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Updated: Tue, May 19, 2020, 4:14 pm
 Uploaded: Mon, Mar 30, 2020, 10:54 am

Coronavirus central: Over 4K total cases reported in Santa Clara, San Mateo counties

If hospitalizations don't increase more than 5% over 7 days, counties can move ahead with next phase of reopening

by Embarcadero Media staff / Palo Alto Weekly

Latest updates:

NEW COVID-19 CASES, DEATHS: [Santa Clara County](#) reported 2,483 cases and 137 deaths on Monday, up from 2,453 cases and 135 deaths on Monday. Eighty-two people are hospitalized. As of Sunday, [San Mateo County](#) reported 1,687 cases of COVID-19 and 75 deaths, up from 1,669 cases and 66 deaths on Sunday. Fifty-five people are hospitalized as of Sunday.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY TO ALLOW CURBSIDE RETAIL PICKUPS: Book shops, clothing stores and other businesses in Santa Clara County that can provide storefront pickup of goods [can start reopening Friday](#), provided they can limit their employee count and demonstrate their compliance with social-distancing rules, county leaders announced Monday.

STATE REVISES CRITERIA FOR REOPENING: More California counties will likely be able to move into Stage 2 of the state's stay-at-home order under loosened reopening criteria announced on Monday by Gov. Gavin Newsom. Counties can move into Stage 2 if the number of hospitalizations for COVID-19 patients does not increase more than 5% over seven days.

NEW SAN MATEO COUNTY ORDER TO ALLOW CURBSIDE RETAIL PICKUP: San Mateo County on May 15 amended its prior shelter-in-place health order to allow [the reopening of additional businesses](#), starting on Monday, May 18, an action that aligns the county with the state's early Stage 2 reopening plan.

PALO ALTO TO OPEN PARKING LOTS AT PRESERVES: The city of Palo Alto, which closed parking lots at open space preserves in [late March](#) due to crowding, plans to open them later this month. Vehicles will be able to park at Arastradero Preserve as of May 23. Parking at the Baylands and Foothills Park is currently allowed only during the weekdays and will be permitted on weekends starting on May 30.

*Below is comprehensive coverage of the Midpeninsula's response to the new coronavirus by Palo Alto Online, the Mountain View Voice and Almanac in **chronological order**. For **coverage by subject** — how the virus is affecting public health, residents, schools, cities, businesses, nonprofits, arts groups, etc. — please go to our [Wakelet page](#).*

Latest COVID-19 statistics

Santa Clara County has 2,483 cases of the new coronavirus and 137 deaths from the disease as of Tuesday, an increase by 30 and two, respectively, from the previous day.



Find comprehensive coverage on the Midpeninsula's response to the new coronavirus by Palo Alto Online, the Mountain View Voice and the Almanac at <https://wakelet.com/wake/7c8ffe8d-c815-448f-81a0-b043eff2bdb5>.



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Palo Alto's total of cases went up by two to 77, a rate of 115 cases per 100,000 residents. Mountain View saw no change to its total since Monday. The city has 55 COVID-19 cases, a rate of 68 per 100,000 people.

The county has recorded 82 people with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 in the hospital as of Tuesday, 18 fewer patients than the week before. Of the 82 patients, 25 are in intensive care beds, which is nine fewer patients than the week before.

Palo Alto Commons was among the seven long-term care facilities in the county that reported a case over the past 14 days. On Friday, the county dashboard had reported zero cases among residents on Friday, which has since changed to less than 11 cases as of Tuesday. The assisted living community saw no change to its number of cases among staff members, which remains at less than 11, over the past five days.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 18

Book shops, clothing stores and other businesses in Santa Clara County that allow storefront pickup can start reopening Friday, provided they can limit their employee count and demonstrate their compliance with social-distancing rules, county leaders [announced Monday](#).

Any retailers that can provide curbside service will have to limit their employee count to one employee per 300 square feet of space, under the new order. In addition, they will have to fill out a new five-page protocol sheet, detailing what they have done to prevent coronavirus transmission.

With [the amended order](#), Santa Clara County joined the wave of Bay Area counties beginning the transition into the second phase of reopening of the economy, consistent with recent guidance from Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The Monday order represents the county's first easing of shelter-in-place restrictions since May 4, when construction work was permitted to resume and gardeners were allowed to go back to work. In the two weeks since then, the county has not seen an increase in cases, suggesting that it is safe to further relax the shelter-in-place restrictions that had been in effect since March 17.

The order also allows car parades, as well as the reopening of outdoor museums, outdoor historical sites and publicly accessible gardens.

New criteria allow more counties to modify stay-at-home orders

More California counties will likely be able to move into Stage 2 of the state's stay-at-home order under loosened reopening criteria announced on Monday.

At a restaurant in Napa County, Gov. Gavin Newsom said that about 53 out of the state's 58 counties are expected to meet new requirements needed to make modifications to the stay-at-home order.

Counties can move into Stage 2 if the number of hospitalizations for COVID-19 patients does not increase more than 5% over seven days. Smaller counties will have to show fewer than 20 hospitalizations on any given day for two weeks.

Dr. Mark Ghaly, secretary of California Health and Human Services, said that counties also must either show no more than 25 positive cases per 100,000 residents in a 14-day period or show a positive test rate of less than 8%. Reopening criteria previously required counties to show no more than one COVID-19 case per 10,000 residents over a 14-day period.

According to the state Department of Public Health's website, 23 counties outside of the Bay Area already have met "readiness criteria" to move into Stage 2 of reopening. The governor did not list the five counties that may not be ready to reopen under the new criteria, but cited Los Angeles County as one example of a region that may not be able to move as quickly as others.

On Monday, Santa Clara County [amended its health order](#) to lift the ban on car parades, allow curbside pickup at retail stores and reopen outdoor facilities. San Mateo County updated its order on Friday.

Newsom said California has seen a 7.5% decrease in hospitalizations and an 8.7% decrease in patients admitted to intensive-care units over the past two weeks, two key criteria for determining whether the state is ready to move forward within Stage 2.

Newsom said testing capacity and personal protective equipment inventory also have substantially increased. About 1.3 million COVID-19 tests have been conducted so far, with around 57,000 tested in the past 24 hours, according to Newsom. The governor also said the state now has 56.1 million masks.

If the current trends continue, Newsom said that the state could be weeks away from allowing in-store retail shopping (not just curbside pickup) and the reopening of hair salons, worship facilities and professional sporting events without spectators.

Latest COVID-19 statistics

Santa Clara County reported 2,470 cases and 135 deaths on Monday, up from 2,441 cases on Sunday, with no additional deaths. Ninety people are hospitalized.

Palo Alto has had 75 confirmed cases since the pandemic began, a rate of 112 per 100,000 residents. Mountain View has had 55 COVID-19 cases, a rate of 68 per 100,000 people.

As of Monday, San Mateo County reported 1,677 cases of COVID-19 and 75 deaths, up from 1,669 cases and 66 deaths on Sunday. Fifty-five people are hospitalized as of Sunday.

East Palo Alto and Menlo Park each saw their total of confirmed cases rise within a week, according to the county's COVID-19 cases by city chart last updated on Friday.

As of May 14, East Palo Alto has 56 confirmed cases, a rate of 18.9 cases per 10,000 residents. The city had 51 confirmed cases on May 7. Menlo Park saw its total rise by four to 59, a rate of 17.4 cases per 10,000 residents.

Palo Alto to open parking lots at preserves

The city of Palo Alto, which closed parking lots at open space preserves in [late March](#) due to crowding, plans to open them later this month. Parking at the Baylands and Foothills Park is currently allowed during the weekdays and will be permitted on weekends starting on May 30. Vehicles will be able to park at Arastradero Preserve as of May 23. Currently, only people who are walking or cycling can get to the preserve.

All Palo Alto parks, athletic fields, the skatepark, tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, and the Baylands Golf Course are currently open. Modifications at the parks are in place to ensure visitor safety. Drinking fountains, and picnic and barbecue areas, playgrounds, dog parks, and outdoor gym equipment remain closed.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 16-17

Santa Clara County could permit car parades

Santa Clara County officials are looking into the idea of allowing car parades and drive-through celebrations, potentially ending a public health prohibition in time for graduation ceremonies and other festivities.

When asked during a virtual town hall meeting on Sunday, Santa Clara County Counsel James Williams said the county is looking into the possibility of expanding the types of travel permitted under the county's shelter order, giving more flexibility for schools to conduct drive-through graduation ceremonies and other motorcade-type celebrations.

Williams acknowledged that these types of activities carry a lower level of risk due to the inherent social distancing.

New San Mateo County order to allow curbside retail pickup:

San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow on Friday, May 15, amended his prior shelter-in-place health order to allow the reopening of additional businesses, starting on Monday, May 18, an action that aligns the county with the state's early Stage 2 reopening plan.

Under the revised health order, retail stores can offer curbside or outside pickup only, with certain restrictions. That means bookstores, jewelry stores, toy stores, clothing and shoe stores, home and furnishing stores, sporting goods stores and florists can reopen with safety protocols in place.

The order allows lower-risk businesses to restart their services, including car washes, pet groomers, dog-walking services, residential and janitorial cleaning companies and appliance repair outfits.

Outdoor museums with outdoor exhibits can also reopen, with customers wearing face coverings at all times. No customers may enter indoor spaces such as gift shops or exhibit rooms.

Offices in which employees cannot conduct business from home are also allowed to restart under the amended order. These businesses must minimize contact with members of the public, may not conduct indoor person-to-person commercial activity and must follow social distancing and face-covering requirements at all times.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 15

A total of 473 cases have originated from 35 long-term care facilities in Santa Clara County; 83 of those people have been or are hospitalized and 56 died. The county is now naming the facilities that have reported at least one case since the pandemic began. Here's a list of those facilities in Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos:

Palo Alto

- Channing House: 0 residents, less than 11 staff
- Lytton Gardens Health Care: less than 11 residents, 0 staff
- Palo Alto Commons: 0 residents, less than 11 staff
- Palo Alto Sub-Acute And Rehabilitation Center: 0 residents, less than 11 staff
- Vi At Palo Alto: 11 residents, less than 11 staff

Mountain View

- Grant Cuesta Sub-Acute and Rehabilitation Center: less than 11 residents, 0 staff

- Mountain View Health Care Center: less than 11 residents, less than 11 staff

Los Altos

- Bridge Point at Los Altos: less than 11 residents, less than 11 staff
- Los Altos Sub-Acute & Rehab Center: less than 11 residents, less than 11 staff

The numbers above are cumulative. In the past 28 days, only the following facilities reported at least one case: Palo Alto Commons and Palo Alto Sub-Acute And Rehabilitation Center.

As of Friday, 91 people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases are hospitalized in the county. Sixty-four are in acute hospital beds and 27 are in intensive care unit beds, according to data from the California Department of Public Health. Another 984 acute beds and 220 ICU beds are occupied by other patients, leaving 876 and 180, respectively, available.

Four of 1,231 surge beds and 106 of 896 ventilators are in active use throughout the county, regardless of whether the patient has the new coronavirus.

A total of 47,267 COVID-19 tests have been performed as of May 15, 2,403 of which returned positive, 44,639 of which returned negative and 225 of which are pending results. The county's test positivity rate stands at 5.1% and results turn around in 1.6 days on average.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 14

Education, health care face deep cuts in proposed state budget

Gov. Gavin Newsom unveiled his revised state budget proposal Thursday, with deep cuts in education and health care funding as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$203.3 billion budget is nearly \$20 billion less than Newsom's initial budget proposal in January and includes about \$6 billion in eliminated plans to expand programs like Medi-Cal, prompted by a roughly 25% drop in sales, personal income and corporate tax revenue.

According to Newsom, the state is saddled with a [projected \\$54.3 billion budget deficit](#) that it must balance over the next year while confronting an ever-mounting loss of tax revenue and an unemployment rate that state officials expect to peak at more than 24.5%.

"This is a multiyear responsibility," Newsom said. "We can't solve everything overnight without catastrophic cuts that are simply too much to bear."

Significant funding expansions included in the January proposal such as extending Medi-Cal coverage to undocumented people living in the state and pouring funding into the state's education system are absent from Thursday's revised proposal.

Newsom said the state plans to use about \$4.4 billion in discretionary funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to maintain education spending at current levels with adjustments for factors like inflation.

Newsom's proposal calls for the state to pull from multiple funding reserves and surpluses to partially pay down the deficit, including using the entirety of the state's \$16.2 billion funding reserve over the next three years, using \$7.8 billion during the 2020-2021 fiscal year, \$5.4 billion the following year and the remaining \$2.9 billion the year after that.

The proposal also asks to use half of a \$900 million safety net reserve and the entire \$524 million surplus of the state's Proposition 98 fund. All told, the state would pull about \$8.8 billion from its reserves in the 2020-2021 fiscal year to pay down the deficit.

Newsom said that at least part of the remaining \$45.5 billion will hinge on the next federal stimulus package and how much aid is included for insolvent cities, counties and states. He also noted that some of the spending reductions and cuts outlined in the budget will be eliminated if the state receives enough federal funding support.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has proposed \$900 billion in federal support for local and state governments as part of a new \$3 trillion stimulus package, which Newsom praised.

"The federal government has a moral and ethical and economic obligation to help support the states," Newsom said. "After all, what is the point of government if not to protect people, their safety and the well-being of citizens?"

The state Legislature must debate the proposal over the next month and approve a state budget by June 15, as outlined in the state Constitution.

New efforts launched to expand testing

A new Santa Clara County COVID-19 testing task force rolled out plans on Thursday to start testing more widely for the coronavirus. Read more [here](#).

Also, starting this week, certain individuals who do not have COVID-19 symptoms will be able to get tested, thanks to new efforts to broaden access by San Mateo and Santa Clara counties and Stanford Health Care. Read more [here](#).

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County's total of people with the coronavirus climbed to 2,391 on Thursday, 84 of whom are hospitalized and 134 of whom have died.

The number of deaths climbed up by two from Wednesday. Of the total, 80 were men and 54 were women.

Palo Alto's total of cases rose to 75 on Thursday, making up 0.1% of the city population. Mountain View's total of cases also went up to 51, which represents 0.06% of the city population. San Jose's total is now 1,582, the highest across all 15 cities in the county. Its total represents 0.2% of the city population. The county is also providing case totals by ZIP code, which can be found [here](#).

Of the 84 people with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, 56 are in acute hospital beds and 29 are in intensive care unit beds. Patients without the virus have taken up 967 acute beds and 222 ICU beds, leaving 886 and 171, respectively, available.

Four of 1,231 ventilators and 110 of 896 ventilators are active throughout the county, according to data provided by the California Department of Public Health, which doesn't specify how many of those resources are being utilized by COVID-19 patients.

Out of 45,113 tests for the new coronavirus, there were 2,391 with positive results, 42,509 with negative results and 213 tests pending results. The county's test positivity rate stands at 5.3% and the average turnaround time for results slightly rose to 1.9 days.

The county's 34 long-term care facilities have reported 447 cases, 59 of which are hospitalized and 54 of which have died.

In San Mateo County, the total of coronavirus cases stands at 1,575 as of Thursday, 836 of which are female and 739 of which are male. The total number of deaths rose by one to 66, which divides to 35 women and 31 men.

Of the 69 people hospitalized with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases, 19 are in ICU. Twenty-nine patients without the virus have also occupied ICU beds, leaving 38 available.

Eight of 298 surge beds and 19 of 289 ventilators are in use throughout the county, regardless of whether the patient has the new coronavirus, according to data from the state Department of Public Health.

As of Wednesday, the county's 20 long-term care facilities reported 332 cases, 80 of which are hospitalized and 44 of which have died.

The county has updated its dashboard displaying case totals by city through May 14. Here's a list of those totals for communities on the Midpeninsula:

- Atherton: 12.
- East Palo Alto: 56.
- Menlo Park: 59.
- North Fair Oaks: Less than 10.
- Portola Valley: Less than 10.
- West Menlo Park: Less than 10.
- Woodside: Less than 10.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 13

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases is close to the 2,400 mark as of Wednesday. The county has a total of 2,381 cases, 100 of which are hospitalized, and tallied 132 deaths from the disease.

The county added two more deaths to its total on Wednesday. Of its 132 deaths, 53 were women and 79 were men. Case totals by city weren't posted for May 13.

Of the 100 people hospitalized with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, 63 are in acute hospital beds and 34 are in intensive care unit beds. Another 912 acute beds and 209 ICU beds are taken up by patients without the virus, leaving 926 acute beds and 209 ICU beds available.

Four of 1,231 surge beds and 109 of 886 ventilators are in use throughout the county, according to data from the California Department of Public Health, which doesn't state how many of those resources are being used by COVID-19 patients.

A total of 43,572 people have undergone tests for COVID-19, 2,381 of which had positive results, 40,975 of which had negative results and 216 of which are pending results. The county's test positivity rate stands at 5.5% and results turn around in 1.6 days on average.

The county's 34 long-term care facilities have reported 446 cases, making up 18% of the county's overall total. Fifty-nine of those cases have been hospitalized and 53 have died.

San Mateo County recorded 1,536 total coronavirus cases on Wednesday. Of the total, 815 are female and 721 are male. The number of deaths, 65, breaks down to 34 women and 31 men.

The number of people hospitalized with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases rose by 14 since Tuesday. Of the 63 patients, 20 are in ICU. Thirty-one patients without the virus have also occupied ICU beds, leaving 35 more available in the county. Eight of 298 surge beds and 17 of 290 ventilators are being used throughout the county, regardless of whether the patient has the new coronavirus.

San Mateo County expected to enter second phase of stay-at-home order

San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow intends to issue a new shelter-in-place order effective Monday, May 18, that would bring the county in line with the early second-phase guidelines recently issued by Gov. Gavin Newsom, according to a [press release](#) Wednesday morning.

The second phase allows for retail curbside pickup and delivery. According to the press release, "logistics and manufacturing, along with some other businesses, can open with modifications."

Morrow expects to release the updated order later this week.

"I am encouraged that data about COVID-19 cases, hospital capacity, and other indicators show some stability so that San Mateo County can now enter the early stages of Phase 2," Morrow said in a statement.

"I want to remind everyone these modifications are not being made because it is safe to be out and about," he added. "The virus continues to circulate in our community, and this increase in interactions among people is likely to spread the virus at a higher rate. Whether these modifications allow the virus to spread out of control, as we saw in February and March and resulted in the first shelter in place order, is yet to be seen. The social distancing and face covering directives, along with the prohibition on gathering, will remain in place since the risk of exposure to COVID-19 looms large for all of us."

Ten counties move further within Stage 2 of reopening the economy

Ten counties outside of the Bay Area have now met the criteria to move deeper within Stage 2 of California's roadmap to modify stay-at-home orders.

During a Wednesday press conference at a fire station in El Dorado County, Gov. Gavin Newsom said that these counties, through "self-attestation," were able to move forward within the state's current phase of the modified stay-at-home order.

According to the state Public Health Department's [website](#), shopping malls, swap meets, dine-in restaurants and schools can reopen with modifications.

In addition, Newsom said his office recently submitted revisions to his budget proposal in order to prepare for this year's wildfire season in the midst of a pandemic. Further details on the budget changes will be revealed Thursday.

"Just this last week, 246 wildfires have occurred here in the state of California," Newsom said. "From January to May 10 this year we've had 1,135 wildfires, (which) represents roughly a 60% increase this year compared to last year."

The revised budget will help create a new Wildfire Safety Division with the Public Utilities Commission to monitor investor-owned utilities such as PG&E, support surge staffing for Cal Fire and help the Offices of Emergency Services monitor natural disasters such as earthquakes and wildfires.

Providing a preview of what's expected Thursday, Newsom said his office will recommend a \$85.7 million budget increase for Cal Fire, \$127 million allocation towards the Office of Emergency Services and \$39.2 million for disaster relief.

Stanford commencement going virtual

Stanford University will hold a virtual commencement ceremony in June, President Marc Tessier-Lavigne told graduates in an email on Wednesday.

The livestreamed event on Sunday, June 14, will highlight digital submissions from undergraduate and graduates in the Class of 2020, such as photos, video and stories, which he invited students to send in. The virtual ceremony will acknowledge "the unusual circumstances," Tessier-Lavigne wrote, and "it will not replicate or replace a traditional commencement ceremony."

Stanford is still committed to holding an in-person commencement when public health restrictions allow for such gatherings, he said.

"I look forward to honoring all that you have achieved, and to thanking your family members and friends for their support and encouragement," Tessier-Lavigne wrote. "I can't wait to celebrate with you, both in June and when we meet again in person."

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 12

Santa Clara County saw its total of coronavirus cases rise to 2,364, 100 of which are hospitalized, and its number of deaths climb to 130 on Tuesday.

The total of cases is nearly evenly split between females and males. Here's a breakdown of cases by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 102.

- 21 to 30 years old: 287.
- 31 to 40 years old: 405.
- 41 to 50 years old: 404.
- 51 to 60 years old: 415.
- 61 to 70 years old: 307.
- 71 to 80 years old: 231.
- 81 to 90 years old: 131.
- 91 years old or over: 70.
- Unknown: 12.

The latest data also shows no change to Palo Alto's total of cases, 73, which represents 0.1% of the city's population. Mountain View has 49 cases, which represents 0.06% of the city's population. At 1,560, San Jose has the most cases in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

The county's total of deaths breaks down to 76 men and 54 women. When it came to pre-existing conditions, 88.5% of the deceased had one or more, 6.4% were unknown and 5.4% had none. Here's a breakdown by age group.

- 31 to 40 years old: 4.
- 41 to 50 years old: 5.
- 51 to 60 years old: 16.
- 61 to 70 years old: 22.
- 71 to 80 years old: 36.
- 81 to 90 years old: 27.
- 91 years old or over: 19.
- Unknown: 1.

Asian and Latinx/Hispanic residents topped the lists of cases and deaths by race. Here's a full breakdown of the cases by race in descending order:

- Latinx/Hispanic: 38%.
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 22%.
- White: 18%.
- Unknown: 16%.
- Other: 4%.
- African American: 2%.

Here's a full breakdown of deaths by race in descending order:

- Latinx/Hispanic: 33.9%.
- Asian: 32.3%.
- White: 26.2%.
- African American: 6.2%.
- Other: 1.5%.
- Unknown: 0%.

Of the 100 people with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, 63 are in acute hospital beds and 34 are in intensive care beds. Another 912 acute beds and 209 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 926 and 179, respectively, available.

Four of 1,231 surge beds and 109 of 886 ventilators are being used throughout the county, according to data from the state Department of Public Health, which doesn't state how many COVID-19 patients are using the resources.

