maybe frustrating, but it is critical to slowing the spread of this virus," says Dr. Ed Moreno, Monterey County's Public Health Doctor. "We must weigh the loss of some freedoms we enjoy with the ability to separate healthy people who may not show symptoms from those at risk who may be inadvertently exposed. "

This order is similar to ones issued yesterday by six San Francisco Bay area counties, limiting activity, travel and business function to the most essential needs; essential businesses and operations should remain open. This order does not affect essential government services - services to protect the health, safety and welfare of communities. It also makes provision for our agricultural community and fieldworkers who keep food in our markets and on our table, and provide other products for personal consumption.

The term "shelter in place" is a more rigorous form of 'social distancing.'" The goal is to limit groups congregating together to stop the further spread the virus; it is not a complete social shutdown. It means to stay in your home and not leave unless necessary for one of the designated exceptions. For most people, this means you and those you live with should remain at home. You can leave your home for specified reasons to make sure you have the necessities of life such as getting food and medical supplies. You are also allowed to go outside to take care of pets, go on a walk, and just get outside, so long as you do not congregate in a group and maintain at least six feet of distance between you and other people.

Please continue to practice the other precautionary measures such as handwashing and using sanitizer and if you are sick you should self-isolate, including, to the extent you can, from others you live with.

If you have specific questions about what activities are covered under the Order, check out the Shelter in Place FAQs on the Monterey County Health Department webpage [www.mtyhd.org/covid19](http://www.mtyhd.org/covid19).

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