Out of 42,720 tests performed for the new coronavirus, 2,364 returned positive, 40,131 returned negative and 225 are pending results. The county's test positivity rate stands at 5.5% test positivity rate and results turn around on an average of 1.6 days.

A total of 447 cases originated at 34 long-term care facilities, 59 of which are in the hospital and 52 of which have resulted in death.

San Mateo County has recorded 1,515 coronavirus cases, 49 of which are hospitalized, as of Tuesday. The number of deaths stands at 65.

Its number of cases breaks down to 804 females and 711 males. The number of deaths splits off to 34 women and 31 men.

Of the 49 people hospitalized with COVID-19, 17 are in intensive care unit beds. Another 27 patients without the virus are also in ICU beds, leaving 43 more available.

Nine of 298 surge beds and 16 of 281 ventilators are being used throughout the county, regardless of whether the patient has the new coronavirus.

Tesla may resume production next week

Tesla may open next week following a discussion Tuesday between officials of the company and Alameda County, county officials said.

Tesla submitted a reopening plan Monday to Alameda County public health officials who met with the company Tuesday about safety and prevention.

If Tesla's plan includes additional safety recommendations made by public health officials and public health indicators don't change or improve, Tesla can prepare this week to reopen next week.

Fremont police will be verifying that Tesla is maintaining social distancing and health and safety guidelines for workers.

Public health officials also said that other businesses may be able to begin some activities next week.

On Monday, Tesla's CEO Elon Musk said he was reopening the company's Fremont plant despite public health orders not to. Musk said Monday that if police came to the plant, he would ask them to arrest only him.

State releases restaurant guidelines

Gov. Gavin Newsom released on Tuesday much-anticipated guidance for the reopening of restaurants in counties that meet the state's criteria for reopening in the second phase of the stay-at-home order.

The [guidance](#), which can be superseded by stricter mandates in local jurisdictions, lays out detailed health, sanitation and physical distancing precautions for restaurants, from symptom checks for staff and diners to spacing tables 6 feet apart and using disposable or digital menus.

The state did not mandate specific capacity percentages for restaurants, as was anticipated, but instead said restaurants should adjust their maximum occupancy to limit the number of people inside and ensure tables are 6 feet apart.

Under the guidance, any seating where customers cannot maintain 6 feet of distance from employees' work and food and drink preparation areas should be closed.

State records over 1 million COVID-19 tests

More than 1 million diagnostic tests for the new coronavirus have been performed throughout the state, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced on Tuesday.

Over the past few days, an average of more than 35,000 tests have been performed on a daily basis, according to a May 12 release from Newsom's office. The governor had previously set a goal of increasing testing levels to 25,000 a day by the end of April.

"Ramping up our testing capacity is critical as we begin modifying our stay at home order," Newsom said in the release. "In addition to standing up more than 80 new testing sites across the state in under-served communities, soon Californians will be able to get tested when they pick up their prescriptions at some pharmacies across the state."

Two of the more than 80 testing sites are in [south Santa Clara County](#).

Pharmacists can now gather specimens for COVID-19 tests and order tests for customers, Newsom announced Tuesday. The specimens will be sent to public health, university and commercial labs for processing.

The state has also launched a new "Medi-Nurse" line for Medi-Cal patients who don't have a health plan and state residents without health insurance. The 24/7 hotline, which addresses questions surrounding COVID-19 and general medical needs, can be reached at 877-409-9052.

Community colleges file suit against feds

California community colleges, including the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, filed a [lawsuit](#) Monday alleging the U.S. Department of Education has placed "arbitrary eligibility restrictions" on relief funds Congress approved to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus, likely leaving hundreds of thousands of students without access to federal emergency assistance.

The lawsuit asks the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California in San Francisco to declare the Department of Education's eligibility requirements for emergency grants to students under the CARES Act unlawful and unconstitutional and to stop their implementation.

"The Department of Education ignored the intent of the CARES Act to give local colleges discretion to aid students most affected by the pandemic, and instead has arbitrarily excluded as many as 800,000 community college students. Among those harmed are veterans, citizens who have not completed a federal financial aid application, and non-citizens, including those with DACA status," California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley said in a statement issued Tuesday.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 11

Santa Clara County recorded 2,341 coronavirus cases and 129 deaths from the disease on Monday.

The number of cases by gender are almost evenly split. Monday marked the second consecutive day the county saw no new deaths. Of the 129 people who have died, 75 were men and 54 were women.

Of the 102 people confirmed with COVID-19 or suspected of having the disease, 65 are in acute hospital beds and 33 are in intensive care unit beds. Another 1,002 acute beds and 220 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 827 and 172, respectively, available as needed.

The county's hospital data shows four of 1,231 surge beds and 107 of 886 ventilators are in use, but doesn't state how many COVID-19 patients are using those resources.

Of the 41,750 COVID-19 tests recorded on Monday, 2,341 returned positive, 39,184 returned negative and 225 are pending results. The county's test positivity rate has gone down to 5.6% and results turn around on an average of 1.6 days.

The number of cases by city shows Palo Alto has 73, representing 0.1% of the city population, and Mountain View has 49 cases, representing 0.06% of the city population. San Jose, the most populous city in the county, has the most cases of all 15 county cities. Its 1,544 cases make up 0.1% of the city population.

As of Saturday, 436 of the county's total cases originated at long-term care facilities, 59 of which are hospitalized and 52 of which have resulted in death.

San Mateo County has a total of 1,497 cases of the coronavirus and the death toll rose to 65 on Monday. Of its total cases, 795 are female and 702 are male. Here's a breakdown of the county's total cases by age group:

- 0 to 19 years old: 79.
- 20 to 29 years old: 205.
- 30 to 39 years old: 273.
- 40 to 49 years old: 266.
- 50 to 59 years old: 238.
- 60 to 69 years old: 200.
- 70 to 79 years old: 93.
- 80 to 89 years old: 83.
- 90 years old or over: 60.

Of its total deaths, 34 were women and 31 were men. Here's a breakdown of the county's total deaths by age group:

- 30 to 39 years old: 1.
- 40 to 49 years old: 0.
- 50 to 59 years old: 4.
- 60 to 69 years old: 9.
- 70 to 79 years old: 8.
- 80 to 89 years old: 20.
- 90 years old or over: 23.

Here's a breakdown of the deaths by race/ethnicity:

- White: 44.
- Asian: 12.
- Hispanic: 7.
- Black 2.

As of Sunday, 52 people with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 17 of whom are in intensive care. Another 23 patients without the virus are also in ICU, leaving 43 more ICU beds available.

Ten of 298 surge beds and 14 of 276 ventilators are in use throughout the county, according to its hospital dashboard, which doesn't state how much of the resources are being used by COVID-19 patients.

Of its total cases, 280 originated in 18 long-term care facilities, 72 of which are hospitalized and 38 of which have resulted in death as of May 6.

San Mateo County allows car gatherings

San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow has issued a new order permitting car gatherings of up to 200 vehicles. The order, which goes into effect Monday, May 11, at 11:59 p.m., is intended to allow schools to perform modified graduation ceremonies.

In a [press release](#), the health department described the permitted gatherings as "highly regulated." It stipulated several criteria, including riders in each car must be members of the same household, riders cannot exit the vehicle except to use the restroom or collect an item such as a diploma, and face masks must be worn if the windows are rolled down.

Riders from only one car at a time can get out of the vehicle.

The events will be considered "essential activities," as will travel to and from the events.

California and other states request \$1 trillion federal aid

California has joined four other states to ask the federal government for about \$1 trillion in aid, Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a press conference on Monday.

State leaders from California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado and Nevada signed their names to a joint letter that was sent to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Newsom said. The states represented in the letter are part of the Western States Pact, a five-state alliance formed last month to work together to find ways to safely return to normal life during the coronavirus pandemic.

The aid request comes just days after Newsom announced that the state is projecting a [\\$54.3 billion budget deficit](#). Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the state has distributed \$13.1 billion in unemployment insurance, including \$3.4 billion last week.

"It's not just states asking for bailouts," Newsom said. "Quite the contrary, it's requesting that we support those that we need the most at this time."

The governor also announced that the state distributed 11 million masks on Friday.

A total of 5 million procedural masks were provided to the state's Department of Social Services, in-home support services, child care facilities and other state-run adult and senior facilities. In addition, around 4.2 million masks were distributed to farmworkers, 750,000 masks to grocers and other employees working in the food supply chain, 500,000 masks to the state Department of Education, and "tens of thousands" of masks to transit agencies.

Santa Clara County encourages public to take care of mental health

The Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services Department reminded residents Monday to be aware and take care of their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rachel Talamantez, a senior manager with the Behavioral Health Services Department, said managing and mitigating stress when possible is important not only for mental health but physical and emotional health.

The human body can often manage mild stress, such as getting ready to go to work, and moderate stress without significant long-term effects. However, major stress can lead to trauma and anxiety for some people.

"For some, this has been catastrophic," Talamantez said of the pandemic. "Maybe you've been sick yourself, maybe a loved one has died. That's very significant."

Talamantez said the pandemic has also hampered the fight or flight response that is a common reaction to stress. While it's difficult to escape the pandemic, she said people have used that fight or flight response to come together in a family home.

"Children returning from college and coming home, fleeing the environment they were in to come to an environment that feels safe, that's sort of a harbor, if you will, of connection and support," she said.

For parents and caregivers, Talamantez said it's important to practice self-care in addition to caring for children and families.

"It's a little counterintuitive, you want to put all of your resources into the health and well-being of your children," she said. "But the first thing is you have to make sure that you as the caregiver are well, that you're emotionally balanced, you're healthy, you have support systems and when you're calm, that helps you respond to your children in a calm way."

Talamantez and Behavioral Health Services Department program manager Mego Lien advised residents under major stress during the pandemic to stay connected with family and friends and to avoid social isolation.

People battling stress can also take advantage of the county's mental and behavioral health resources, they said, such as supportive groups and organizations for food scarcity, housing concerns, financial support, physical and behavioral health and substance abuse.

The county has multiple hotlines and other information about mental health resources, all of which can be found at sccgov.org.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 9-10

As of Sunday, Santa Clara County reported 2,339 total confirmed cases of the coronavirus, 95 of which are hospitalized, and 129 deaths caused by the disease.

San Mateo County's data dashboard shows 1,464 COVID-19 cases and 56 deaths as of Sunday. Of the total cases, 58 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized as of Saturday.

Tesla CEO threatens to move headquarters, plant

Elon Musk, CEO of Palo Alto-based electric automaker Tesla, vented on social media Saturday about Alameda County public health orders preventing Fremont's Tesla plant from resuming production, and threatened to file a lawsuit and move operations to another state.

"Frankly, this is the final straw. Tesla will now move its HQ and future programs to Texas/Nevada immediately. If we even retain Fremont manufacturing activity at all, it will be dependent on how Tesla is treated in the future. Tesla is the last carmaker left in CA," Musk posted on Twitter.

"Tesla is filing a lawsuit against Alameda County immediately."

Musk targeted Health Officer Dr. Erica Pan, who maintained Friday that production at the Tesla plant could not yet resume.

"Tesla knows far more about what needs to be done to be safe through our Tesla China factory experience than an (unelected) interim junior official in Alameda County," Musk tweeted.

The county's Public Health Department issued a statement Saturday afternoon, saying that it had been working closely with Tesla in a "collaborative, good faith effort to develop and implement a safety plan that allows for reopening while protecting the health and well-being of the thousands of employees who travel to and from work at Tesla's factory."

Although the department didn't announce lifting restrictions, the statement said "we look forward to coming to an agreement on an appropriate safety plan very soon."

In a [tweet](#) Saturday afternoon, Palo Alto Mayor Adrian Fine wrote, "I would be really sad and disappointed if @Tesla left @cityofpaloalto, and stand ready to help. I truly appreciate having a cutting edge company based here, employing people, paying taxes, and helping to solve the climate crisis. Happy to help @elonmusk."

Musk tweeted back, "Much appreciated, Mayor Fine!"

Fine later followed up, "Getting criticism from different quarters for tweeting this. Let me be clear: as Mayor, I'm committed to making my hometown as strong as it can be. I am pro housing pro business pro people pro schools pro transit pro environment, and most of all, pro Palo Alto. I love this place."

On Monday, Tesla resumed production at the Fremont plant in defiance of the Alameda County health order, Musk said in a [tweet](#). "I will be on the line with everyone else. If anyone is arrested, I ask that it only be me," he wrote.

Telephone town hall

Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian will host a COVID-19 telephone town hall on Sunday, May 17, at 11 a.m.

Panelists include county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody; county Counsel James Williams; Dr. Yvonne Maldonado, chief of infection control at Stanford University; and Dr. Mark Adams, chief medical officer at El Camino Hospital.

Anyone interested in joining the discussion must register by 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 16, through [this link](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 8

Santa Clara County recorded a total of 2,290 coronavirus cases, according to new data released Friday. The total breaks down nearly 50-50 between males and females.

One more person has died of the disease in the county, raising the death toll to 128, which divides to 74 men and 54 women.

Of the 111 people hospitalized with confirmed or suspected cases of the disease, 64 are in acute hospital beds and 40 are in intensive care unit beds. Patients without the virus have occupied 936 acute beds and 195 ICU beds, leaving 886 and 198, respectively, available.

There are five of 1,231 surge beds and 115 of 896 ventilators in use throughout the county, regardless of whether or not the patient has COVID-19.

Out of 38,002 tests performed for COVID-19, 2,290 returned positive, 35,483 returned negative and 229 are pending results. The county's test positivity rate has gone down to 6% and results turn around on an average rate of 1.6 days.

Five more cases were reported at long-term care facilities on Friday, raising the total to 435 and making up about 19% of the county's overall case total. Of the 435 cases, 60 are hospitalized (making up 54% of the county's total cases in the hospital) and 52 have died (making up 40% of the county's death total).

The county's case count by city chart shows Palo Alto's total has been readjusted to 72, which represents 0.1% of the city population. Mountain View saw no change to its total, 47, which represents 0.06% of the city population. At 1,519, San Jose has the most cases of all county cities. Its total makes up 0.1% of the city population.

California to mail out general election ballots

Every registered voter in California will receive a mail-in-ballot ahead of the presidential general election this November under a new executive order Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Friday.

At a press briefing, Newsom explained that the new order allows every Californian registered to vote the option to submit a ballot by mail rather than visiting a physical polling booth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Physical voting booths will still be available, but the locations and staffing are part of the logistics still being worked out, Newsom said.

The new order comes just two days after state Sen. Thomas Umberg, D-Santa Ana, and state Assemblyman Marc Berman, D-Palo Alto, proposed a new bill requiring every voter to receive a ballot by mail.

"No Californian should have to choose between protecting their health and safety and participating in our democracy, particularly when doing so can be easily avoided," Berman said in a press release.

In addition, further industry- and sector-specific guidelines will be released on Tuesday as the state further advances into Stage 2 of reopening the economy, Newsom said.

If businesses and people continue to follow the guidelines and the numbers improve on COVID-19 cases, Newsom said that the state will be weeks away from moving deeper into Stage 2 and onto the next phase.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 7

Some businesses can reopen starting Friday under state's new guidelines

Long-awaited guidelines to reopen a portion of California's economy were unveiled at a Thursday press conference by Gov. Gavin Newsom that allows for retail, manufacturing and logistics sectors to resume operations with modifications as soon as this Friday, May 8.

Newsom said that the state was prepared to move into Stage 2 of the reopening process during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, state Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly emphasized that this did not mean a "return to a new normal" or that the virus has stopped spreading.

Starting Friday, retailers looking to reopen their stores should opt for curbside pickup or delivery options for customers, and employees should wear masks and gloves, Ghaly said in his rundown of the new directions set forth by the state Public Health Department. Stores are also "encouraged" to install hands-free devices for any credit card transactions. In addition, hand sanitizer stations should be made available.

Manufacturing plants and warehouses should encourage physical distancing and close any indoor break rooms. Instead, Ghaly suggested open-air break rooms with physically distanced seating.

Though he didn't provide a date, Ghaly also said that moving into Stage 2 will "soon" allow for offices that cannot manage work-from-home protocols to reopen. Seated dining restaurants, shopping malls, museums and outdoor museums were also included in the list of spaces that can open later, with proper modifications, as the state moves into the second phase.

Ghaly also outlined industrywide guidelines for what employers should do as they restart business. Employers should train their workers on how to limit the spread of the coronavirus, how to screen for its symptoms and remind them to stay home if they're feeling sick, he said. In addition, there should be "site-specific protection plans" with protocols on cleaning, disinfecting and physical distancing

Counties also have the option to move further into Stage 2 if they can meet the state Public Health Department's list of requirements:

- Have no more than one positive COVID-19 case per 10,000 people in the last 14 days and zero COVID-19-related deaths in the last 14 days.
- Capacity to protect all essential workers with protective gear and disinfectant supplies.
- A minimum daily testing capacity of one-and-a-half tests per 1,000 residents.
- Fifteen contact tracers per 100,000 residents. (Santa Clara County would need 290 contact tracers and San Mateo County would need 115 contact tracers to meet this requirement.)

- Temporary housing for at least 15% of the county's homeless population.

Counties must also have adequate hospital capacity, with a minimum surge capacity of 35%. In addition, every hospital should have a plan to protect its workforce with personal protective equipment and other preventive measures.

Skilled nursing facilities must also be equipped with more than a 14-day supply of PPE for the staff, with access to "non-state supply chains" that can refill equipment in the case that the 14-day supply runs low.

Ghaly added that counties must have the ability to be able to toggle back or slow down modifications, if necessary.

Newsom said he was confident that the state is now prepared to move into Stage 2. Over 843,000 tests have been conducted, with more than 30,000 tests completed in the past 24 hours, he said on May 7. The state also saw declines in hospitalizations and patients admitted to the intensive care unit in the past 24 hours.

However, on Thursday afternoon, seven Bay Area health officers released a [joint statement](#), stating that their jurisdictions will not immediately adopt the new statewide modifications.

"Bay Area orders do not currently permit curbside pickup from non-essential, non-outdoor businesses, and that is not allowed to begin on Friday, May 8," the statement read. "The coronavirus pandemic is still well underway."

Newsom also shared that the state projects a \$54.3 billion budget deficit due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It's a sharp contrast from the \$21.4 billion surplus the state had a year ago, according to the governor.

"We'll get through this (but) this will be challenging," Newsom said. "My optimism is conditioned on this: more federal support."

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County's total of coronaviruses is nearing the 2,300 mark. The 2,281 total cases reported on Thursday are almost evenly split between males and females. The county also announced one more death, raising the total number of deaths to 127, which breaks down to 73 men and 54 women.

Three more cases were added to Palo Alto's total, 73, which represents 0.1% of the city population. Mountain View saw no change to its total since Wednesday. Its 47 cases make up 0.06% of the city population. San Jose's case total rose to 1,515, the highest across all 15 cities in the county, representing 0.1% of the city population.

Of the 113 confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases in the hospital, 60 are in acute hospital beds and 39 are in intensive care unit beds. Patients without the virus occupy 925 acute beds and 189 ICU beds, leaving 894 and 199, respectively, available.

Five of 1,231 surge beds and 114 of 896 ventilators are being used throughout the county, according to data from the California Department of Public Health, which doesn't state how many COVID-19 patients are using those resources.

Of the 36,691 COVID-19 tests performed across the county, 2,281 returned positive results, 34,179 returned negative results and 231 are pending results. Based on these numbers, the county's test positivity rate is 6.2%. Results turn around in 1.6 days on average.

The county's data dashboard on long-term care facilities shows 430 cases, 59 of which are hospitalized and 52 of which have resulted in death.

As of Thursday, San Mateo County reported a total of 1,397 cases of the coronavirus, which breaks down to 743 females and 654 males. The county's death toll remains at 56, which splits to 29 men and 27 women.

Of the total cases, 61 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 14 of which are in ICU. Another 16 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 52 more ICU beds available.

Eighteen of 231 surge beds and 17 of 223 ventilators are in use throughout the county, according to data from the state Department of Public Health, which doesn't state how many of those resources are being used by COVID-19 patients.

The county has started reporting its cases by city. Here's a list of a few of those totals for cities on the Midpeninsula:

- Atherton: 12.
- East Palo Alto: 51.
- Menlo Park: 55.
- North Fair Oaks: Less than 10.
- Portola Valley: 10.
- West Menlo Park: Less than 10.

- Woodside: 10.

Supporting distance learning projects

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI) is launching a new campaign to support local teachers "as they navigate their new normal" by providing \$1.2 million to fund distance learning projects, the nonprofit announced Thursday.

CZI's grant is going to DonorsChoose, a nonprofit that connects teachers in high-need communities with donors. In a DonorsChoose survey of more than 4,000 teachers about the transition to distance learning, teachers estimated that 68% of their students lack the resources they need to learn at home.

"In the face of considerable challenges and uncertainty, teachers are going above and beyond to ensure their students' learning stays on track and to support their overall wellbeing," said Priscilla Chan, co-founder and co-CEO of the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. "We're thankful everyday for the incredible contributions of educators, but now — more than ever, we're humbled by their dedication and creativity."

Teachers will be able to post distance learning projects on [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org) and request supplies and equipment they and students need for at-home teaching and learning, from notebooks to laptops and Wi-Fi hot spots. Teachers can also use the funds to meet students' basic needs, such as purchasing groceries.

In the Bay Area, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative is providing donations of up to \$300 to teachers in Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin and San Francisco counties who teach at schools where 50% or more of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, for a total of \$750,000 going to local teachers. Donations will be applied to projects that cost up to \$1,000 while funds last, and there is a limit of one project per teacher.

Nationwide, CZI is also providing \$500,000 to match donations to DonorsChoose distance learning projects that cost up to \$1,000 posted by teachers from schools across the country where 75% or more students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

CZI will also match [community donations](#) to teacher projects' dollar for dollar, while funds last.

Telephone town hall

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, will host a COVID-19 town hall for her constituents in San Mateo County on Thursday, May 7, at 4:30 p.m. She will be joined by state Sen. Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo, and San Mateo County Health Deputy Chief Srija Srinivasan. Community members interested in joining the discussion can sign up at vekeo.com/repannaeshoo/.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 6

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases climbed to 2,268 on Wednesday. Of the total, about 2,270 are males and 2,270 are females. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 91.
- 21 to 30 years old: 275.
- 31 to 40 years old: 390.
- 41 to 50 years old: 387.
- 51 to 60 years old: 403.
- 61 to 70 years old: 295.
- 71 to 80 years old: 218.
- 81 to 90 years old: 125.
- 91 years old or over: 71.
- Unknown: 13.

The latest data also shows no change to Palo Alto's total of cases, 70, which represents 0.1% of the city's population. Mountain View has added one more case to its total, which is now 47, representing 0.06% of the city's population. At 1,507, San Jose has the most cases in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

The county has recorded a total of 126 COVID-19 deaths, an increase by two from Tuesday. Seventy-two of the deceased were men and 54 were women. When it came to pre-existing conditions, 88.1% of the deceased had one or more, 6.4% were unknown and 5.6% had none. Here's a breakdown by age group.

- 31 to 40 years old: 4.
- 41 to 50 years old: 5.
- 51 to 60 years old: 16.
- 61 to 70 years old: 17.
- 71 to 80 years old: 36.

- 81 to 90 years old: 27.
- 91 years old or over: 19.
- Unknown: 1.

Asian and Latinx/Hispanic residents had the most cases and deaths based on the lists of cases and deaths by race. Here's a full breakdown of cases by race in descending order:

- Latinx/Hispanic: 38%.
- Asian: 22%.
- White: 18%.
- Unknown: 16%.
- Other: 4%.
- African American: 2%.

Here's a full breakdown of deaths by race in descending order:

- Latinx/Hispanic: 34.1%.
- Asian: 31.8%.
- White: 25.4%.
- African American: 6.4%.
- Other: 1.6%.
- Unknown: 0.8%.

There are 123 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected of having the disease, 71 of whom are in acute beds and 42 of whom are in intensive care beds. Patients without the disease occupy 836 acute beds and 204 ICU beds, leaving 1,023 and 189, respectively, available.

There are five surge beds and 115 ventilators in use throughout the county's hospitals, leaving 1,226 and 781, respectively, available. County data doesn't state how many surge beds or ventilators are being used by COVID-19 patients.

Of the 35,195 people who have been tested for COVID-19, 2,268 returned positive, 32,715 returned negative and 212 are pending results. The county has a test positivity rate of 6.4% and results turn around in 1.6 days on average.

Of the county's 2,268 cases, 430 originated at long-term care facilities, 59 of which are hospitalized and 52 of which have resulted in death.

San Mateo County reported 1,377 total cases of the coronavirus as of Wednesday, 734 of whom are female 643 of whom are male. The death toll remains at 56, made up of 29 men and 27 women.

Data from the state Department of Public Health shows 58 people with the coronavirus or suspected of having the disease are in the hospital, 18 of whom are in intensive care unit beds. Another 17 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 47 available.

Seventeen of 231 surge beds and 16 of 223 ventilators are in use throughout the county, according to the hospitalization data dashboard, which doesn't state how many are being utilized by COVID-19 patients.

Arrival of PPE

San Mateo County has restocked its supply of personal protective equipment, County Manager Mike Callagy said during a call with reporters on Wednesday. This supply includes 671,000 face shields, 100,000 surgical masks and over 500,000 pairs of gloves in various sizes, he said.

The county also has 15,000 protective coveralls, 50,000 surgical gowns and 52,000 goggles at the moment. It has 1,100 gallons of hand sanitizer, with another 24,000 16-ounce bottles slated to arrive soon.

The county is expecting 500,000 more surgical masks and 800,000 N95 masks this coming week. Another 218,000 pairs of gloves are coming later this week.

"We can certainly breathe a sigh of relief in knowing that we at least have the PPEs," Callagy said. "We're not redlining anymore."

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 5

Santa Clara County recorded a total of 2,255 cases of the new coronavirus on Tuesday. The total roughly breaks down to 1,128 females and 1,128 males.

Four more deaths from COVID-19 raises the county's total number of deaths to 121, which breaks down to 68 men and 53 women.

Palo Alto's total of cases remains at 70 and represents 0.1% of the city population. Mountain View added one more case to its total, which is now at 46, representing 0.05% of the city population. San Jose has five new cases, raising its total to 1,499, the highest in the county. Its total makes up 0.1% of the city population.

Of the 132 hospitalized with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, 73 are in acute hospital beds and 47 are in intensive care beds. Another 859 acute beds and 191 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 901 and 190, respectively, available.

Five of 1,231 surge beds and 117 of 896 ventilators are in use throughout the county hospital system. Hospital data from the state Department of Public Health doesn't identify how many are being used by COVID-19 patients.

Of the total 34,166 tests that have been performed for COVID-19, 2,255 returned positive, 31,747 returned negative and 194 are pending. The data shows at 6.6% test positivity rate. Results on average turn around in 1.7 days.

There are 424 cases at long-term care facilities, making up 18.8% of the county's overall cases. Fifty-nine of those cases have led to hospitalization and 48 have died.

San Mateo County has a total of 1,341 cases of the coronavirus, which splits to 713 females and 628 males. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 0 to 19 years old: 53.
- 20 to 29 years old: 178.
- 30 to 39 years old: 234.
- 40 to 49 years old: 244.
- 50 to 59 years old: 220.
- 60 to 69 years old: 188.
- 70 to 79 years old: 91.
- 80 to 90 years old: 77.
- 91 years old or over: 56.

Of the 56 people who have died from the disease, 29 were men and 27 were women. Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 30 to 39 years old: 1.
- 40 to 49 years old: 0.
- 50 to 59 years old: 3.
- 60 to 69 years old: 8.
- 70 to 79 years old: 8.
- 80 to 90 years old: 17.
- 91 years old or over: 19.

Here's a breakdown of the deaths by race/ethnicity:

- White: 38.
- Asian: 12.
- Hispanic: 4.
- Black 1.
- Unknown: 1.

As of Monday, 59 people with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized. Thirteen of those individuals are in intensive care. Another 15 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 65 more ICU beds available.

Fifteen of 231 surge beds and 16 of 223 ventilators are in use throughout the county, regardless of whether or not the patient has COVID-19. Data provided by the state doesn't state how many are being used by people with the virus.

Updates from the state

In the past three days, the state has been able to test 100,000 people for the new coronavirus, Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a press conference Tuesday. In addition, there was a 1.9% decrease in patients admitted to the intensive care unit. Hospitalizations have modestly increased 2.6%, Newsom said. The state's website also indicates a 2.3% increase in positive COVID-19 cases as of Tuesday afternoon.

Federal loans through the Paycheck Protection Program also continue to be distributed, Newsom said. The state already received and sent out \$34 billion to support businesses, and is now in the process of distributing the second round of federal funding of \$33.2 billion. Newsom said 60% of the \$33.2 billion had been distributed.

California has dispersed more than \$10 billion in unemployment insurance throughout the state since March 15, shortly before the state's COVID-19 coronavirus shelter-in-place order began.

Roughly 4.1 million California residents have received about \$10.1 billion in unemployment insurance, including roughly 450,000 people who are self-employed.

"This is unprecedented in our state's history," Newsom said. "These are numbers that no one thought they'd see in our lifetime."

Newsom said he plans to work with the state Legislature to include more protections for self-employed and gig economy workers in the May revision of the state budget, which legislators must pass by June 15.

For essential workers and workers whose businesses may open in the next week as the state begins modifying its stay-at-home order, Newsom said the state has procured millions of protective masks and other items in recent weeks. The state has dispersed some 14 million protective items and still has a stockpile of nearly 20 million items that are ready for use.

The state has prioritized health care workers, first responders and workers in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities for protective gear, but Newsom said grocery and retail workers will begin receiving protective items from the state very soon.

"I can assure you, all of these months, we have never had so many procedure masks, surgical masks in our possession, now able to be distributed all across the state of California," Newsom said.

The state is still planning to allow some low-risk businesses and industries to resume operations on Friday. However, Newsom chastised a handful of northern California counties who have announced their intentions to open higher-risk businesses such as hair salons and dine-in restaurants.

"They're making a big mistake," Newsom said of Yuba and Sutter counties. "They're putting their public at risk, they're putting (the state's) progress at risk."

Health officials around the state have confirmed a total of 56,212 coronavirus cases, including 2,317 deaths, according to Newsom. In addition, 1,157 people are in intensive care due to the virus and 3,369 are currently hospitalized across the state.

Ramping up contact tracing in Santa Clara County

Contact tracing will become a new focus for Santa Clara County public health officials, according to discussions at the Board of Supervisors meeting Tuesday.

Contact tracing and case investigation is "core to public health efforts to control the spread of a communicable disease," Dr. Sara Cody told the board during the meeting. "And we're going to need to do it at a scale that we've never before done here or in many, many other places."

The goal is to be able to have county staff investigate every new case of COVID-19, but the county currently traces about 75 cases per day, according to Cody. She said an ideal team of contact tracing staff would be about 1,000 people.

Read the full story [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 4

State allowing certain businesses to reopen this week

Bookstores, clothing stores, toy stores and other businesses that can accommodate curbside pickup may be allowed to reopen the end of this week in some parts of California under a plan Gov. Gavin Newsom unveiled Monday afternoon. Malls are not included in the first round of reopening, regardless if stores within them can support curbside pickup, Newsom explained.

Newsom said the state will issue new guidelines Thursday that would allow certain types of businesses to reopen as early as Friday, triggering the second phase in his four-phase plan for reopening the economy. The announcement empowers county health officials to ease their own restrictions, though it does not require them to do so.

Newsom and Dr. Sonia Angell, the state's public health officer, both said that the decision to start reopening parts of the economy was driven by data: namely, the state's significant progress to ensure hospital capacity and expand testing and contact tracing throughout California. Angell noted that the state is on track in all of these categories, with more than 10,000 ventilators available for use and a "surge capacity" of 14 hospital facilities with 2,072 beds ready to accept patients (a number beyond what's required in the traditional health care system). The state has also met its goal of performing 25,000 tests per day and is in the process of setting up 86 testing areas in rural and urban areas.

"This gives us optimism that as we move toward the end of this week, that we will have testing that is necessary for this early stage in place," Angell said.

In counties that follow the state's lead and relax their shelter-at-home orders, businesses such as bookstores, clothing stores, florists and sporting goods stores will be able to reopen, provided they make modifications to ensure physical distancing. The businesses comprise some – though not all – of the businesses that Newsom had identified in the second stage, which he said will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

Other businesses that had been identified in the second stage — including offices, dine-in restaurants and shopping malls — will be required to remain closed.

Counties will be able to move faster — or slower — to reopen businesses than the state. Those that want to wish to reopen other types of businesses faster will be allowed to submit "readiness plans" to the state for review and approval. Those that feel they aren't ready to reopen will be able to retain their existing health orders that bar certain business types from reopening.

Newsom noted that counties in the Bay Area have guidelines that are "a little more strict" than the state's. The state will not tell local officials who feel it's too soon to modify their orders to do so, he said.

"If they choose not to come into compliance with state guidelines, they have that right," Newsom said.

Santa Clara County opening two new community testing sites

Santa Clara County is opening two new community COVID-19 sites in San Jose and Gilroy as early as Wednesday for those who are in skilled-nursing facilities, symptomatic individuals and asymptomatic first responders.

James Lick High School in San Jose and Christopher High School in Gilroy are two of 80 state-managed testing sites opening across California in collaboration with [OptumServe](#), a federal health services business based in Minnesota.

Slated to open early as Wednesday, each site can serve up to 132 people each day, which adds up to 10,560 tests that can be issued across all 80 locations each day. Screening and testing criteria are based on state guidelines, which may be updated to comply with the latest guidance.

The news comes on the heels of Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent announcement of more community testing sites across the state in underserved communities and all 15 Santa Clara County mayors [urging county leaders for more COVID-19 testing sites](#) last week.

"It is especially important to make testing readily available in communities that may have limited access," county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody said in a press release. "Our ultimate goal is that anyone, living in any neighborhood, can get access to testing, particularly those with symptoms of COVID-19, and those who work in settings where they may have frequent exposure."

Tests will only be provided to residents by appointment, which can be made by calling 888-634-1123 or visiting [lhi.care/covidtesting](#). The testing sites will be open on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Read more about the testing sites [here](#).

The county also launched a [new webpage](#) that lists who should be tested for COVID-19 and testing locations. Midpeninsula providers administering tests at local sites include Stanford Health Care, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, Kaiser Permanente, El Camino Health and Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System. For a full list, visit [sccgov.org/cv19testing](#).

The webpage also provides information on testing capacity and expansion and the types of COVID-19 tests.

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases now stands at 2,244, according to new data published Monday. The total almost evenly splits between males and females.

Two more people have died of the new coronavirus, raising the total number of deaths to 117, which divides to 66 men and 51 women.

The case counts by city on May 4 showed Palo Alto has 70 cases, which represents 0.1% of the city population, and Mountain View has 46 cases, which represents 0.05% of the city population. San Jose has the most cases across all 15 cities in the county. Its 1,494 cases make up 0.1% of the city population.

Of the 131 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected of having the disease, 72 are in acute hospital beds and 46 are in intensive care unit beds. Patients without the virus occupy 903 acute beds and 193 ICU beds, leaving another 880 and 186, respectively, available.

Five of 1,231 surge beds and 109 of 896 ventilators are being used throughout the county, but data provided by the state doesn't further break down those numbers to ones being used by COVID-19 patients.

Of the 33,396 tests performed for COVID-19, 2,244 returned positive, 30,970 returned negative and 182 are pending results. The data shows a 6.7% test positivity rate. Results turn around on an average of 1.7 days.

San Mateo County has 1,315 cases of the new coronavirus, which splits to 696 females and 619 males as of May 4. Five more people have died of the disease, raising the county's total number of deaths from 51

to 56, which breaks down to 29 men and 27 women.

As of Sunday, May 3, 61 people with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 were hospitalized. Eighteen of those individuals are in intensive care.

Sixteen patients without the virus are also in ICU beds, leaving 50 more ICU beds available.

Fifteen of 231 surge beds and 17 of 223 ventilators are in use throughout the county, according to state public health data, which doesn't further break down those numbers to those being used by COVID-19 patients.

Remdesivir approved for emergency use

On May 1, the Food and Drug Administration [approved](#) emergency use of the experimental drug remdesivir for treatment of COVID-19.

The National Institutes of Health announced early data from its worldwide remdesivir trial found the drug helps to speed recovery in severely ill patients, reducing the time from 15 days to 11 days. The drug, which was developed by Foster City-based Gilead Sciences, is for use in hospitalized patients and can only be given intravenously at this time.

Remdesivir has been shown to reduce the coronavirus' replication in laboratory cell culture and animal studies against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and other coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV.

"It is reasonable to believe that the known and potential benefits of (remdesivir) outweigh the known and potential risks of the drug for the treatment of patients hospitalized with severe COVID-19," the FDA wrote in its approval letter.

The drug will only be used on adults and children with suspected or laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 and severe disease, which was defined as a patient who has a blood oxygen level of 94% or less when breathing normal room air, requiring supplemental oxygen, mechanical ventilation or life support.

Gilead will supply the drug to authorized distributors or directly to a U.S. government agency, which will distribute remdesivir to hospitals and other health care facilities in collaboration with federal, state and local authorities.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 2-3

Santa Clara and San Mateo counties have seen fewer patients with confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 in intensive care unit beds over the past week, according to the latest public data.

Santa Clara County reported a new total of 2,231 cases of the coronavirus on Sunday, May 3, and one death, for a total of 115. Of the 140 people hospitalized, 44 are in ICU, 33 fewer patients than a week earlier. On April 26, the county reported 77 patients in ICU.

In San Mateo County, the total number of coronavirus cases is 1,281 and the death toll remained at 51 as of Sunday, May 3.

San Mateo County's number of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases in ICU has ebbed and flowed over the span of a week. As of Saturday, May 2, the county reported 17 patients with or suspected of having the coronavirus in ICU beds at its hospitals, the same as the day before. A week earlier, on April 25, the county had 26 COVID-19 patients in ICU.

Shelter-at-home orders

Extended stay-at-home orders in six Bay Area counties, including Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, went into effect on Monday, May 4.

Health officers for the counties [issued revised orders](#) on Wednesday, April 29, that largely retains restrictions that were previously in place but loosens some directives. The new orders allow gardeners and landscapers to resume all work and reclassifies construction and real estate as "essential business" that is permitted.

On Friday, May 1, Gov. Gavin Newsom indicated that California is now "many days, not weeks" away from loosening the statewide stay-at-home order in effect until the end of May.

Newsom didn't provide a timeline for the changes, but said he'll make an announcement on the topic sometime this week. The pending modifications come as the state reports a decrease in the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 and more resources for testing and personal protective equipment arrives.

COVID-19 case at juvenile hall

A youth admitted two weeks ago into the Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall in San Jose tested positive for COVID-19, the county announced Friday, May 1.

"Best practices were used to protect both youth and staff from exposure in our facilities," the county said in a statement, adding that the youth "is doing well."

No further details were released by the county, except that the youth was never placed in general population, was isolated and moved to the medical clinic within the facility after testing positive for the novel coronavirus.

The county said additional youths and staff members are being tested for the coronavirus but that none of the tests have come back positive so far, though testing is not yet completed.

Couples can obtain marriage licenses remotely under new executive order

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an executive order on Thursday allowing state residents to obtain marriage licenses remotely due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

The order will allow couples to obtain a marriage license from their county clerk via video conference provided that both members of the couple are state residents and that they can both present a valid form of identification on the video call. The clerk will then email the licenses to the couple.

The state will also recognize marriages performed over video call as long as both members of the couple are present and there is at least one witness to the live ceremony.

The executive order will remain in effect for the next 60 days, according to Newsom's office.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MAY 1

Santa Clara County has 2,179 cases of the new coronavirus in about 1,090 males and 1,080 females, according to new data released Friday.

Of the total 144 people hospitalized with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, 84 are in acute hospital beds and 48 are in intensive care. Another 767 acute beds and 200 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 1,026 and 188, respectively, available.

Eight of 1,231 surge beds and 112 of 892 ventilators are in use throughout the county, regardless of whether the patient has the new coronavirus.

Sixty-five men and forty-eight women make up the county's total of 113 deaths from the disease, two of which are new.

There were no changes to the total of cases in Palo Alto and Mountain View, which have stayed at 69 and 45, respectively, since Wednesday. Palo Alto's 69 cases make up 0.1% of the city's population and Mountain View's 45 cases make up 0.05% of the city's population. San Jose's 11 new cases bring its total to 1,447, which represents 0.1% of the city's population.

Out of 29,614 COVID-19 tests performed in the county, 2,179 returned positive, 27,239 returned negative and 196 are pending. The data reveals a 7.4% test positivity rate. Results turn around in 1.7 days on average.

There were no changes to the county's cases that originated at long-term care facilities. Of the total 419 cases, which make up 19% of the county's overall total, 57 have been hospitalized and 43 have died.

Newsom: State is 'many days, not weeks' from modifying stay-at-home orders

Gov. Gavin Newsom said on Friday that California is now "many days, not weeks" away from loosening the statewide stay-at-home order now in effect until the end of May.

Newsom didn't provide a timeline for the changes, but said he'll make an announcement on the topic sometime next week. The pending modifications come as the state reports a decrease in the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 and more resources for testing and personal protective equipment arrives. On Thursday, more than 5 million masks were distributed, according to Newsom.

Newsom said positive COVID-19 cases and deaths have increased statewide on Friday (data from the California Department of Public Health shows increases of 3.1% and 4.6%, respectively), but hospitalization numbers went down and the number of intensive care unit beds remained flat.

"The data is starting to give us more confidence," Newsom said.

The governor also took a moment to thank essential workers for May Day, also known as International Workers' Day.

On Monday, Newsom plans to address more details on testing and contact tracing.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 30

Santa Clara County watched its total of coronavirus cases go up to 2,163 on Thursday, 1,080 of which are male and 1,074 of which are female.

Four more people have died of the disease, raising the county's total number of deaths to 111, which divides to 63 men and 48 women.

There was no change to the total number of cases in Palo Alto and Mountain View since Wednesday. Palo Alto's 69 cases make up 0.1% of the city's population and Mountain View's 45 cases make up 0.05% of the city's population. San Jose's 13 new cases brings its total to 1,436, which represents 0.1% of the city's population.

Nearly 7% of the county's cases are hospitalized. Of the 150 people with or suspected of having COVID-19, 78 are in acute hospital beds and 56 are in intensive care beds. Another 820 acute beds and 173 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving another 970 and 198, respectively, available.

County data only shows how many surge beds and ventilators are in use throughout the county, regardless of whether they have COVID-19. Nine of 1,231 surge beds and 112 of 892 ventilators are being utilized.

Three more cases were reported at long-term care facilities, where a total of 419 cases have been found at 33 facilities. Fifty-seven have been hospitalized and 43 have died.

Of 28,570 tests for COVID-19, the results returned positive for 2,163 people and negative for 26,224 people. Another 183 tests are pending results, which turn around on an average of 1.7 days. The numbers show a 7.6% test positivity rate.

San Mateo County has a total of 1,197 cases of the coronavirus, which breaks down to 645 females and 552 males, as of Thursday. The death toll rose to 51, of which 28 were men and 23 were women.

As of Wednesday, 70 people with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 17 of whom are in intensive care, according to the county's hospitalization dashboard. Another 20 ICU beds are occupied by patients without the virus, leaving 52 available.

Eleven of 231 surge beds and 21 of 224 ventilators are in use throughout the county, according to the dashboard, which doesn't break down those numbers further to those being used by COVID-19 patients.

San Mateo County this week started releasing information on cases by ZIP code. Here's a breakdown of the total cases for a few local cities as of Sunday (the latest data available):

- 94025 (Menlo Park): 49
- 94027 (Menlo Park/Atherton): 11
- 94028 (Menlo Park/Portola Valley): Less than 10.
- 94063 (Redwood City/Woodside): 52.
- 94303 (East Palo Alto): 47.
- Unknown/Other: 14.

Newsom clarifies permitted outdoor, social activities under stay-at-home order

Gov. Gavin Newsom on Thursday tried to clear the air on permissible outdoor and social activities — a confusion onset by the increasing number of cities and counties across the state easing local shelter-at-home orders, including six Bay Area counties.

At a press conference, Newsom said that outdoor activities such as hiking, horseback riding and tennis are acceptable outdoor activities, as long as physical distancing is maintained. Golf courses, Newsom vaguely said, "is a space that's loosening up, but with modifications." Realtors can also resume hosting open houses on site.

However, in response to the images of crowded southern California beaches last weekend, Newsom said a few beaches in certain cities and counties around the region will now be closed, mainly singling out Orange County.

"The images we saw on a few of our beaches were disturbing," Newsom said.

To stress his point on physical distancing, Newsom cited a 5.2% increase in positive COVID-19 cases across the state in the past 24 hours. Patients hospitalized and admitted into intensive care increased within a percentage point, but Newsom contrasted that statistic with the state's 95 deaths from COVID-19 over the past day.

Newsom also announced a new online portal where parents and essential workers who need child care can find local resources. which can be found at covid19.ca.gov.

About 63% of licensed child care centers have been impacted by the pandemic, Newsom said.

Face coverings required on VTA vehicles

Starting Monday, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority is requiring riders to wear face coverings while on the transit system's buses and light-rail trains through the end of May. The new rule is in compliance with Santa Clara County's revised [shelter-at-home order](#) that mandates transit personnel and passengers wear face coverings.

The agency is communicating the new requirement across its system via posters, recorded messages on vehicles and platforms and other public messaging, the agency said in a press release Thursday.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 29

The Bay Area's stay-at-home orders will stretch on until at least the end of May, though construction workers, gardeners and outdoor retailers that can accommodate physical distancing can get back to businesses as early as Monday, county officials announced Wednesday.

The [new order](#) in Santa Clara County, which Dr. Sara Cody, the county's health officer issued Wednesday, represents the Bay Area's first attempt to loosen the shelter-at-home directives that health officers across the region [issued on March 16](#), when COVID-19 cases were rapidly climbing and officials were preparing for a larger surge. The order also lifts prohibitions on outdoor spaces such as skate parks, which do not involve shared equipment or physical contact.

Health officials at Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo counties, as well as the city of Berkeley, announced similar measures Wednesday.

Read the full story [here](#).

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County reported 2,134 total cases of the new coronavirus on Wednesday, 164 of which are hospitalized. The total almost splits evenly between gender to 1,069 males and 1,057 females. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 80.
- 21 to 30 years old: 259.
- 31 to 40 years old: 358.
- 41 to 50 years old: 365.
- 51 to 60 years old: 378.
- 61 to 70 years old: 284.
- 71 to 80 years old: 209.
- 81 to 90 years old: 121.
- 91 years old or over: 67.
- Unknown: 13.

The latest data also shows Palo Alto has 69 cases, which represents 0.1% of the city's population. Mountain View has a total of 45 cases, which represents 0.05% of the city's population. At 1,423, San Jose has the most cases in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

The county has recorded a total of 107 COVID-19 deaths, an increase by one from Tuesday. Sixty of the deceased were men and 47 were women. When it came to pre-existing conditions, 86.9% of the deceased had one or more, 8.4% were unknown and 4.7% had none. Here's a breakdown by age group.

- 31 to 40 years old: 4.
- 41 to 50 years old: 5.
- 51 to 60 years old: 15.
- 61 to 70 years old: 14.
- 71 to 80 years old: 30.
- 81 to 90 years old: 23.
- 91 years old or over: 16.

Asian and Latinx/Hispanic residents had the most cases and deaths based on the lists of cases and deaths by race. Here's a full breakdown of cases by race in descending order:

- Latinx/Hispanic: 37%.
- Asian: 22%.
- White: 18%.
- Unknown: 16%.
- Other: 4%.
- African American: 2%.

Here's a full breakdown of deaths by race in descending order:

- Asian: 32.7%.
- Latinx/Hispanic: 32.7%.
- White: 25.4%.
- African American: 6.5%.
- Unknown: 2.8%.

- Other: 1.9%.

There are 164 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected of having the disease, 89 of whom are in acute beds and 66 of whom are in intensive care beds. Patients without the disease occupy 749 acute beds and 173 ICU beds, leaving 1,011 and 193, respectively, available.

There are nine surge beds and 107 ventilators in use throughout the county's hospitals, leaving 1,222 and 789, respectively, available. County data doesn't state how many surge beds or ventilators are being used by COVID-19 patients.

Of the 27,502 people who have been tested for COVID-19, 2,134 returned positive, 25,189 returned negative and 179 are pending. The county has a test positivity rate of 7.8% and results turn around in 1.7 days on average.

There are 416 cases across 32 long-term care facilities, which make up about 19% of the county's total. Fifty-six cases are hospitalized and 41 have died.

San Mateo County has a total of 1,177 cases of the coronavirus, which splits to 636 females and 541 males. The county's death toll remains at 48, which divides to 26 men and 22 women.

As of Tuesday, 63 people with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized.

San Mateo County reopening some park trails

Trails at 13 of San Mateo County's 23 parks will be reopened starting this Monday, according to a Tuesday announcement from the county's parks department.

Trail access, which has been off-limits in all county parks since March 27, will be offered with a number of restrictions in place to minimize the risk of spreading the coronavirus, according to a [press statement](#). Some single-track trails will be converted to one-direction routes, and some trails will be closed to bikes. Dogs must remain on leashes.

Other park areas that permit gathering will remain closed. That includes picnic areas, playgrounds, campgrounds, fields, visitor centers, and some parking lots and restrooms.

Read the full story [here](#).

Supplying food banks

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a state and federal initiative Wednesday to connect farmers and ranchers with excess produce to food banks around the state.

According to Newsom, food banks have seen a 73% increase in demand since the COVID-19 pandemic began, while farmers and ranchers have seen demand for their crops and other food fall by half.

With supply chains of perishable food to shuttered restaurants fractured during the pandemic, that produce and other food could end up being thrown away if action wasn't taken, Newsom said.

The partnership currently includes nearly 130 farmers and ranchers who are providing food commodities to 41 food banks in 58 counties. State officials hope to extend the program through the end of the year, providing roughly 21 million pounds of food to local food banks every month.

Read the full story [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 28

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases rose to 2,122 on Tuesday, which divides to about 1,070 males, 1,050 females, seven of unknown gender and one identified as "other" gender. The number of deaths in the county now stands at 106, which roughly splits to 60 men and 45 women.

Tuesday's cases-by-city data shows Palo Alto has 68 cases, making up 0.1% of the city population, and Mountain View has 46 cases, making up 0.6% of the city population. San Jose, the county's most populous city, has the most cases — 1,409 — making up 0.1% of the city population.

Of the 182 people in the hospital with COVID-19 or who suspected of having the disease, 86 are in acute beds and 77 are in intensive care. Patients without the new coronavirus occupy 719 acute beds and 176 ICU beds, leaving 1,034 and 182, respectively, unoccupied.

Nine of 1,231 surge beds and 118 of 890 ventilators are in use throughout the county, though the hospital dashboard doesn't further break down those numbers to show which ones are being used by COVID-19 patients.

Exactly 26,640 tests for the coronavirus have been performed as of Tuesday, 2,122 of which are positive, 24,318 of which are negative, 200 of which are pending. The county's test positivity rate has gone down to 8% and results on average turn around in 1.7 days.

The county's long-term care facilities have 407 COVID-19 cases, about 20% of the countywide total. Fifty-six are hospitalized and 40 have resulted in death.

As of Tuesday, San Mateo County has a total of 1,136 cases of the coronavirus, which is split to 608 females and 528 males. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 19 years old or under: 37.
- 20 to 29 years old: 156.
- 30 to 39 years old: 189.
- 40 to 49 years old: 196.
- 50 to 59 years old: 187.
- 60 to 69 years old: 161.
- 70 to 79 years old: 84.
- 80 to 89 years old: 73.
- 90 years old or over: 53.

The death toll remained at 48 on Tuesday, which divides to 26 men and 22 women. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 59 to 59 years old: 3.
- 60 to 69 years old: 8.
- 70 to 79 years old: 6.
- 80 to 89 years old: 15.
- 90 years old or over: 16.

Here's a breakdown of the deaths by race/ethnicity:

- White: 32.
- Asian: 11.
- Hispanic: 3.
- Black 1.
- Unknown: 1.

The county's hospitalization data shows 80 people with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized as of Monday.

State outlines four stages of reopening

At a Tuesday press conference, Gov. Gavin Newsom outlined the four stages of reopening businesses, schools and child care facilities guided by the [six indicators](#) the governor announced April 14, which will determine if the state is ready to modify its stay-at-home order as positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations due to the disease continue to stabilize.

The four phases organize businesses and facilities by sectors that have the lowest to highest risk of COVID-19 transmission. For example, the first stage, which the state is currently in, only allows the operation of essential workplaces.

During the first stage, Dr. Sonia Angell, director of the state's health department, said the state will want to focus on increasing testing and contact tracing capacity; ensuring personal protective equipment and hospital space availability; and developing the guidelines for reopening more businesses in the next stages.

In Stage 2, which Newsom said the state is just weeks away from, "lower-risk workplaces" will be able to reopen but only with new guidelines set in place. This includes retailers that can offer curbside pickup, the manufacturing sector, office workspaces that can't adopt work-from-home protocols, schools, child care facilities and public spaces such as parks and hiking trails.

"We're talking about summer programs and the next school year potentially starting sooner, perhaps in July or August," Angell said, but the environment has to be safe for children and teachers.

To transition from Stage 1 to Stage 2, Angell broadly stated that there must be a combination of government, business and individual-level initiatives — from policy changes and sick pay for employees to physical distancing.

Though Stage 2 will be a statewide transition, local counties will be able to relax restrictions on their own accord, Angell said.

Stage 3 will include reopening personal care facilities such as hair and nail salons; entertainment venues such as theaters and sporting events without live audiences; and in-person religious services.

By Stage 4, Angell said the stay-at-home order should be over and concerts, convention center events and other mass gatherings will be allowed.

Besides addressing the possibility of starting the next school year in the middle of the summer, no other specific dates were provided.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 27

The six Bay Area counties that became the first in the nation to shelter at home in March will continue under an extension of the public-health policy through the month of May, according to a [joint statement](#) issued Monday by health officials.

The counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara and the city of Berkeley plan to revise their shelter-at-home orders and release them later this week.

The seven jurisdictions plan to mostly keep the current limitations in place, though restrictions will be lifted for a few "lower-risk activities," according to a joint press release.

The counties and city of Berkeley that make up more than 7 million residents are currently under a shelter-at-home order expiring this Sunday. While the release notes there has been "substantial progress" in slowing down the growth of COVID-19 and a leveling of hospitalizations, lifting restrictions could lead to a significant increase in cases.

There is no set date for when the health officers will announce the extended order, which is also expected to outline state-aligned indicators they will use to track the progress and response to the disease.

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

On Monday, Santa Clara County saw its total of coronavirus cases rise to 2,105, 172 of which are hospitalized, and 103 deaths caused by the disease.

The total of cases divides to about 1,060 men, 1,037 women, seven people of "unknown" gender and one person identified as "other" gender. The total number of deaths splits to 59 men and 44 women.

According to data released Sunday, Palo Alto has 68 cases, representing 0.1% of the city's population, and Mountain View has 45, representing 0.05% of the city's population. San Jose has the most cases in the county — 1,383 — which represents 0.1% of the city's population.

Of the 172 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected of having the disease, 82 are in acute beds and 77 are in intensive care beds. That leaves another 692 acute beds and 167 ICU beds being used by patients without the virus and another 1,078 and 191, respectively, available.

County data also shows nine surge beds and 123 ventilators are in use, leaving 1,222 and 767, respectively, on hand as needed. The data doesn't differentiate between COVID-19 patients and other hospital patients.

Of the 25,575 people who have tested for COVID-19, 2,105 have received positive results, 23,023 received negative results and 267 are pending results. The test positivity rate has gone down to 8.2% and the average turnaround time for results is 1.8 days.

As of Sunday, there are 391 cases at long-term care facilities, which include skilled nursing, independent living, assisted living and board and care facilities. Fifty-four are hospitalized and 37 have resulted in death.

As of Monday, San Mateo County has a total of 1,099 cases of the coronavirus, 591 of whom are female and 508 of whom are male. The death toll rose to 48, which divides to 26 men and 22 women.

Of the total cases, 63 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 20 of whom are in intensive care unit beds. Another seven patients without the virus are also in ICU, leaving 55 more beds available.

County data doesn't indicate how many COVID-19 patients have ventilators or are occupying surge beds. Thirteen of 243 surge beds and 22 of 246 ventilators are in use throughout county hospitals.

Stanford seeks plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients

Stanford Medicine and Stanford Blood Center are creating a convalescent plasma program, which takes plasma donations from recovered COVID-19 patients and transfuses them into critically ill patients with the virus.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved the procedure in an effort to help patients fight off the virus, according to a FAQ list for the program.

The Stanford Blood Center is a member of America's Blood Centers, which on Monday announced a partnership with the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority to promote gathering COVID-19 convalescent plasma from recovered patients across the country. The authority is part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, which falls under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"The support of BARDA enhances the continued mobilization efforts by community blood centers to meet patient needs during the COVID-19 pandemic," America's Blood Centers CEO Kate Fry said in a press release.

America's Blood Centers acknowledged there is no proven treatment for the new coronavirus, but said convalescent plasma could give patients with COVID-19 antibodies to fight the virus.

Those interested in donating can apply through [this form](#). Questions or those in need of additional support can email specialdonations@stanford.edu or call 650-723-6667.

New clinic for COVID-19 patients

Stanford Health Care has established a new clinic for COVID-19 patients who don't need hospital care, allowing them to isolate from other clinics and avoid exposing others to the disease, according to a news release issued Monday.

The clinic, known as CROWN (short for care and respiratory observations of patients with novel coronavirus), is housed in the first floor of Hoover Pavilion and has its own separate entrance. It's staffed by a doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant and other health care professionals.

"It's a safe place where we can manage their symptoms and keep them out of the emergency department if it's not necessary," said nurse and clinic manager Christopher Lentz.

Patients can speak with a caregiver by phone, over video conference or in-person visits to the clinic.

"If they're high-risk and we're worried about them, we follow them very closely with video visits and in-person visits to make sure that they're doing well," Dr. Maja Artandi, clinical associate professor of medicine and CROWN medical director, said in the news release.

Clinicians monitor the patients for two to three weeks until they stop exhibiting symptoms and are no longer contagious. In addition, they see patients suspected of having the disease and need urgent care.

As state figures out how to modify sheltering order, Newsom pleads people to continue staying at home

California is just a few weeks away from modifying its stay-at-home order, Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a Monday press conference. But recent images of crowded southern California beaches over the weekend were "an example of what not to see," the governor warned, if the state wants to reopen.

"The only thing that will set us back is our behavior," Newsom said. Nothing about the nature of the virus has changed, but rather people's behaviors that have helped mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, he added.

Increasing talks of changing stay-at-home orders come as several states across the U.S., including Georgia and South Carolina, begin to reopen parts of their economy. California has yet to make any changes to its statewide order. The city of Berkeley and six Bay Area counties, including Santa Clara County, however, made a joint announcement on Monday regarding plans to extend the local stay-at-home order set to expire this Sunday. Local health officers will make an announcement with further details later this week.

Newsom also announced that Nevada and Colorado recently joined a coalition of western states — Oregon, Washington and California — to collaboratively work on guidelines for modifying the stay-at-home measures.

In addition, Newsom said he will give further details on Tuesday about the indicators that will help determine how California will modify its order.

Starting Tuesday, there also will be separate press conference opportunities with the economic recovery task force Newsom announced on April 17 in an effort to make the group's plans more transparent.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 25-26

Over the weekend, Santa Clara County Executive Jeff Smith said a new shelter-at-home order will be announced this week for the six Bay Area counties plus Berkeley. Smith said public health officers are finalizing the policy, which may differ from [the current one](#), which lasts through Sunday.

Also, as Santa Clara County reported its 100th death from COVID-19, the autopsy report on a San Jose woman, the first person known to have died of the disease in the nation, was made public. It stated that, even though she didn't have a history of coronary artery disease, the virus contributed to a heart attack that led to a heart rupture that proved fatal.

Finally, at a telephone town hall meeting on Sunday, local leaders discussed concerns about the coronavirus risk of takeout food, the state of hospital capacity and more.

Stay-at-home order will be extended

With other states beginning to relax their public health restrictions, Santa Clara County leaders on Friday predicted a local spike in cases of the novel coronavirus this summer and warned of local plans to continue the shelter-in-place policy.

"In terms of seeing a light at the end of the tunnel, that's pretty hard to visualize at this point because, in order to prevent the spread of this virus and try to mute the pandemic, the only tool we really have is shelter-in-place," the county's executive Dr. Jeff Smith said Friday in a teleconference with the Silicon Valley Commonwealth Club, a Bay Area-based public affairs forum. "We don't have the treatment; we don't have the vaccine; we don't have any other specific way to deal with the pandemic."

"I think we're looking forward, sadly, to another spike (in cases) probably the late summer and early fall because we don't have a consistent shelter-in-place program for the rest of the country," Smith said. "And since we're so mobile, we'll expect higher numbers because other people will be traveling around the nation."

Seven Bay Area jurisdictions in March led the country with the [first shelter orders](#) following the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States. Smith during a Sunday teleconference, sponsored by Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian, said that as soon as the middle of the coming week the public health officers in the seven Bay Area municipalities will likely announce the updated stay-at-home order. The [current one](#) is in effect through May 3.

Smith told the Commonwealth Club that the new order could look different from the current one — a "staged relaxation," with different parts of the county adhering to different restrictions.

On Sunday, he said the county has seen fewer cases than it expected due to the shelter policy. Public cooperation has made a difference in lowering the number of cases and hospitalizations. It's not the time to slack off, however, he said.

"We're very concerned about spikes. Every pandemic in the history of the world has had two to three spikes," he said.

Board of Supervisors President Cindy Chavez joined Smith for the Friday teleconference and applauded the staff of the county and individual cities for their work. However, she added, "I don't feel that way about the whole rest of the country," particularly pointing to states without their own shelter orders and physical distancing protocols.

"The way I see this is we're going to slowly open up the economy based on how safe the workplaces are that we're sending people into, because the last thing we want to do is put people in harm's way, and furthermore put their families in harm's way," Chavez said. "People who are not following this order are risking the lives of whole other states and countries."

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo said that his city is "in the food distribution business now" as a result of the health crisis, with about 160 employees producing about 2 million meals per week. He also expressed the need for increased testing for the coronavirus.

"I would love to see a much more focused public health effort at a federal level so that we're not all out there trying to do our own thing," Liccardo said.

Smith similarly took aim at the federal government, criticizing the country's leaders for "diversion, disinformation and lack of preparation" in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

Santa Clara and San Mateo counties' COVID-19 cases

As of Sunday, Santa Clara County has 2,084 total confirmed cases of the coronavirus, an increase of 48 from Saturday. The county also reported a total of 100 coronavirus-caused deaths and 163 people currently hospitalized. According to data released Saturday, Palo Alto has 68 cases and Mountain View has 45.

[San Mateo County](#) has a total of 1,080 cases of the coronavirus, with a death toll of 41 as of Sunday. Seventy-four people are hospitalized.

Autopsy report implicates virus in fatal heart attack

The autopsy report on the first person known to have died of COVID-19 in the United States, San Jose resident [Patricia Cabello Dowd](#), 57, states that the viral infection contributed to a heart attack that proved fatal.

[The report](#), which is a public record under [California law](#), was obtained by the San Francisco Chronicle. Initially written on Feb. 7, the day after Cabello died, it was only signed by Santa Clara County Medical Examiner Susan Parson on April 23. In the intervening time, public health officials have stated, tissue from Dowd was sent for testing to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which confirmed her death was related to COVID-19.

According to the autopsy, Dowd experienced a heart attack. That attack led to a rupture of her left ventricle (one of four chambers in the heart), which allowed blood to fill the sac around the heart, ultimately preventing her heart from pumping.

Although one of the common causes of heart attacks is coronary artery disease, Dowd had "no significant degree" of plaque, nor any blood clots, in her arteries, the report stated. What the coroner did find in her heart was the coronavirus RNA and inflammation, even in the right ventricle, which did not rupture.

The virus was also present in her lungs, trachea and intestines.

The report did not state that Dowd, who was 5 feet, 1 inch tall and 165 pounds, had pre-existing health conditions that would have made her more vulnerable, such as diabetes or hypertension.

Dowd experienced flu-like symptoms in January, according to media reports, long before community spread of the new coronavirus had been suspected in Santa Clara County.

The autopsy report stated that Dowd tested negative for influenza A and B and a respiratory virus known as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Four types of parainfluenza viruses were also "not detected," the report states.

Santa Clara County public health administrators said on April 21 that Dowd did not travel out of the country before contracting the virus. Officials said that the CDC also confirmed two other county deaths as related to COVID-19: a 69-year-old man who died on Feb. 17 and a person whose death was reported on March 6.

"What these deaths tell us is that we had community transmission far earlier than our systems allowed us to detect," Santa Clara County Public Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody said in a statement. "The virus was likely introduced and circulating in our community earlier than we had known."

Simitian town hall addresses food takeout risks, hospital readiness

On Sunday, April 26, Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian hosted a telephone town hall meeting, which included updates from Paul Lorenz, CEO of the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center hospital system; Greta Hansen, chief assistant county counsel; and County Executive Jeff Smith.

Lorenz said that as of April 26, the county's health system, which includes three public hospitals, has 165 COVID-19-positive patients. The county still has 40% of its acute-care capacity available.

There are 800 ventilators available across all hospitals in the county, including public and private institutions.

In addition to hospitals, the county's surge facilities, such as a field hospital at the Santa Clara County Convention Center, are 100% available, Lorenz said.

Addressing hospital preparation, Hansen said the county has acquired 17 million pieces of personal protective equipment, which have been distributed within the county's hospital system.

Many hospitals, including those within the county's system, are experiencing financial struggles because they haven't been able to do elective surgeries, which provide revenue. They are all looking at their ability to maintain employment for their workers, Lorenz said.

Smith said that testing capacity is still inadequate and had sharp criticism for the nation's leaders. The federal response to testing "should've gotten started a few months ago. We didn't get tests from the CDC until the first part of February and those tests were defective," he said.

Although the World Health Organization has a test that is available, county public health departments are hampered by law from using anything from overseas or from sources other than the CDC, and the tests must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration, he said.

Private companies are supplying tests to hospitals and clinics now, but the county still doesn't have anywhere near the needed number of tests, which would help local leaders to better understand the spread of the virus, he said. To date, 23,000 tests have been completed with about 2,000 returning positive results for the coronavirus, he said.

Related to residents' concerns about the potential health risks of ordering takeout food from restaurants, Hansen said county environmental health teams are conducting site inspections to ensure restaurants are maintaining food safety and following public health department guidance related to the coronavirus.

Smith said there is no data linking takeout food and the coronavirus, but health workers are watching for the possibility. So far, they have not been able to conduct contact tracing of all coronavirus cases, which involves following up on everyone with whom a coronavirus-positive person came into contact, to see if the takeout food process has transmitted the virus, he said.

On the issue of serving vulnerable populations, the county has a strike team of doctors and nurses who are keeping an eye on nursing homes, Smith said. They make sure staff has enough personal protective equipment — gloves, masks, gowns and face shields — and that they are following protocols. Staff members in nursing homes are being tested for COVID-19, he said.

Teams are also going into the homeless community. Everyone who has been identified as having the coronavirus has been quarantined in a hotel room and is receiving support services, he said.

Simitian also conducted a poll for listeners to identify their chief concerns. On Sunday, 33% said the health and welfare of seniors and at-risk family and friends is their top concern; 27% said hospital capacity and the ability to handle a surge worries them most; 32% identified the impacts on the economy and jobs; and 8% said education and schools.

[Three weeks ago](#), twice as many people identified hospital capacity as their chief concern, Simitian said. He plans to hold another town hall teleconference on May 17. His office will send out a registration link before the event.

Counties take tougher stances on face coverings

Last week marked the beginning of [San Mateo County's new order](#) requiring face masks, which went into effect on Wednesday morning. Residents must cover their face while outside of their homes and inside an essential business, including grocery stores, hospitals and even ride-sharing vehicles.

Santa Clara County hasn't followed suit in making face masks mandatory but earlier this month said it was "strongly urging" residents to cover their face when leaving their home. Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody was asked Friday why she didn't go the same route as other Bay Area counties in making face coverings a legal requirement, subject to enforcement by local police departments.

In a [live Q&A](#) sponsored by the nonprofit news organization San Jose Spotlight, Cody said that law enforcement has many priorities and that she didn't want to divert enforcement resources away from those priorities and towards people wearing face coverings.

"When I issue a health office order, I mean it. And I want law enforcement to take action. I didn't really see that law enforcement would be going to grocery stores and citing people for not wearing face coverings," she said.

Cody also said that she hopes wearing a face cover in public will become a "social norm" so that when people go outside without the covering, "It should feel funny. It shouldn't feel right. It should feel OK when you're in your home, with your household (not to wear one), but when you're not at your home and out and about, you should feel like something is missing. It's like not having your glasses on."

Cody also made her rounds on national media outlets on Thursday, speaking to CNN's Anderson Cooper and Dr. Sanjay Gupta at a [coronavirus town hall](#) and MSNBC's Rachel Maddow on her eponymous news show for a [nearly eight-minute segment](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 24

On Friday, Santa Clara County saw its total of coronavirus cases rise to 2,018, which divides to about 1,015 males, 995 females, seven of unknown gender and one identified as "other" gender.

The latest data also shows Palo Alto has 68 cases, which represents 0.1% of the city population, and Mountain View has 43, representing 0.05% of the city population. San Jose has the most cases in the county — 1,344 — which represents 0.1% of the city's population.

There are a total of 98 deaths in the county, which splits to 58 men and 40 women.

Of the 176 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease, 86 are in acute beds and 86 are in ICU beds. Patients without the disease occupy 870 acute beds and 151 ICU beds, leaving 647 and 114, respectively, available.

County data doesn't state how many COVID-19 patients are in surge beds or using ventilators. As of Friday, 16 surge beds are filled, with another 1,215 on hand as needed, and 127 ventilators are in use, with another 677 available as needed.

Out of the 22,034 people who have been tested for the coronavirus, 2,018 received positive results, 19,737 received negative results and 279 are pending results. The numbers show a 9.2 test positivity rate. Results turn around on an average of 1.8 days.

The county's data on testing and long-term care facilities have not been updated as of about 5:45 p.m. Friday.

Meals for seniors of California

A new three-meal program for isolated and vulnerable seniors was announced by the state on Friday to not only support dependent seniors, but also local restaurants that have been economically ravaged by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initiative, called "Restaurants Deliver: Home Meals for Seniors," will provide eligible individuals with three nutritious meals per day through the partnership of local restaurants, Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a Friday press conference.

Eligible seniors include those who are high-risk individuals with compromised immune systems, below the federal poverty line by 600% or have been directly impacted by the pandemic. The restaurants that can participate in the program will be determined on a local level, Newsom said.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency will reimburse 75% of costs for the entire program and the remaining 25% will be funded by local governments. Newsom said that the state will help counties pay three-quarters of their share.

Participating restaurants will be reimbursed up to \$16 for each breakfast meal, \$17 for lunch and \$28 for dinner.

Through "Restaurants Deliver," Newsom hopes that this will give restaurant owners the opportunity to retain or rehire staff members and boost business, while also providing an estimated 1.2 million isolated seniors essential care.

Seniors interested in the program should call 211 or visit covid19.ca.gov for more information.

Newsom also unveiled the "Friendship Line" call center, created in partnership with the Institute on Aging, to provide emotional support for isolated seniors. The hotline can be reached at 888-760-1360.

Prioritizing long-term care facilities

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department is prioritizing seniors and staff at long-term care and skilled nursing facilities for testing of COVID-19.

During a Friday press conference at the county's Emergency Operation Center, Santa Clara County Public Health Department officials briefly addressed how the county has responded to COVID-19 cases at these facilities that house seniors — among the most vulnerable members of the population when it comes to the coronavirus.

Dr. Elsa Villarino, county assistant public health officer, said sharing information is one of the key steps to preventing more COVID-19 cases. The county has assigned public health nurses to talk with residents and staff at care facilities and provide infection control and prevention guidelines.

Part of that guidance also includes contact tracing. Villarino said that anytime a case is discovered at these facilities, an investigation will be conducted to find out with whom the infected individual has come into contact. The Public Health Department will then conduct lab tests for those who may have been exposed to the virus.

In addition, the county will continue to provide extra staffing to maintain a reasonable staff-to-patient ratio and supplement personal protective equipment for any facility experiencing a shortage, according to Villarino.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 23

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases climbed closer to the 2,000 mark on Thursday. Of the total 1,987 cases, 95 have resulted in death and 178 have been hospitalized.

There are about 1,000 men, 980 women, seven people of unknown gender and one person identified as "other" gender who have the disease. The number of deaths break down to 58 and 37 women.

The city-by-city case data showed no change for Palo Alto, which has 67 cases that represent 0.1% of the city population, and Mountain View, which has 43 cases that represent 0.05% of the city population. Twenty-two more cases have raised San Jose's total to 1,324, the most in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

The total of people tested for COVID-19 now stands at 21,064, 1,987 of whom had positive results, 18,799 of whom had negative results and 278 of whom are pending results. The numbers show a 9.6% test positivity rate. Results turn around on an average of 1.9 days.

As of Thursday, San Mateo County has a total of 989 cases of the coronavirus, 535 of whom are female and 454 of whom are male. The death toll rose to 41 as of Thursday, up from the total of 39 reported on Tuesday. The number breaks down to 21 men and 20 men.

Of the total cases, 67 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 17 of whom are in intensive care. Another 35 patients without the virus are also in ICU, leaving another 32 ICU beds available as needed. Eleven of 297 surge beds and 24 of 246 ventilators are in use throughout the county, which doesn't state how many are being used by COVID-19 patients.

Debt relief for Californians

Californians in debt will now receive some relief under a new executive order signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom Thursday.

As stimulus checks from the federal government arrive, Newsom said at a Thursday press conference that he will ban debt collectors from garnishing the relief funds. The order will also be retroactive. If debt collectors already collected any checks, then they must return them.

The ban does not apply to individuals who owe child care or spousal support as well as those who owe compensation to victims.

In addition, Newsom said that 21 out of 24 California-based student loan providers have agreed to give college students in debt a 90-day forbearance, which means they do not need to make regular monthly payments during that time period. There will also be no late fees, penalties and impacts to credit ratings, but rather support for new payment plans, Newsom said.

The state will also start distributing 90,000 testing swabs from the federal government on Friday. Though Newsom [announced on Wednesday](#) that President Donald Trump promised 100,000 swabs, the governor said that the rest of the 10,000 will be accounted for next week.

Newsom also gave a sharp rebuke to U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's suggestion on Wednesday that states should file for bankruptcy instead of getting federal support.

The governor was unequivocal when he said that the senator's idea was "offensive" to both Democrat and Republican governors and "expects he'll take back his comments."

Newsom also provided updated numbers for the COVID-19 crisis, citing Thursday as one of the worst days of the pandemic for the state in terms of the number of deaths. In the past 24 hours, 115 people died from the coronavirus and there was a 5.6% increase in positive COVID-19 cases.

Newsom added that there was a 0.4% decrease in hospitalizations and 1.2% decrease in intensive care unit-admitted patients.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 22

Santa Clara County has 1,962 confirmed COVID-19 cases, up by 16 from the previous total, according to new data the county posted online Wednesday.

Of the 1,962 cases, about 990 are male, 960 are female, seven are of unknown gender and one identified as "other" gender. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 69.
- 21 to 30 years old: 230.
- 31 to 40 years old: 332.
- 41 to 50 years old: 334.
- 51 to 60 years old: 369.
- 61 to 70 years old: 264.
- 71 to 80 years old: 196.
- 81 to 90 years old: 106.
- 91 years old or over: 61.
- Unknown: 11.

The latest data also shows Palo Alto has 67 cases, which represents 0.1% of the city's population. Mountain View has a total of 43 cases, which represents 0.05% of the city's population. At 1,302, San Jose has the most cases in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

The county has recorded a total of 94 COVID-19 deaths, six of which are new. Fifty-seven of the deceased were men and 37 were women. When it came to pre-existing conditions, 86.2% of the deceased had one or more, 8.5% were unknown and 5.3% had none. Here's a breakdown by age group.

- 31 to 40 years old: 4.
- 41 to 50 years old: 5.
- 51 to 60 years old: 14.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.
- 71 to 80 years old: 26.
- 81 to 90 years old: 18.
- 91 years old or over: 14.

Latino/Hispanic and Asian residents had the most cases based on the list of deaths by race. Here's a full breakdown by percentage in descending order:

- Latino/Hispanic: 31.9%.
- Asian: 30.9%.
- White: 25.5%.
- African American: 6.4%.
- Other: 5.3%.

There are 191 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected of having the disease, 86 of whom are in acute hospital beds and 72 of whom are in intensive care beds. Non-COVID-19 patients are occupying 771 acute beds and 134 ICU beds, leaving another 665 and 105, respectively, available as needed.

The county's hospital data provides cumulative totals for surge beds and ventilators in use, regardless of whether they have the coronavirus. Seventeen surge beds are occupied and 186 ventilators are in operation, with another 1,617 and 671, respectively, available as needed.

A total of 20,416 people have undergone testing for the coronavirus, of which 1,962 had positive results, 18,169 had negative results and 285 are pending results. The county's test positivity rate stands at 9.6% and the average turnaround for results is 1.9 days.

The county's data on cases at long-term care facilities didn't have new information on Wednesday.

San Mateo County has a total of 966 cases of the coronavirus as of Wednesday, 520 of whom are female, 445 of whom are male and one of unknown gender. The death toll remains at 39, which splits to 21 men and 18 women.

Of the total cases, 67 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 21 of whom are in intensive care. Another 30 patients without COVID-19 are in ICU, leaving 33 more beds available as

needed. County data shows 13 of 292 surge beds and 50 of 246 ventilators are in use, but don't state how many are being used by coronavirus patients.

New findings suggest 'iceberg' of COVID-19 cases

At a Wednesday press conference, Dr. Sara Cody addressed new reports of three COVID-19-related deaths in the county, which she called "iceberg tips ... to some iceberg of cases of unknown size."

The deaths occurred before March 9 — the date of the first coronavirus-associated death originally recorded in the county.

Based on new findings from the Santa Clara County Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office, health officials now know that the first case belonged to a 57-year-old woman, who died on Feb. 6 — over a month before the March 9 death and more than three weeks before the first recorded death in the U.S.

More than a week later, on Feb. 17, a 69-year-old man died of COVID-19. Then on March 6, a 70-year-old man died of the same disease. Cody said there were no records of significant travel history for any of the individuals, allowing health officials to "presume community transmission."

The delay in the early deaths was due to a lack of testing for COVID-19 at that time, according to senior health planner Evelyn Ho, who read a statement from the county coroner's office at the press conference.

Anytime an individual shows flu-like symptoms before death, it's common protocol for a medical examiner to perform studies for any viral illnesses, Ho said. The three individuals exhibited flu-like symptoms but tested negative for other viruses, raising suspicion from the medical examiner that the cause of death was related to COVID-19.

Ho said that the coroner's office then sent autopsy tissue samples to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for further examination and received confirmation on Tuesday that the three individuals died from the coronavirus.

The findings raised many concerns from online viewers during the Facebook Live conference, who left comments that asked what this means for the current stay-at-home order, which on March 31 was extended to May 3.

Cody did not comment on any changes to the order, but said the new findings suggest community transmission of the disease was much earlier than what county health officials originally detected.

"We anticipate that this pandemic is going to be going on for a very, very, very long time," she said. "We know that we do not have immunity in the population nor do we have a vaccine, so anytime that we let up on our mitigation measures, we are going to expect to see a spike in cases, hospitalizations and deaths — that is certain."

State to ramp up COVID-19 testing

After weeks of COVID-19 testing that has come in dribs and drabs, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced at a press briefing on Wednesday that the state is ramping up its testing for the coronavirus with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of swabs needed for the testing.

Newsom said the state has tested 465,325 people so far, but that sum is inadequate. The state can't consider lifting its stay-at-home order until it has completed much more testing and contact tracing (the act of following up with whoever has been in contact with a COVID-19 patient and testing those people).

Currently, the state has tested 16,000 patients per day, but Newsom said the goals are to reach 25,000 per day by the end of April and 60,000 per day over the next months. Ultimately, the state hopes to test 80,000 people each day using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, which tests for the presence of the virus in nasal/throat swabs.

The testing has been hampered by shortages of components necessary for taking and preserving the samples, the latest being the swabs. Newsom said he spoke with President Donald Trump at around 11 a.m. Wednesday about the need for components for the tests, and Trump has assured him the state will receive 100,000 swabs this week, 250,000 by next week and a "substantial increase" by the third week. Each swab represents another person who can be tested, he added.

The state is also looking at building "an army of tracers," perhaps as many as 10,000 people, who will help with tracing and tracking people who have the disease and the people with whom they have been in contact.

Newsom said the state is also working with Google and Apple to develop smartphone apps for symptom tracking that would aid in the contact tracing efforts.

The state is also opening 86 testing sites in rural areas and communities of color — so-called "testing deserts" — in order to have equal access to testing, Newsom said.

Newsom also announced plans to allow hospitals and health systems to resume delayed medical care, such as heart-valve replacements, angioplasty and tumor removals, and key preventive care services, such as colonoscopies — which were deferred as the state's health care delivery systems prepared for a surge of COVID-19 patients. The decision was based on progress the state has made toward preparing hospitals for a surge in COVID-19 patients. Read more [here](#).

Santa Clara County unveils data on cases by race

For the first time, Santa Clara County on Wednesday released information on the race and ethnicity of its nearly 2,000 cases, a majority of whom are Hispanic/Latinx.

The county has 1,962 confirmed COVID-19 cases, and 94 deaths. Here's a breakdown by race in descending order:

- Hispanic/Latinx: 35.9%.
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 22.5%.
- White/Non-Hispanic: 18.9%.
- Unknown: 16.7%.
- Other: 3.9%
- African American/Black: 2.0%.

The county noted in a press release Wednesday that the data could change given about 17% of its cases are currently of an unknown race as more data becomes available.

"The County recognizes that social determinants of health, including race/ethnicity, employment, and income may significantly affect the distribution of cases and the severity of cases across the community," according to the press release. "The County and its community partners are actively working together to support and provide needed resources to communities who may be more vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 through multiple strategies."

Stanford withdraws relief application

Stanford announced Wednesday that the university has decided to withdraw its application for federal relief funds to make money available for smaller colleges and universities. "Like all universities, Stanford is facing significant financial pressures during this time of unprecedented uncertainty," the university said in a statement. "However, we realize that this crisis represents an existential threat for many of the smaller colleges and universities that are such a critical part of the fabric of higher learning in the United States. We believe strongly in the importance of keeping these institutions viable in order to provide access to higher education for as many students as possible, and we had concluded that this should be a priority. "

Stanford assured students that it is "fully" committed to providing their financial aid despite the fact that half of the federal funds, from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund section of the CARES Act, were to be applied to student grants.

Addressing concerns about passing COVID-19 through food packaging

At a Wednesday press briefing at the Santa Clara County Emergency Operations Center, Michael Balliet, director of the county Environmental Health Department, assured residents that there has been no substantial evidence that the coronavirus can be transmitted through food packaging when ordering takeout or buying groceries.

It is "unlikely" that someone can transmit COVID-19 through food packaging, and there is "absolutely no evidence that that has occurred at this point" based on multiple reports from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, World Health Organization and the European Union, Balliet said.

The director said that the best precautionary measures residents can take is to always maintain a 6-foot distance, wear a mask and thoroughly wash their hands.

For more information on food safety, visit [sccgov.org](https://www.sccgov.org).

New education partnership

On Wednesday, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the Santa Clara County Office of Education announced a [new partnership](#) that will provide local school districts with pro-bono services to address immediate challenges and longer-term recovery efforts related to COVID-19, including distance learning; staff and families' social-emotional needs; food services; and emergency child care for essential workers.

Silicon Valley Community Foundation is supporting the effort with a \$1 million donation, which has also been matched by Genentech. The organizations are urging others to donate to support local public school students.

"The impact of COVID-19 on our students and school communities has been severe and widespread, and existing equity gaps are more pronounced than ever," said San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee. "My hope is that the San Mateo County community will join in this effort to hold up our students hardest hit by this global pandemic."

SamTrans schedule changes

SamTrans is modifying its schedule starting this Sunday to reduce service on 31 routes as a result of ridership rates dropping between 66-70% since the shelter-at-home order went into effect last month.

Passengers can expect most routes to run on Saturday schedules during the weekday. Route ECR, which runs between the Palo Alto Transit Center and Daly City BART, will operate buses every 20 minutes during the weekday and maintain its Saturday and Sunday schedules.

A full list of the changes can be found at samtrans.com.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 21

Santa Clara County is now home to the nation's first deaths from the coronavirus.

The county received confirmation Tuesday that two people who died Feb. 6 and 17 at their homes had the virus that causes COVID-19, earlier than deaths in Washington state [announced Feb. 29](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

On Tuesday night, Santa Clara County said it received confirmation from the CDC that three people who died in February and March had the coronavirus.

The county Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office conducted autopsies on two of the individuals who died at their respective homes on Feb. 6 and 17. Samples from the residents were submitted to the CDC. Another person who died in the county on March 6 was also found to have COVID-19.

The county had previously stated that a woman in her 60s who [died on March 9](#) was its first death connected to the coronavirus. She succumbed to the disease at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View where she was admitted for several weeks.

It's not clear whether the three deaths are captured in the county's total of 88 deaths or raises the total to 91. A request for clarification from the county was not immediately returned.

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Twenty-seven more people have been infected by the coronavirus in Santa Clara County, where the total number of COVID-19 cases rose to 1,946 on Tuesday, 175 of whom are hospitalized. Of the total, about 960 are female, 980 are male, seven are of unknown gender and one was identified as an "other" gender.

Five more people have died of COVID-19, bringing the county's total number of deaths to 88, which splits to 54 men and 34 women. A majority of the deceased had one or more underlying health conditions, according to the county's deaths dashboard.

The latest data also shows Palo Alto has 67 cases, which represents 0.1% of the city's population. Mountain View has 43 cases, which represents 0.05% of the city's population. San Jose has the most cases in the county — 1,288 — which represents 0.1% of the city's population.

There are 86 people with or suspected to have COVID-19 in acute hospital beds and 72 in ICU beds. That leaves 771 acute beds and 134 ICU beds occupied by other patients without the virus, with another 665 acute beds and 105 ICU beds available as needed.

Seventeen surge beds and 186 ventilators are being used throughout the county, but the hospital data doesn't divide those numbers between patients with or without the virus. Another 1,617 surge beds and 671 ventilators are available as needed.

Of the 19,928 people who have tested for COVID-19, 1,946 had positive results, 17,707 had negative results and 275 are pending results. The information indicates a 9.8% test positivity rate in the county, where results on average turn around in 1.9 days.

Nineteen more cases were identified at long-term care facilities, where the total of COVID-19 cases is at 357. Fifty of those individuals have been hospitalized and 31 have died.

San Mateo County has a total of 958 cases of the coronavirus as of Tuesday. When sorted by gender, 511 are female, 446 are male and one is unknown. Here's a breakdown of the cases by age group:

- 19 years old or under: 29.
- 20 to 29 years old: 139.
- 30 to 39 years old: 159.
- 40 to 49 years old: 169.
- 50 to 59 years old: 161.
- 60 to 69 years old: 144.
- 70 to 79 years old: 70.
- 80 to 89 years old: 59.
- 90 years old or over: 38.

The death toll rose to 39 on Tuesday, up from the total of 28 reported on Monday. Twenty-one were men and 18 were women. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 50 to 59 years old: 2.

- 60 to 69 years old: 6.
- 70 to 79 years old: 6.
- 80 to 89 years old: 11.
- 90 years old or over: 14.

Here's a breakdown of county's deaths by race in descending order:

- White: 24.
- Asian: 10.
- Hispanic: 3.
- Black 1.
- Unknown: 1.

Of the total cases, 72 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 22 of whom are in ICU. Another 32 ICU beds are occupied by non-COVID-19 patients and another 19 available as needed. County data doesn't differentiate between patients with or without the virus in surge beds or using ventilators, which is currently 14 and 47, respectively. The county has another 221 surge beds and 199 ventilators available.

A total of 9,092 people have tested for the virus in the county, 958 of whom had positive results, 8,002 of whom had negative results and 132 of whom are pending results. The test positivity rate is at 10.5% and results turn around in 1.9 days on average.

Santa Clara County waives penalty fees on property taxes

Late payment penalties on property taxes will be waived for the 2019-20 tax year in Santa Clara County.

The county Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved Supervisor Joe Simitian's proposal to waive the 10% penalty and \$20 fee attached to late property tax payments, according to a news release from Simitian's office. This applies to penalties and fees attached to the second installment of property taxes that were due on April 10.

The board also agreed to work on two other points of Simitian's proposal: publicizing different payment options, which includes partial payments of property taxes, and finding "relief measures" for taxpayers who have not paid the second installment of property taxes as of July 1. Measures could include, but are not limited to, waiving, reducing or refunding redeemed penalties and fees, the release states.

"I'm told that a proposal of this type ... sort is unprecedented, but then so is the crisis at hand," Simitian said in a statement. "If we've got a tool we can use to provide relief, we should use it."

New website connects Californians to volunteer opportunities during pandemic

During a Tuesday press conference, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the new website that connects the public to volunteer opportunities such as delivering donations to food banks, providing tutoring services, answering calls at 211 help centers and lending a hand at shelters, among other areas. Residents also can volunteer for skill-specific services such as accounting and translation.

Californians who want to volunteer during the COVID-19 pandemic can apply at californiansforall.ca.gov.

Newsom also responded to several inquiries about the extent of local counties' authority to begin slowly opening up businesses. Counties can start to open up businesses as long as they don't supersede the statewide stay-at-home orders, Newsom said in response to a question about Riverside County reopening golf courses.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 20

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases reached 1,922 on Monday with the addition of 41 new cases. Of the total, about 940 are female and 980 are male.

Since Friday, the county's total number of deaths has gone up by 10 to 83, which breaks down to 31 women and 52 men.

The county unveiled a new online chart that shows the number of new cases by specimen collection date rather than the date the positive test result was reported to the state's database. The new method "more closely represent(s) the timing of the spread of the virus in Santa Clara County," according to a press release. The dashboard shows that on March 30, 78 specimens collected resulted in positive results, the largest of any day since Feb. 17. The county site also notes that values for the most recent five days may likely go up as more results come in.

Monday's data also shows 189 with or suspected to have COVID-19 are hospitalized, 107 of whom are in acute hospital beds and 82 of whom are in intensive care. Another 19 surge beds and 186 ventilators are in use, though county data doesn't differentiate between COVID-19 patients and others hospitalized for other reasons.

The latest data also shows Palo Alto has 66 cases, which represents 0.1% of the city's population. Mountain View has 43 cases, which represents 0.05% of the city's population. San Jose has the most cases in the county — 1,227 — which represents 0.1% of the city's population.

The county has recorded 19,463 people tested for the virus, 1,922 of whom received positive results, 17,291 of whom received negative results and 250 of whom are pending results. The numbers indicate a 9.9% positivity rate. Results turnaround on an average of 1.9 days.

Of the 1,922 cases, 338 originated in long-term care facilities. Forty-eight are hospitalized and 26 have died.

San Mateo County has a total of 935 cases of the coronavirus, 504 of which are female and 431 of which are male as of Monday. The death toll remains at 28, which breaks down to 17 men and 11 women.

Of the total cases, 59 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 18 of whom are in intensive care. Twenty-five surge beds and 49 ventilators are also in use, though the county's data doesn't differentiate between COVID-19 patients and others hospitalized for other reasons.

70K laptops and tablets to close 'digital divide' for low-income students

Laptops, tablets and Wi-Fi hot spots will be distributed throughout California in an effort to close the digital gap between low-income students and online distance-learning methods that schools have adopted since local and state stay-at-home orders went into effect in March.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and Jennifer Siebel Newsom, his wife and the state's first partner, announced at a Monday press conference that tech companies are giving over 70,000 laptops and tablets to the effort. The donors include Google, Microsoft, Apple and T-Mobile.

The state Public Utilities Commission also will invest \$25 million to increase Wi-Fi hot spots and \$5 million for electronic devices to help make distance learning more accessible.

The initiative will build on Google's commitment to provide 100,000 free Wi-Fi hot spots and 4,000 Chromebooks, which Newsom previously announced on April 1.

In addition, Newsom said seven buses will be converted into mobile Wi-Fi hot spots. If the project proves successful, the initiative will be rolled out on a larger scale. According to a separate Monday press statement from the governor's office, the California State Transportation Agency will partner with the city of Sacramento to deploy the program. The buses will be able to provide connectivity within at least a 500-foot radius from where they will be parked for four to eight hours.

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey as well as venture capitalist John Doerr and his wife Ann's private family foundation will each donate \$1 million to help purchase more electronic devices, according to the news release.

The governor also plans to expand on the six indicators he unveiled on April 14 that would determine whether the state is prepared to modify its stay-at-home order. Further details will be unveiled this Wednesday, Newsom said.

Testing for COVID-19 is on Newsom's radar. By the end of this month, Newsom said he hopes to have the capacity to conduct 25,000 tests per day, along with a significant increase "in multiples" by May. He did not provide details for how the state would achieve that goal.

County updates briefings schedule, reminds residents to maintain social distance

Santa Clara County Public Health Department will reduce its press briefings to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only starting this week. The briefings will be aired live at 10 a.m. on the department's [Facebook page](#).

County Public Information Officer Hilary Armstrong said during Monday's briefing that the move is to focus on reports of critical developments within the Emergency Operations Center.

Armstrong also addressed why the number of new COVID-19 cases in the county had not been updated on the Public Health Department's online dashboards over the weekend. She attributed the reporting delay to a "data update in the state's Reportable Disease Information Exchange," an electronic disease reporting and surveillance system. She said the online dashboards will continue to be updated today.

County officials also reminded residents to continue social distancing, noting that they've personally seen too many cars on U.S. Highway 101.

"Unless a lot more people became essential workers, you all are bending the rules a little bit," said Marianna Moles, public information officer for Santa Clara County.

To socially distance means to refrain from seeing anyone outside of your household, said Moles, unless it's for essential business such as going grocery shopping, but only when food supply is low. Residents should not be visiting friends or families outside of their household.

Call center taking questions submitted online

Palo Alto's Community Support Call Center is now accepting questions submitted online on topics related to the COVID-19 crisis, such as the shelter-at-home order, city services and local resources, among other

topics. The call center will continue to stay open on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 650-272-3181. Anyone who is experiencing a life-threatening emergency is asked to call 911.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 18-19

The Peninsula collectively has a total of 2,790 cases of the coronavirus, according to the latest data available on Sunday.

In Santa Clara County, the total of COVID-19 cases climbed to 1,870 on Friday with the announcement of 37 new cases. The total number of deaths has jumped by four to 73, 47 men and 26 women. The county did not release numbers on the total cases and deaths over the weekend due to a data update in the Reportable Disease Information Exchange, a resource managed by the state Department of Public Health, which prevented the county from obtaining updated information.

As of Sunday, there were 200 people hospitalized with the coronavirus in Santa Clara County, 107 of whom are in acute beds and 82 of whom are in ICU.

San Mateo County's total of cases reached 920 on Sunday, 496 of whom are female and 424 of whom are male as of Friday. The death toll remains at 28.

Of the total cases, 61 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, with 16 of those patients in intensive care.

Cases at skilled nursing facilities

As of Friday, 13 skilled nursing facilities in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties have one or more health care workers or patients who have tested positive for COVID-19, according to new data published Saturday by the California Department of Public Health.

The list names 11 skilled nursing facilities in Santa Clara County, including Mountain View Healthcare Center and Los Altos Sub-Acute and Rehabilitation Center. San Mateo County reported two facilities: The Sequoias Portola Valley retirement community and Burlingame Long-Term Care nursing home.

The list identifies a total of 258 skilled nursing facilities throughout the state that have reported one or more positive COVID-19 cases from a staff or patient. This includes long-term care facilities, nursing homes, retirement communities and rehabilitation centers for seniors. There are 1,224 skilled nursing facilities in California, according to the state Department of Public Health.

Centers with fewer than 11 COVID-19 cases do not provide a specific number of infected individuals or a timeline of when these cases were identified.

Mountain View Healthcare Center reported fewer than 11 health care workers and patients with the coronavirus, while the Los Altos Sub-Acute and Rehabilitation Center showed fewer than 11 cases only within its staff members. No centers in Palo Alto were identified.

Most of the skilled nursing facilities in Santa Clara County with COVID-19 cases were based in San Jose, where the highest number of cases came from the Canyon Springs Post-Acute nursing home with 25 health care workers and 39 patients who have tested positive.

In the two San Mateo County facilities, Burlingame Long-Term Care nursing home had fewer than 11 health care workers and patients with COVID-19, while The Sequoias Portola Valley retirement center only reported fewer than 11 cases within its staff.

A total of 1,290 health care workers and 1,740 patients in skilled nursing facilities throughout the state have tested positive for COVID-19.

View the complete list at cdph.ca.gov.

California finds 16K hotel rooms for homeless

California has acquired nearly 16,000 hotel rooms as part of a statewide initiative to shelter vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness.

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the new milestone on Saturday outside of a Motel 6 in Santa Clara County. According to the governor, it's set to be one of 47 Motel 6 buildings throughout 19 counties in the state that was provided by the budget motel chain to aid the initiative called, "Project Roomkey."

With Motel 6's contribution, it will provide 5,025 rooms on top of the additional 10,974 rooms the state separately acquired, surpassing the project's initial goal of 15,000 rooms in a matter of weeks. Newsom said 4,211 vulnerable homeless individuals have now been placed in one of the 10,974 rooms the state has locked in.

The initiative was launched on April 3 with the goal of prioritizing sheltering homeless individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19, were exposed to the coronavirus or are high-risk individuals such as seniors who are age 65 years or older or already have underlying health conditions.

Funding for the new shelters comes from a mix of federal and state government support as well as through public and private partnerships. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had already agreed to reimburse the state 75% of the costs to purchase the rooms and provide staffing. California will provide \$650 million in emergency grants.

Newsom also said that the occupants will be fed three meals a day through partnerships with local restaurants and World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit founded by celebrity chef José Andrés that provides meals during natural disasters.

In addition, an extended goal of "Project Roomkey" is to segue into more long-term solutions for the homelessness crisis, which Newsom acknowledged on Saturday was an issue long before the COVID-19 pandemic and the most prevalent in the state compared to the rest of the country.

Newsom said that he hopes to purchase these rooms in the future to create permanent sheltering options for the homeless. One of the strategies he outlined at an April 3 press briefing is to seek contracts with properties that have month-to-month occupancy leases and allow right of first refusal — the ability to enter into a transaction before any other party can.

With Motel 6, Newsom stated that he has created a template with "language" that sets the state up with an opportunity to purchase some of the 47 sites provided by the chain, but didn't elaborate on the idea.

Since the outset, Santa Clara County has also been cooperative with the project, taking its own initiative as well to house the homeless. On Friday, the county announced that it successfully placed all homeless individuals known to have tested positive for COVID-19 in temporary housing.

Newsom took the time to praise the county's efforts by bringing up Santa Clara County Board of Supervisor President Cindy Chavez and San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo to provide a few comments at Saturday's press briefing.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 17

Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases climbed to 1,870 on Friday with the announcement of 37 new cases. The cases are almost evenly distributed by gender, with about 950 being male, 910 being female, 10 of unknown gender and 1 identified as "other" gender.

The total number of deaths has jumped by four to 73, 47 men and 26 women.

The latest data also shows no change to Palo Alto's total, which stands at 63 and represents 0.09% of the city's population. Two more cases in Mountain View have brought the city's total of cases to 42, which represents 0.05% of the city's population. Twenty more cases have brought San Jose's total to 1,232, the highest of any city in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

There are 187 people hospitalized with the coronavirus in Santa Clara County, 110 of whom are in acute beds and 71 of whom are in ICU. Patients hospitalized for other reasons make up 847 acute beds and 139 ICU beds in the county. That leaves 723 acute beds and 92 ICU beds unoccupied.

Nineteen surge beds and 194 ventilators are being used throughout the county, leaving 1,1615 and 663, respectively, available as needed. Data provided by the state Department of Public Health doesn't identify which ones are being used by COVID-19 patients and which ones are being used by patients hospitalized for other reasons.

Of the total 17,774 people tested for the virus, 1,870 reported positive results, 15,660 reported negative results and 244 are pending results. The numbers indicate a 10.5% test positivity rate. Results on average turn around in two days.

Thirteen more cases were recorded at long-term care facilities across the county. Of the 322 cases, 44 are hospitalized and 22 have resulted in death.

The county announced on Friday that it has housed homeless people who have or are suspected of having the coronavirus. They have been placed in hotel rooms, noncongregate temporary housing and added shelters that have enough physical distance between the individuals. There are 35 homeless people who are confirmed with the virus.

Another 236 homeless people have been placed in hotel/motel rooms and 277 other homeless individuals are in shelters that have enacted physical distancing measures.

As of Thursday, the county has 453 hotel/motel rooms in San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Morgan Hill and Gilroy, according to a press release. County officials are searching for more temporary housing sites to provide shelter for the homeless.

New recommendations on masks

[On Friday](#), both counties scaled up their calls for the public to wear face masks. In San Mateo County, a new order that requires residents and essential employees to wear face coverings when out in the public will be enforced starting this Wednesday at 8 a.m. Santa Clara County, which was previously "recommending" the public wear masks, is now "strongly urging" face coverings.

This is a "critical recommendation," Dr. Sara Cody said in a [YouTube video](#) published Friday evening. The new guidance comes as more research emerges on COVID-19.

Santa Clara County addresses evictions, housing assistance

To address housing inequalities being exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Santa Clara County officials joined Jennifer Loving, CEO of Destination: Home, a San Jose-based nonprofit homelessness prevention agency, at a Friday press conference [streamed live](#) to review the county's current eviction moratorium. The

Board of Supervisors [approved the temporary ban](#) on March 24 to protect tenants from being evicted during the coronavirus crisis.

Deputy County Counsel Christopher Cheleden said the order applies to all cities in the county, even those that have not established their own eviction moratoriums.

If landlords want to end a lease, Cheleden said the ordinance requires they give tenants notice of why they're being evicted, present their rights under the current ordinance and provide them possible sources for rent relief and assistance.

Cheleden also said that the moratorium could be extended by the county Board of Supervisors beyond its original May 31 expiration date, though he did not specify when and for how long.

For more information on the ordinance, visit sccgov.org.

Destination: Home and Sacred Heart Community Service are also in the process of distributing \$11 million to about 4,500 people who have applied for the agencies' COVID-19 relief fund, Loving said. Last month, the money was [quickly exhausted](#) to support those heavily impacted by the crisis. She assured more financial assistance will be on the way.

Low-income residents impacted by COVID-19 can apply for financial assistance at sacredheartcs.org.

Testing San Mateo County's first responders

For first responders and health care workers in San Mateo County whose daily work puts them at high risk of being exposed to people who have COVID-19, it just got easier to get tested for the coronavirus.

These workers – including health care workers, paramedics, firefighters, police officers, as well as those who work in clinics, senior care facilities and nursing homes – can now be tested for the coronavirus for free within 24 hours of requesting a test, according to San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy.

The drive-thru testing center is located at the San Mateo County Event Center in San Mateo and is operated by Verily Life Sciences, an Alphabet company.

Verily's screening process had previously set strict standards for who could access tests, and according to Callagy, the number of tests administered has been far below the capacity of the testing center in recent days.

Callagy said that as more tests become available, the county is hoping to lower the standards at which tests are administered to the general public so that they can be more widely available.

Visit the Project Baseline [screening survey](#) see if you qualify for a test.

Newsom creates new state economic recovery task force

A new bipartisan task force made up of industry leaders and both former and current government officials was announced on Friday. The group will focus on recovering from what Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a "pandemic-induced recession."

The members include Walt Disney Executive Chairman Bob Iger, Apple CEO Tim Cook, former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen and former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The advisory committee will be co-chaired by Newsom's Chief of Staff Ann O'Leary as well as billionaire and former 2020 Democratic presidential candidate Tom Steyer, who provided a few comments at Friday's press briefing. Newsom said the panel consists of 80 members and will be divided into subcommittees representing different sectors of the economy such as entertainment and retail.

Since March 12, around 3.1 million state residents have filed for unemployment insurance, effectively ending a 10-year streak in unprecedented job growth, according to Newsom.

"We were enjoying the lowest unemployment in modern American history," Newsom said, citing 3.4 million jobs created since the 2008 Great Recession. "It ended officially with our March numbers."

On Friday, the state also experienced the worst death toll since the beginning of the pandemic, with 95 lives lost due to the coronavirus.

No specific plans for the economic recovery task force were detailed, but Newsom said that its actions will be determined by what's safest for the public's health and guided by science and facts.

Insurers ordered to refund two months of premiums

California Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara has ordered insurance companies to return premiums to consumers and businesses during the COVID-19 emergency.

Lara's April 13 order covers premiums paid for at least March and April and includes the month of May if shelter-at-home restrictions continue.

At least six different areas of insurance fall under the order: private passenger automobile, commercial automobile, workers' compensation, commercial multi-peril, commercial liability, medical malpractice and other insurance products where the risk of loss has fallen substantially as a result of the pandemic.

Californians are driving fewer miles and many businesses are closed due to the health emergency, so premiums no longer reflect present-day risks of accident or loss, Lara said in a statement.

The commissioner's [bulletin](#) requires insurance companies to provide a premium credit, reduction, return of premium or other appropriate premium adjustment as soon as possible, and no later than August. Lara has already requested at least a 60-day grace period for policyholders to pay their premiums so that insurance policies are not canceled for nonpayment of premium during the crisis. The two actions will give consumers and businesses substantial financial relief, he said.

The University of California, Davis' [Special Report on the Impact of COVID-19 on California Traffic Accidents](#) found that there are fewer accidents, injuries and fatalities on public highways and roads due to reduced driving from the shelter-in-place order. Falling payroll and receipts due to closure orders have also dramatically reduced risk of a liability loss for businesses.

Several auto insurance companies recently announced voluntary premium refunds to drivers, he noted. The state will also monitor insurance companies' compliance with California's consumer protection laws so that refunds are not discriminatory or inadequate.

The insurance companies must report all premium refunds they've issued or expect to issue within 60 days to the Department of Insurance.

Telephone town hall

Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian has announced plans to host a telephone town hall on the coronavirus on April 26. He will be joined by County Executive Jeff Smith, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center CEO Paul Lorenz and Greta Hansen, the county's chief assistant county counsel.

Those interested in joining the meeting, scheduled at 11 a.m., can register [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 16

On Thursday, Santa Clara County reported 40 new cases of the coronavirus, raising its total to 1,833, about 930 of whom are male, 890 of whom are female 8 of whom are of unknown gender and one identified as "other" gender.

The latest data also shows one more case was added to Palo Alto's total, which is now at 63 and represents 0.09% of the city's population. Three more cases in Mountain View have brought the city's total of cases to 40, which represents 0.05% of the city's population. At 1,202, San Jose has the most cases in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

Four more people who died of the virus has brought the city's total number of deaths to 69, which splits to 45 men and 24 women.

Out of 17,061 tests performed in the county, 1,833 returned positive results, 15,008 returned negative results and 220 are pending results. The test positivity rate is at 10.7% and the average turnaround time for results is two days.

Out of the 1,833 cases, 309 originated from long-term care facilities, nine of which are new. Forty-two people at the facilities have been hospitalized for COVID-19 and 17 have died from the disease.

San Mateo County has a total of 797 people with the coronavirus, 434 of whom are female and 363 of whom are male as of Thursday. The death toll remains at 28.

Of the total cases, 71 with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, with 18 of those patients in intensive care. County hospitals have placed another 32 patients without the virus in ICU, leaving 27 ICU beds unoccupied. Fifteen of the county's 262 surge beds and 44 of its 247 ventilators are in use, though county data doesn't differentiate which ones are for COVID-19 patients and patients hospitalized for other reasons.

Food workers to receive paid sick leave during coronavirus crisis

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a statewide executive order on Thursday that will provide essential food industry employees with two weeks of paid sick leave if they test positive for COVID-19 or were forced to quarantine because they were exposed to the virus. It applies to California workers of large employers.

Newsom did not outline every type of employee in the supplemental order, but defined it broadly as those who work in the food sector, including farm workers, fast food chain employees, delivery people and grocery store staff.

The order also provides health and safety standards that allow workers at food facilities to wash their hands every 30 minutes or as needed to increase proper sanitation measures.

In addition, Newsom did not provide further comment on the nationwide guidelines for "phased reopening" of the country's economy, which President Donald Trump will be releasing on Thursday night at 6 p.m. EDT. The governor only commented that the booklet of guidelines is being sent out in "real time" for state officials to review soon.

Newsom did not know exact details in terms of the content of the booklet. Based on a conference call with state governors and members of the White House administration, including President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, "it certainly is in line with what we were hoping to hear," he said.

Resources for people facing domestic violence

Though staying at home is a combatant against the spread of the coronavirus, it can also leave people vulnerable to domestic violence.

Carla Collins, manager of Santa Clara County's Office of Gender-Based Violence Prevention, said at a Thursday press briefing that the global pandemic has added stresses such as financial burdens that can often make home an unsafe place.

"All of this can negatively impact survivors and actually create circumstances where safety is further compromised," Collins said.

Esther Peralez-Dieckmann, executive director of Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence has seen those effects. Without a private space such as the home or the office, calls to hotline centers have decreased, a signal that domestic violence survivors are having a difficult time in reaching out.

"When our clients have been able to reach us in the past, it's usually at a time where they have some privacy, during the day with people at work," she said. "But right now, during the shelter-at-place order, the victims are often housed with the perpetrator, so it's very difficult."

Resources are available for survivors, including hotline centers and online chat rooms that connect people one-on-one with domestic violence advocates — all of which are free and confidential.

Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence's hotline can be reached at 408-279-2962.

YWCA Silicon Valley, a San Jose-based nonprofit organization that provides a broad range of support services from housing assistance to therapy, has a 24-hour hotline that can be reached at 1-800-572-2782.

Safe Chat Silicon Valley can connect individuals one-on-one with an advocate in online chatrooms at safechatsv.org.

For more information and resources, visit sccgov.org.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 15

On Wednesday, Santa Clara County reported a total of 1,793 cases of the coronavirus, 71 of which are new. The virus has infected about 915 males, 869 females, eight people of unknown gender and one person identified as an "other" gender. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 3.4%.
- 21 to 30 years old: 11.8%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 17%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 17%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 18.1%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.2%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 9.9%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 5.6%.
- 91 years old or over: 3.3%.
- Unknown: 0.8%.

The latest data also shows no change in Palo Alto's total cases, which remains at 62 since Monday and represents 0.09% of the city's population. Three more cases in Mountain View have brought the city's total of cases to 37, which represents 0.04% of the city's population. At 1,182, San Jose has the most cases in the county. Its total represents 0.1% of the city's population.

Since Monday, five more people have died from the disease, bringing the county's death total to 65, which splits to 44 men and 21 women. When it came to pre-existing conditions, 84.6% of the deceased had one or more, 7.7% had none and 7.7% were unknown. Here's a breakdown by age group.

- 31 to 40 years old: 4.6%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 6.2%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 13.8%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.8%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 29.2%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 24.6%.
- 91 years old or over: 7.7%.

Latino/Hispanic residents topped the list of deaths by race. Here's a full breakdown by percentage in descending order:

- Latino/Hispanic: 35.4%.
- White: 30.8%.
- Asian: 23.1%.
- African American: 6.2%.
- Other: 4.6%.

Out of 16,585 people who have tested for COVID-19, 1,793 received positive results, 14,591 received negative results and 201 were pending results. The county's test positivity rate stands at 10.8% and the average turnaround time for results is 2.1 days.

There are 300 COVID-19 cases at the county's long-term care facilities, 48 of which are new. Of the 300 cases, 40 patients are hospitalized and 15 have died. Forty-five more cases are reported from the county's 16 skilled nursing facilities, which account for 275 of the total, 35 of whom are hospitalized and 13 of which have died.

One independent living facility has recorded 14 cases, one of which has been hospitalized and two of which have died. One board-and-care facility reported a single case that has resulted in hospitalization.

Six assisted living facilities have reported 10 cases, three of which have led to hospital stays.

A total of 188 people with or suspected to have COVID-19 are hospitalized, 113 of whom are in acute hospital beds and 71 of whom are in ICU. Another 862 acute hospital beds are being used by patients without the virus and 707 more acute beds are available as needed. The county has 124 other ICU beds filled with other hospital patients and 104 more are unoccupied.

Nineteen of the county's 1,529 surge beds and 186 of the county's 835 ventilators are being utilized. The county data doesn't differentiate between COVID-19 cases and other hospital patients.

As of Wednesday, San Mateo County reported a total of 767 people with the coronavirus, 415 of which are female and 352 are male. Seven people who have died of the disease raised the death toll to 28, 17 of whom were men and 11 of whom were women.

The county is now announcing deaths by race. Here's a breakdown in descending order:

- White: 13.
- Asian: 10.
- Hispanic: 3.
- Black 1.
- Unknown: 1.

Of the 67 people hospitalized with COVID-19 or suspected to have the disease, 23 have been placed in ICU. Another 33 patients without the virus are also ICU, leaving 25 ICU beds available as needed.

Seventeen of 252 surge beds and 50 of 247 ventilators are in use in the county, but the latest data doesn't differentiate which ones are being used by patients with or without the virus.

Aid coming for undocumented workers, independent contractors

California will provide \$125 million to undocumented workers — a population that accounts for 10% of the state's workforce and that will not benefit from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

Along with \$75 million in state funds, \$50 million will be provided through philanthropic efforts spearheaded by the Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, an organization based in Sebastopol, Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a Tuesday press briefing.

The state will disperse the money as grants to community-based organizations, which will then be responsible for delivering the aid. Households can receive up to \$1,000, while individual workers can receive \$500.

"I'm not here to suggest that \$125 million is enough," Newsom said. "But I am here to suggest that it's a good start."

In addition, self-employed and independent contractors in California will be able to apply for the federal government's Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program starting April 28.

State Labor Secretary Julie Su said that the program is currently being set up in a way to ensure that people will receive checks within 24 to 48 hours of filing an application. She also said that the payments will be retroactive. Workers can receive money for unemployment that dates as far back as the first week of February if they can show that they were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic at that time.

Newsom also signed an executive order Wednesday to extend hours of the state Employment Development Department's call center.

With more than 2.7 million workers applying for unemployment insurance just in the past month, according to Newsom, the center will now operate everyday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., to address the long queue of callers seeking unemployment resources. The department increased its staff to 1,340 employees to answer more calls.

County health official clarifies her authority on stay-at-home orders

Days after President Donald Trump said his position allows for "total authority" to lift stay-at-home orders across the country during a Monday White House press briefing, Santa Clara County Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody clarified what the extent of her power is to enact or lift those orders in the county.

"In California, the local county public health officer has the authority and the power to make decisions," Cody said at a Wednesday briefing. "The orders that we've had in Santa Clara County ... those are health officer orders and they are to protect the public health."

The health officer then restated her position on easing sheltering orders that she had initially announced on Tuesday: It is too early to lift restrictions. Though the county has seen a slowdown in the coronavirus' spread, there continues to be an increase of cases and hospitalizations, she said.

"We're not out of the woods yet," Cody re-emphasized.

San Mateo County offering free rides to testing center

San Mateo County is providing free rides to residents who meet the requirements for COVID-19 testing but don't have the means to reach the Verily testing site at the San Mateo County Event Center

The county has reconfigured cars to make sure patients and drivers don't have physical contact.

Residents can visit projectbaseline.com to determine if they're eligible for a test and schedule an appointment if needed. Those in need of a ride can make arrangements by calling the testing site at 650-779-9375 on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 14

Santa Clara County launched a new dashboard that provides more insight into COVID-19 cases at long-term care facilities on Tuesday. There are 252 cases, 40 of which are hospitalized and 13 of which have resulted in death, according to the data provided by the California Reportable Disease Information Exchange.

"We are paying special attention to long-term care facilities because their clients are at higher risk for more severe disease from COVID-19," county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody said in a statement. "We are acutely aware of this and have been actively investigating and responding to needs in LTCFs to protect our most vulnerable residents."

A bulk of the people were spread out across 16 skilled nursing facilities, which accounted for 230 of the total, 35 of whom are hospitalized and 11 of whom have died.

An independent living facility in the county recorded 11 individuals with the virus, one of whom is in the hospital and two of whom have died. One case was recorded at a board-and-care facility.

The county is aware of 10 cases from six assisted living facilities, three of which have led to hospital stays.

The county has a dedicated, specialized team that looks into coronavirus cases and possible outbreaks at long-term care facilities, according to a county press release. The Public Health Department launches an investigation into any facility that may be seeing an outbreak or is at risk of transmitting the virus that causes COVID-19.

The agency's next step could be more symptom screening and testing, which may incorporate people who were exposed to the virus and are asymptomatic; residents and staff.

In the event when the county confirms a positive case at a facility, department staff works to identify all the people the infected person crossed paths with. The process includes looking at the duration, frequency and proximity of the contact.

Nearly 200 people are hospitalized with COVID-19 in Santa Clara County as of Tuesday. Of the total 195 patients, 115 are in acute hospital beds and 76 are in intensive care, with another 802 and 134, respectively, in use by patients without the disease. Another 747 acute and 87 ICU beds are unoccupied.

In addition, 18 surge beds and 177 ventilators are in use across the county, with another 1,511 and 616, respectively, available as needed. The data provided by the state Department of Public Health doesn't list how many surge beds and ventilators are being used by coronavirus patients.

The county did not release new data on the number of cases, deaths and testing as of Tuesday evening due to technical issues with the California Reportable Disease Information Exchange, which is operated by the state Department of Public Health.

San Mateo County has reported a total of 747 cases of the coronavirus cases as of Tuesday, according to the county's data dashboard. Of the total cases, 403 are female and 344 are male. Here's a breakdown by

age group:

- 20 years old or under: 27.
- 21 to 30 years old: 101.
- 31 to 40 years old: 139.
- 41 to 50 years old: 129.
- 51 to 60 years old: 117.
- 61 to 70 years old: 107.
- 71 to 80 years old: 67.
- 81 to 90 years old: 37.
- 91 years old or over: 23.

The death toll has stayed at 21 since April 6. Ten of the deceased were female and 11 were male. It's unclear whether they had pre-existing conditions. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 51 to 60 years old: 2.
- 61 to 70 years old: 2.
- 71 to 80 years old: 4.
- 81 to 90 years old: 7.
- 91 years old or over: 6.

The latest hospitalization data shows 76 people with the virus or suspected to have the disease are hospitalized, 22 of whom are in ICU. Another 29 hospital patients without the virus are also in ICU, leaving 26 beds available.

Seventeen of the county's total 302 surge beds are in use and 50 of the county's 247 ventilators are being utilized. The county data provided by the state Department of Public Health doesn't distinguish how many ventilators and surge beds are being used by coronavirus patients and others hospitalized for different reasons.

The county's latest data also shows 7,163 people have tested for COVID-19 as of Tuesday.

What it would take to reopen Santa Clara County

As talks of easing stay-at-home restrictions are collectively discussed by state governors across the country, Santa Clara County Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody briefly addressed a few factors that need to be considered to move from broad shelter-in-place orders to more "focused measures."

At a Tuesday press conference, Cody said the county would need to ensure stable hospital and testing capacity and, as COVID-19 case numbers settle down, the ability to track the spread of the virus.

"We can't do it the way that we did it at the beginning of the outbreak — our case numbers are too high," Cody said. "But once we begin to settle those case numbers down, then we can transition into a more focused effort."

Cody said there's reason for "cautious optimism" given how the number of COVID-19 cases are increasing at a stable pace with 50-100 confirmed cases per day. She emphasized multiple times that the county is "not out of the woods."

"We're still probably at the beginning of what is going to be a very long marathon here in the county, across the region and indeed across the country," she said.

When will California relax its stay-at-home order? Ask Newsom in two weeks

Gov. Gavin Newsom unveiled a sweeping outline of California's approach to loosening its stay-at-home order during a press briefing on Tuesday, but didn't provide a concrete timeline for when it will all happen.

Returning to some semblance of normalcy requires a consistent decrease in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, as well as a strong statewide infrastructure, especially one that can readily take on a sudden surge of infection when stay-at-home measures are relaxed, Newsom said.

If those needs are met within the next two weeks, then he can provide a more specific timeline for easing the restrictions currently in place, Newsom said.

The six indicators that will determine whether the state is prepared to modify its measures include:

- Establishing a fortified hospital and alternative health care system with sufficient staffing, personal protective equipment and other critical resources to deal with any potential surge.
- Comprehensive monitoring capabilities, such as testing and contact tracing.

- Securing at-risk individuals such as seniors and the homeless population with options for health care and isolation.
- A continued effort to develop "therapeutics" or vaccines through public, private and academic partners.
- New guidelines for businesses, schools and other public spaces that support physical distancing.
- The ability to reinstate any social distancing measures if necessary.

"There's no light switch here," Newsom said. "I would argue it's more like a dimmer — this toggling, back and forth, from more restrictive to less restrictive measures."

Newsom and state Health Officer Dr. Sonia Angell didn't delve into specific numbers or goal posts that would determine when those six indicators are satisfied. Angell emphasized that the framework is not a list of indicators that "we check and we move on," but rather something that will continue to be assessed over time.

When stay-at-home orders are slowly lifted, Angell noted that it will not be a return to normal. Restaurants, for example, may have fewer tables and face coverings will be the new norm.

"This is not about going back to the way things were before," she said. "It's about going forward in ways that are healthy for all of us. But it won't look the same."

New hotlines connect unemployed workers with resources

Santa Clara County's Labor Standards Enforcement Office introduced two hotlines that would help employees, who have been laid off, furloughed or had their hours drastically reduced due to the pandemic, navigate critical resources such as unemployment insurance and legal aid.

In partnership with the Fair Workplace Collaborative, the office launched the [COVID-19 Assistance Navigation hotline](#) to directly connect workers affected by the health crisis to various social safety-net programs.

The free service is currently available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. Interested callers can leave a voicemail at 408-809-2124 and expect a response within 24 hours.

The Fair Workplace Collaborative also has a free legal advice hotline staffed by employment law attorneys who can help workers with concerns such as discrimination, wage theft, paid family leave and unemployment benefits.

The hotline can be reached at 866-879-7725 and is available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Tagalog.

For more information on other resources and benefits available to county residents, visit sccfairworkplace.org.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 13

On Monday, Santa Clara County reported a total of 1,666 cases of the coronavirus, 45 of which are new. The latest data also shows one more case in Palo Alto, which now has 62, which represents 0.09% of the city's population. There was no change in Mountain View's total, which stands at 34 and is equal to 0.04% of the city's population. Six more people have died from the disease, raising the county's total number of deaths to 60.

Of the total 1,666 people who tested positive, 197 are in the hospital. The county has 119 COVID-19 patients in acute hospital beds, another 827 being used by other hospital patients and 761 more available. Seventy-two patients are in intensive care and 136 non-COVID-19 patients are also in ICU, leaving 99 ICU beds unoccupied.

Nineteen surge beds and 184 ventilators are in use, with another 1,150 and 609, respectively, on hand as needed. The county data doesn't differentiate between ones being used by coronavirus patients and other hospital patients.

Of the 14,956 people tested for COVID-19, 1,666 had positive results, 13,670 had negative results and 193 are pending results. The county has a test positivity rate of 10.7% and results turn around in 2.1 days on average.

A 13th Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office employee has tested positive for the virus, the agency announced Monday. The individual, who works for the custody bureau, is under quarantine at their home.

A total of 73 employees in the office have tested for the virus as of Monday, 17 of whom are under quarantine or isolation. Six employees have recovered and been cleared for duty. Fifty-one county inmates have also undergone testing, of which two received positive results.

The Sheriff's Office coronavirus tracking data can be found [here](#).

Santa Clara County's public information office hopes to establish two-way communication between the county and residents during the health crisis through a partnership with United Way's 211 call center, David Flamm, deputy director of the county's Office of Emergency Management said during a briefing Monday morning.

For more information about the county health orders and the resources that are available, call 211. For those with impaired hearing, text "coronavirus" to 211.

San Mateo County surpasses 700 cases

On Monday, San Mateo County reported a total of 721 coronavirus cases. The death toll is at 21; no deaths have been reported over the past week.

A total of 87 patients have been hospitalized with the virus as of Monday, 22 of whom are in intensive care. Another 26 ICU beds are occupied by people without the virus, leaving another 37 beds available as needed.

The county on Monday provided totals for how many surge beds and ventilators are in use, 102 and 56, respectively, though the numbers don't differentiate which ones are for COVID-19 patients and which ones are for other hospital patients.

On Monday, the county Sheriff's Office said its two employees who tested positive for the virus, as announced over the weekend, worked in correctional centers and not in inmate housing areas. No inmates, correctional officers or sheriff's deputies were reported to have the virus.

Free meals for high schoolers

The Sequoia Union High School District's food services department is offering breakfast and lunch meals to all district students for the rest of the 2019-20 school year, according to an email sent on Monday to district families.

Parents or students can pick up multiple breakfasts and lunches at once on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Pick up locations are: SUHSD central kitchen at [300 James Ave. in Redwood City](#), East Palo Alto Academy at [1050 Myrtle St. in East Palo Alto](#) and Menlo-Atherton High at [555 Middlefield Road in Atherton](#).

Social distancing and safe food handling procedures must be observed, according to the email.

For more information, go [here](#).

California steps up for foster care children

The state has invested \$42 million toward additional resources for foster care children, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Monday.

At his daily press briefing, Newsom addressed how in-home visits from social workers who check on children in the foster care system are low due to stay-at-home orders and school closures, which have removed another major point of contact for critical resources.

To ramp up support for families in the welfare and foster care system, \$42 million will go toward supporting social workers and family resource centers that provide necessities, and a \$200 per month program for families, among other services. A majority of the funding is coming directly from the state.

Newsom also said he hopes to extend the emancipation process for foster care children, the time period when children are released from foster care when they turn 18 years old.

For more information, visit cdss.ca.gov.

Kimberley Johnson, director of the state's Department of Social Services partially outlined how the money will be used: \$27.8 million will support the \$200 per month program, \$6.8 million will provide extra support for social workers, \$3 million will be earmarked for family resource centers and \$1.7 million is for any additional resources children may need.

In addition, Newsom hinted at talks about an incremental release of the stay-at-home orders. The governor said that he will provide a "framework" for easing restrictions Tuesday afternoon.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 11-12

Santa Clara County saw its total of coronavirus cases and deaths rise to 1,621 as of Sunday with 55 new cases and three new deaths. The total number of deaths now stands at 54.

The county now has recorded 194 people hospitalized with the coronavirus as of Saturday, nine more than on Friday, with 72 of those patients in intensive care. On Friday, the county recorded 185 people hospitalized with the coronavirus, 100 fewer patients from the day before.

The county Public Health Department has also broken out cases by city. Palo Alto has 61 cases and Mountain view has 34 as of Sunday.

The total number of COVID-19 coronavirus cases in the state, meanwhile, has reached 21,794, with 651 deaths as of Sunday, according to the California Department of Public Health.

County and state officials put out public service announcements over the weekend asking people to continue sheltering in place over the Easter weekend and to refrain from holding public Easter egg hunts in parks.

\$100 million to support child care

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the release of a \$100 million child care package on Friday to support child care services and child care providers who are serving essential infrastructure workers and vulnerable populations and their children during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Of the funding, \$50 million will go to the California Department of Education to pay for up to 20,000 limited-term, additional state-subsidized slots for child care. The other \$50 million will go to the department to ensure child care centers, facilities and family-provider homes are safe and clean for the children and families they are serving. The funding reimburses the providers for the purchase of gloves, face coverings, cleaning supplies and other labor related to cleaning in accordance with federal and state public health and safety guidelines.

Sheriff announces positive cases

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office on Saturday announced that two of its professional staff members have tested positive for COVID-19. They have been quarantined at home and are under a physician's care.

The agency did not elaborate on the staff members but said they haven't been to work since late March. The two cases appear unrelated. The areas where they work have been professionally cleaned.

No inmates, correctional officers nor deputies have tested positive in the county correctional facilities. The correctional department is screening anyone who enters the facilities and with decreased inmates populations therein ample space to quarantine inmates if needed. The facilities are being deep sanitized regularly and inmates and staff practice social distancing, the department said.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 10

Santa Clara County's total of COVID-19 cases climbed to 1,484 on Friday, 42 of which were new. Of the total people with the coronavirus, an estimated 757 are male, roughly 712 are female, around 10 were of an unknown gender and about two were categorized as "other."

The county's death toll from the virus reached 50 on Friday, 33 of whom were men and 17 of whom were female. The county has also published data on the cases and deaths by age group, and deaths by race and whether the individual had pre-existing conditions, which can be viewed [here](#).

New data also shows one more case in Mountain View, which brings the city's total to 31 and makes up 0.04% of the city's population. Palo Alto's total remains at 57 cases as of Friday, representing 0.09% of the city's population. San Jose, which has most of the county's residents, has a large bulk of the region's cases with 986, an increase by 29 from the day before. The virus has struck 0.1% of the city's population.

Since Thursday, the county has seen 100 fewer COVID-19 patients in the hospital. Of the 185 people hospitalized with the virus, 99 are in acute hospital beds and 76 are in intensive care beds. Another 818 acute beds and 123 ICU beds are being used by patients without the virus. The county has 771 acute beds and 104 ICU beds available as needed.

Eighteen surge beds are occupied (another 1,511 are ready as needed) and 194 ventilators (with 503 more available). The county data doesn't divide the total between COVID-19 patients and those hospitalized for other reasons.

Hundreds of more people have undergone testing for the virus in the county, where the total rose to 14,135 and the test positivity rate slightly dipped to 10.5%. Of the total, 1,484 tests were positive, 12,400 were negative and 251 are pending results.

As of Friday, San Mateo County reported 652 cases and the death toll has stayed at 21 since April 6.

More than 150 COVID-19 cases found in nursing homes

Nursing homes in Santa Clara County have 164 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among its staff and residents as of Thursday, the county's Public Health Department reported Friday. This includes "long-term care facilities" such as licensed skilled nursing, assisted living, independent living and board and care facilities.

Of the 164 people, 50 are staff members, the county department said in a press release.

To reduce the spread of the coronavirus among the most vulnerable individuals, the department said that it is "actively investigating and responding" to the concentration of cases in those nursing homes.

The agency will provide testing within facilities where there may be COVID-19 outbreaks, and "aggressive interventions" will be implemented in locations where the virus may have spread. In addition, disaster service workers and other health care professionals will be deployed to support any facilities that are understaffed. Workers in long-term care facilities can also visit [sccgov.org](https://www.sccgov.org) for more guidance.

Reducing the jail population

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office plans to release approximately 100 inmates in the next several days "due to increased COVID-19 restrictions," according to a press release issued Friday.

Maguire Correctional Facility, which has a maximum capacity of 684 inmates, had a population of 486 as of Feb. 29 and is down to 356 as of Friday. Maple Street Correctional Center, which can hold 832 inmates, had 483 inmates as of Feb. 29 and is now down to 302, the Sheriff's Office said.

Santa Clara County also plans to release inmates and place them in involuntary home detention in an effort to reduce the jail population and lower the risk of spreading the coronavirus across the county's jail facilities.

California looks out for seniors

California is prioritizing some of its resources, including the USNS Mercy hospital ship docked in the Port of Los Angeles, to care for its seniors — one of the most vulnerable groups of people to contract the coronavirus.

In addition to the hospital ship and seven unspecified sites that will be used to isolate and care for older adults, Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a Friday press briefing that the Federal Emergency Management Agency will support struggling local restaurants by having them deliver three nutritious meals daily to isolated, homebound seniors.

Part of the initiative is to relieve the current strain on the Meals on Wheels program, which distributes around 50,000 meals each day, according to Newsom.

"This state has a disproportionate number of aging and graying individuals, and we have a unique responsibility to take care of them," Newsom said. "Meals on Wheels alone can't do what is required to protect and meet the needs of our seniors."

Nursing homes have become a hot spot for positive COVID-19 cases. According to Newsom, out of the 1,224 "skilled-nursing facilities in California," not including the 7,461 facilities licensed through the Department of Social Services, the state is closely monitoring 191 locations where a total of 1,266 patients and staff tested positive for the coronavirus.

And within the 7,461 smaller nursing facilities, Newsom said 94 locations are being monitored because 370 patients and staff members contracted the virus.

Licensed vocational nurses and certified nursing assistants are also getting a small boost from the state. Using the \$25 million donation from Facebook previously announced on March 31, Newsom said LVNs and CNAs can soon receive \$500 stipends to stay in hotels and properly isolate themselves if necessary.

In addition, state Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly explained how social distancing measures helped slightly flatten the curve of COVID-19 cases. Without strong interventions, California quickly could have been on its way to 700,000 hospitalizations by around May. Currently, Ghaly said the state is on a good track and doing better than expected projections, even when factoring in the interventions.

But he emphasized that there can be a strong peak in hospitalizations at any moment if current measures are loosened.

Reporting child abuse

In observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month in Santa Clara County, acting Director of the county's Department of Family and Children's Services Daniel Little spoke briefly at a Friday press conference on what to do if residents see a child potentially in danger or being neglected.

"With this current public health emergency we know there's additional burdens and stressors placed upon children and placed upon families," Little said. "And we want to make sure that as a community that each and every one of us understands our part in ensuring the safety and well being of all the vulnerable populations within our county."

Emergency response social workers are available 24 hours a day at 833-SCC-KIDS (722-5437). Additional resources can be found at the county's Child Abuse Prevention Council's [website](#).

San Mateo County open spaces to be closed on weekends

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will close all of its open spaces in San Mateo County on weekends starting this Saturday.

The closures, which apply to all district open space areas in the county, are in response to a request by San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow, according to the district.

The weekend closure announcement comes on the heels of many local park closures that have been implemented as park rangers in the area report visitor numbers to be higher than average and some instances where social distancing protocols are not being followed.

Read more [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 9

On Thursday, Santa Clara County unveiled more detailed data that shows how its total 1,442 cases — 62 of which are new — distribute across its 15 cities. Palo Alto has 57 cases, translating to 0.09% of the city's population with the virus, and Mountain View has 30, which makes up 0.04% of the city's population. San Jose has the most cases in the county with 957, which makes up 0.09% of the city's population.

"With various levels of testing in different communities, the city-level data do not necessarily represent the level of spread in these cities," said County of Santa Clara Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody. "Whether there are

three confirmed cases or 100 hundred confirmed cases in any given city, we must behave as if the virus is everywhere, because it is."

Out of the total cases, about 735 are male (or 51%) and 692 are female (or 48%). Exactly 285 people are hospitalized with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, 189 of whom are in acute beds and 84 of whom are in intensive care. Another 754 acute beds and 105 ICU beds are available in the county.

The county's hospital data shows 205 ventilators and 18 surge beds are in use, with another 493 and 1,511, respectively, on hand as needed. The information doesn't differentiate between those with COVID-19 and other patients.

The county also debuted data on deaths by race. Of the 47 people who have died of the disease, 36.2% were Latino/Hispanic, 34% were white, 23.4% were Asian, 4.3% were African American and 2.1% were identified as other. The total also breaks down to 33 men and 14 women.

Records show 13,360 people have tested for the virus, of which 1,442 returned positive, equal to a 10.8% positivity rate; 11,667 returned negative; and 251 are pending.

San Mateo County has reported a total 638 cases, 5 of which were announced Thursday. Of the total, 350 are female and 288 are male. The county's death toll stands at 21.

The county also reported 86 people with the virus were hospitalized as of Thursday. Twenty-seven of those patients are in intensive care unit beds, with another 32 being used by non-COVID-19 patients and 32 others available in the county. The county's hospitals are using 97 surge beds (with another 330 more available) and 53 ventilators (with another 159 available). The county's data doesn't divide the total of people using surge beds and ventilators between patients with and without the virus.

Ready for an expected surge

Paul Lorenz, CEO of Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, assured residents on Thursday that the county's health care system is well prepared for the expected surge of COVID-19 patients.

Even as the pandemic continues, visits to the hospitals' emergency rooms are down to 33% of the typical volume, going from a high of about 600 to 650 individuals to between 150 and 200 currently, Lorenz said at the county's daily morning briefing. Of the visitors, roughly a quarter have influenza-like illnesses and, of those, between 10% and 15% test positive for COVID-19.

The county has also recently acquired two community hospitals – O'Connor Hospital in San Jose and St. Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy – acquisitions that allow the system to add 340 beds, including 200 that would be ICU-ready, Lorenz said.

He credited the county's shelter-in-place order issued on March 16 with containing the number of cases and giving county hospitals adequate time to prepare for a possible surge.

"The time that the public health officer has given your public health care system has been invaluable," Lorenz said.

California offers hotel rooms, flights for traveling health care workers

Health care workers and caregivers responding to the pandemic can receive vouchers, stipends and, for any low-wage workers, full reimbursements for hotel stays throughout California.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a Thursday press briefing that the state has been able to acquire over 150 hotels as part of a "bulk-purchasing" program through the state's Department of General Services.

"Some of the nicest and finest hotel chains in the world are participating in this program, providing deep discounts to the state of California," Newsom said. "And we will extend those deep discounts to our caregivers and, in other cases for low-income workers, we'll provide 100% reimbursements so that they're allowed to stay closer to their patients."

The program will also allow workers not to worry about potentially spreading the coronavirus to their families, said Newsom.

Interested health care workers can view the list of participating hotels at caltravelstore.com.

Airlines have also stepped up to aid potential out-of-state health care workers participating in the state's Health Corps initiative Newsom announced on March 30. United Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Alaska Airlines and Delta Air Lines have offered fully reimbursed, round-trip flights into California for any out-of-state health care employees who have signed up for the program that was created to relieve California's health care system.

As of Thursday afternoon, 86,516 people have signed up through healthcorps.ca.gov.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 8

Santa Clara County has a total of 1,380 cases of the coronavirus, 95 of which were announced Wednesday. Of the total patients, about 704 are male (or 51%) and roughly 662 are female (or 48%). Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 3.1%.

- 21 to 30 years old: 12.3%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 18.3%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 18.6%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 18.2%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.3%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 9%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 4.4%.
- 91 years old or over: 2%.
- Unknown: 0.8%.

New data released Wednesday showed 278 COVID-19 patients are in the hospital, 168 of whom are in acute beds and 89 of whom are in intensive care. Another 736 acute beds and 100 ICU beds remain available in the county. The hospital data dashboard also showed 18 surge beds and 195 ventilators are in use, while another 1,511 and 422, respectively, are on hand. The information doesn't show how many are being used by COVID-19 patients.

The total of county residents who have tested for the virus climbed to 13,008 on Wednesday, 1,380 of which returned positive (which shows a 10.6% positivity rate), 11,404 of which were negative and 224 of which are pending results.

A 25-year-old man who was taken to the Main Jail in San Jose on Monday tested positive for COVID-19, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office announced Wednesday. The inmate, who is homeless, informed deputies while he was getting booked that he was exposed to the virus through a friend.

The man was transferred to an infirmary where he remains isolated while medical staff continues to monitor his condition. The initial arresting officer or officers from San Jose police were informed of the possible exposure, the sheriff's office said.

The first inmate who tested positive for COVID-19 last month has since recovered and was released from custody, according to the agency.

The Sheriff's Office has started screening new arrestees in the sally port area outside of the jail, where health care staff are checking for dry cough, shortness of breath, fever and whether the individual was exposed to someone with the virus.

Three more people have died of the disease, raising the death toll to 46, 32 of whom were male (or 70%) and 14 of whom were female (or 30%). When it comes to pre-existing conditions, 80% had one or more, 8.7% had none and 10.9% were unknown. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 21 to 30 years old: 2.2%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 2.2%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 8.7%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 10.8%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 15.2%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 28.3%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 28.3%.
- 91 years old or over: 4.4%.

On Wednesday, San Mateo County reported a total of 633 cases, 344 of whom are female and 289 of whom are male. Residents between 31 and 41 years old made up 116 of the total, the largest age group infected with the virus. The death toll stands at 21, 11 of whom are were male and 10 of whom were female.

The latest hospitalization data for the county showed 76 people with the coronavirus were hospitalized as of Wednesday. Fifty-six COVID-19 patients were in intensive care (with another 35 ICU beds available). The numbers provided by the state showed 103 surge beds and 52 ventilators were in use, though the information doesn't show how many are being used by COVID-19 patients. Another 160 ventilators and 324 surge beds are on hand as needed.

Out of 5,919 people who have tested for the virus, 644 returned positive (indicating a 10.9% positivity rate), 5,182 returned negative and 93 are pending results. It takes an average of 2.2 days for results to return, according to the county.

County asks residents to hand over protective equipment

Santa Clara County issued a new order on Wednesday requiring all residents, organizations and businesses with personal protective equipment and other critical items to treat COVID-19 patients, such as ventilators, to report their inventory to the county.

Any individual or entities with more than 5,000 nitrile or vinyl gloves, 500 N95 masks as well as surgical or procedure masks, 500 hair-covering bonnets, 500 shoe coverings, 100 containers of sani wipes and cloths, 100 safety goggles, 100 face shields, 100 long-sleeved protective gowns and coveralls, 10 large or gallon-sized containers of hand sanitizer (or 100 small or medium containers greater than 8 oz.) and any number of ventilators must disclose that information in a one-time online survey at sccphd.org/cv19ppe. The results will be kept confidential.

Dr. Jennifer Tong of the Santa Clara County hospital surge capacity team said at a Wednesday press briefing that local hospitals have the supplies they need to address the current number of hospitalized patients with the coronavirus (as of Tuesday, there were 277 COVID-19 patients in the hospital). But to prepare for a possible surge of local COVID-19 cases, she emphasized that the county cannot exclusively depend on state and federal support for protective equipment and ventilators.

"This is a unique situation in which the disaster is so widespread across our state and across our country that we can't rely solely on our state and federal government," Tong said. "We really have to turn locally to see what capacity for inventory exists here in our county."

Mike Wasserman, vice president of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, added that the county expects a shortage of equipment assuming the current rate of cases continues and no additional equipment enters the local health care system.

A specific number for the amount of protective equipment needed can't be quantified, Tong said. The need continues to evolve based on many factors, including the volume of patients entering the hospital, the varying ways medical workers expend these resources and how often they reuse protective equipment in a given week, he said.

For those who want to donate protective equipment, visit vmcfoundation.org.

State invests over \$1 billion for protective equipment

California will invest over \$1.4 billion to purchase and distribute more personal protective equipment to medical workers and essential employees such as grocery store clerks, according to Gov. Gavin Newsom.

To meet the state's goals of acquiring more personal protective equipment, including 500 million N95 masks, Newsom said at a Wednesday press conference that he formally submitted a request to the state Legislature to tap into California's Disaster Response-Emergency Operations Account.

Mark Ghilarducci, director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, said that the state also will partner with nongovernmental organizations, large firms and vendors, such as Bear Mountain Development Company and JR Resources, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to acquire a steady flow of personal protective equipment.

Newsom also provided a limited portrait of the racial demographics that make up the total number of COVID-19 cases in the state. Of the 16,957 confirmed cases of COVID-19, Newsom's office was only able to analyze 37.2% of the aggregate data, which is around 6,306 cases.

Out of the 6,306 positive COVID-19 cases, Newsom said that 30% of the people identified as Latino, 6% as African American, and 14% as Asian. Newsom did not unveil the racial makeup for the rest of the cases.

County exploring exclusive vote-by-mail general election

Due to the coronavirus crisis, the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters is examining the option of a vote-by-mail only general election later this year.

The idea, raised by Board of Supervisors President Cindy Chavez at this week's board meeting, comes as many counties are voicing support for a vote-by-mail election this November, according to a press release from her office issued Wednesday.

"This is about preparing. The goal is to make absolutely certain that in sprawling and diverse Santa Clara County we are able to give every resident a way to vote in the 2020 presidential election on Tuesday November 3, 2020," Chavez said in the release. "At this point, because of the coronavirus outbreak there are no certainties about being able to vote."

Chavez's recommendation, which received unanimous support from the board, also calls on the Registrar of Voters to communicate voting rights at county jails, nursing homes and senior assisted living facilities, according to the release.

East Palo Alto takes further actions in response to crisis

On Tuesday, the East Palo Alto City Council took further actions to address the coronavirus crisis in relation to its RV Safe Parking Program, planning and building entitlements and construction activities, the city outlined in a press release Wednesday.

The RV Safe Parking Program will temporarily allow participants to stay on site for up to 24 hours a day while the shelter-at-home order is in place. Prior to Tuesday's decision, people with RVs were required to leave during daytime hours. The city is working with nonprofit Project WeHope to secure funds for other aspects of the program, such as 24-hour security and facilities for washing on-site, during the health crisis, according to the city.

The council also chose to extend current and unexpired planning approvals and building permits through Sept. 30, the press release states.

Essential construction will move forward, but the city's Chief Building Official will also consider requests from developers seeking to continue work on their projects while the order is in effect, according to the release. Residents can pursue projects that don't require an entitlement, such as switching to a tile floor, and are on a homeowner's property.

New initiative for families in need

The Menlo Park City School District and Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation launched MPCSD Helps, an initiative to provide district families in need with necessities such as housing, health care, money, gift cards or food pantry staples.

"MPCSD Helps will focus much of its effort on addressing food insecurity as more and more families are laid off, experience reduced hours, or contend with rising costs brought on by the pandemic response," according to a Wednesday, press release. "As the economic toll of the pandemic grows, we expect more families to reach out with needs."

Gift cards can be dropped off at the district office, [181 Encinal Ave. in Atherton](#), between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.

More information on necessities that can be donated and how to donate, go [here](#) or email mpcsdhelps@mpcsd.org.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 7

Santa Clara County has a total of 1,285 cases of the coronavirus, 61 of which were announced Tuesday. One more person died of the disease, raising the death toll to 43.

As of Tuesday, 277 people with the virus are hospitalized, 172 of whom are in acute beds (with another 748 available) and 86 of whom were in intensive care beds (with another 90 available). The county is also using 17 surge beds (with another 1,512 available) and 202 ventilators (with another 443 available). The data doesn't distinguish which surge beds and ventilators are for coronavirus cases and other hospital patients.

The county also reported 11,782 people have undergone testing for the coronavirus, of which 1,285 received positive results (which translates to a 10.9% test positivity rate), 10,243 returned negative and 254 are pending results.

A dozen staff members at the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office have tested positive for the coronavirus. The workers have isolated themselves at home and "remain in good spirits," the agency said in a press release issued Tuesday.

Nine of the 12 employees are deputies. One works for the patrol division and the eight others are part of the custody bureau, two of whom have recovered and returned to work.

Two employees are custody support assistants at the Main Jail in San Jose and another employee is a records technician.

The Sheriff's Office is working with the county Public Health Department to prevent the disease from spreading to other people.

As of Tuesday, San Mateo County had a total of 617 cases of the coronavirus, more than two-dozen of which are new. Of the total patients, 330 are female, 286 are male and one was of an unknown sex. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 24.
- 21 to 30 years old: 75.
- 31 to 40 years old: 119.
- 41 to 50 years old: 101.
- 51 to 60 years old: 102.
- 61 to 70 years old: 95.
- 71 to 80 years old: 53.
- 81 to 90 years old: 32.
- 91 years old or over: 16.

The death toll stands at 21, 10 of whom were female and 11 of whom were male. It's unclear whether the deceased had pre-existing conditions. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 51 to 60 years old: 2.
- 61 to 70 years old: 2.
- 71 to 80 years old: 4.

- 81 to 90 years old: 7.
- 91 years old or over: 6.

Santa Clara County sees slowdown in cases

Dr. Sara Cody, the county's health officer, said Tuesday that COVID-19 cases in the county are doubling every two weeks, according to the latest counts. In early March, before the county began adopting increasingly stringent measures to mandate social distancing, cases doubled roughly every three days, Cody told the county Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

"The trend is exactly what we want to see: that we're lengthening the doubling time, we're slowing things down," Cody said.

Read more [here](#).

Newsom: The curve is 'bending'

The oft-mentioned curve that doctors, researchers, government agencies and media outlets closely survey to track the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic across the nation appears to be "bending" and "stretching" in California, according to Gov. Gavin Newsom.

For the first time, the number of hospitalizations and patients in the intensive care unit diagnosed with COVID-19 increased by only a single-digit percentage, he said, citing the latest statewide numbers of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations during his daily press conference on Tuesday.

The latest numbers show that California has 15,865 positive cases, 2,611 patients hospitalized and 1,108 patients in ICU. Those numbers reflect a 4.1% increase for hospitalizations and 2.1% increase for those in the ICU, compared to a 10.9% increase of ICU-admitted patients just last Saturday.

"That's not to suggest by any stretch of the imagination that we'll continue to see these declines," Newsom emphasized. "It's to only reinforce the importance of maintaining physical distancing and continuing our stay-at-home policy that has helped bend the curve."

Dr. Mark Ghaly, the state's secretary of health and human services, explained that the bending curve means that the peak comes down but "also goes further out."

Newsom also outlined how the state is sending out a total of 500 ventilators at this time to east coast states: 100 to New York, 100 to New Jersey and 100 to Illinois, so far. On Monday, Newsom said that the state had 11,036 ventilators on hand, and sending 500 of those ventilators to the national stockpile would assist other states in more need. California would retain the ability to redeploy those ventilators, if necessary.

Newsom also addressed where the public can find help as the physical and mental health effects of being cooped up during the pandemic may be slowly taking its toll on some people. He said there are many hotlines, including texting services and chat lines, people of all ages can access at covid19.ca.gov for various concerns.

San Mateo County bans evictions of businesses in unincorporated areas

On Tuesday, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors [banned evicting small commercial businesses in unincorporated parts of the county](#) that can't afford to pay rent because their business has suffered as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

The ordinance, which runs through May 31, applies to businesses that make under \$2.5 million annually. It doesn't apply to businesses in cities, but county officials noted that cities may use the county's ordinance as a model to enact their own moratoriums on commercial evictions (the city of San Mateo [already has](#)).

Small businesses would be liable to pay back rent up to 180 days following the termination of the declared local emergency in San Mateo County.

Supervisor Warren Slocum, president of the Board of Supervisors, and co-sponsor of the ordinance, said businesses in his district have been keenly impacted by the shelter-at-home order.

"The businesses and families of North Fair Oaks work hard every day for themselves, their families and their communities," he said in a prepared statement. "They have pride in what they accomplish, even when it is a struggle. Right now, they like the rest of us trying to make sense of this virus are struggling even more. Providing relief from the fear of being evicted because they cannot pay rent — through no fault of their own — is one concrete step my colleagues and I are proud to take."

Light-rail service resumes Thursday

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority plans to resume light-rail service this Thursday, two weeks after trains were suspended due to a training operator who tested positive for the coronavirus.

Trains will only run on weekdays every 30 minutes on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The agency is not collecting fare for the time being.

While service was on a break, the VTA deep-cleaned the trains and replaced upholstery seats with vinyl seats, which is an ongoing project for the agency.

Federal help for small businesses, nonprofits

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, plans to hold a webinar this Thursday at 4:30 p.m. for small businesses and nonprofits in her Congressional district to learn about resources they can utilize under a \$2 trillion bill to provide relief during the coronavirus crisis.

Eshoo will discuss the funding and take questions with Julia Clowes, director of the Small Business Administration's San Francisco district office, which oversees 14 counties in northern California.

Anyone interested in joining the RSVP at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 6

Santa Clara County has a total of 1,224 people with the coronavirus, 17 of whom were announced Monday and 276 of whom were hospitalized. Three more people died of the disease, raising the death toll to 42.

Out of the 11,607 people tested for the virus, 1,224 returned positive, showing a positivity rate of 10.6%. Another 10,175 returned negative and 208 are pending results.

As of Monday, San Mateo County had a total of 589 cases of the coronavirus. Eight more deaths have brought the death toll to 21. The county's latest data from the state Department of Public Health also shows 159 people with the virus are hospitalized as of Saturday, 31 of whom are in intensive care. (Another 56 ICU beds are in use by other hospital patients and 40 more beds are available.) State data on the county also reported 67 surge beds in use, with another 348 available, and 63 ventilators in use, with another 111 available. The information on surge beds and ventilators doesn't differentiate which ones are used by COVID-19 patients.

Housing the homeless

As of Sunday, Santa Clara County has added approximately 602 shelter beds for homeless individuals and families. These beds will populate sites such as the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, Parkside Hall at the San Jose Convention Center and hotels.

Half of that number will make up for the approximately 300 shelter beds that were lost in order to meet the social distancing requirements, Ky Le, director of Santa Clara County's Office of Supportive Housing, said at a county press conference on Monday.

At the beginning of the shelter-at-home order, Le said that the county had the capacity to shelter around 2,100 unhoused individuals. However, some of that capacity was lost to comply with social distancing rules.

"We do have a net of over 300 shelter beds so far," Le said. "We're working to expand both congregate and non-congregate sites in the coming days."

In addition to increasing housing efforts for the homeless, the county continues to work with the Valley Homeless HealthCare Program for outreach and educating the homeless population on the virus.

In a press release Monday evening, the county said it has found temporary shelter for another 265 people who are unhoused and at risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19.

California locks in sites to house nearly 5,000 surge beds

California has acquired several sites to house 4,613 beds that will specifically serve patients with mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19.

During a Monday press conference, Gov. Gavin Newsom stood inside the Sleep Train Arena in Sacramento — the former home of the Sacramento Kings that's currently being transformed into an alternative care site for COVID-19 patients — to emphasize how the state is trying to meet the demand for 50,000 additional hospital beds for an anticipated surge of patients.

Around 30,000 surge beds can be housed within the state's existing 416 hospitals, according to Newsom. But the other 20,000 beds will need to be placed in various locations of different sizes throughout the state, including Sleep Train Arena, which Newsom said can hold 400 beds and will be operational "as early as" April 20.

The state also has secured sites up and down the coast at facilities such as the Seton Medical Center in Daly City with 220 beds, hotel rooms in San Carlos that account for 120 beds, St. Vincent Hospital in Los Angeles with 266 beds, the USNS Mercy hospital ship docked in Los Angeles with 550 beds, Fairview Developmental Center in Costa Mesa with 520 beds and Porterville Developmental Center in Fresno County with 246 beds. There also are eight medical station sites provided by the federal government that will provide space for around 2,000 beds, including ones in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

Newsom hopes to staff some of the current and future sites with medical workers recruited through the state's Health Corps initiative announced a week ago. Newsom said 81,879 health care professionals have already signed up through [healthcorps.ca.gov](https://www.healthcorps.ca.gov).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 4-5

The coronavirus continued to take its toll on the Peninsula over the weekend, when Santa Clara and San Mateo counties together reported a collective total of 154 new cases of the coronavirus.

On Saturday, the county reported 1,148 positive COVID-19 cases, representing 11% of the total tests conducted for the virus. One more person died of the disease, bringing the death toll to 39. On Sunday, 54 more cases brought the county's total to 1,207 and no new deaths were reported.

The virus infected 41 more people over the weekend in San Mateo County, where the total of cases stood at 579 as of Sunday night. The death toll continues to stand at 13.

Temporary medical station welcomes first patients

A state Field Respite Center in Santa Clara opened its doors to two people with less-acute cases of the coronavirus, the county announced on Sunday.

Located at the Santa Clara Convention Center, the facility has beds, supplies and medication delivered by the National Guard and can accommodate up to 250 people. It was established with help from the state and federal governments to alleviate the volume of patients at hospitals in the area.

"Today's patients will have the ability to recuperate in a safe setting while still sheltering in place – keeping all of our residents and essential workers protected," county Supervisor Susan Ellenberg said in a press release.

State ramps up testing efforts

Gov. Gavin Newsom is looking to increase California's COVID-19 testing capacity through a new task force that represents a public-private partnership.

The task force is co-chaired by Dr. Charity Dean, assistant director of the state Department of Public Health, and Paul Markovich, president and CEO of Blue Shield of California, a health plan provider.

Newsom said at a Saturday press conference that the state is currently working with University of California, San Diego, and University of California, Davis, to create a minimum of "five to seven hubs" for testing throughout the state and collaborating with various vendors to increase testing capacity.

Newsom also acknowledged Stanford University School of Medicine's first-in-the-state efforts to produce serology, also known as blood-based tests, which can help researchers further understand the virus by examining one's antibodies.

In addition to academic institutions, Abbott Laboratories, a company that makes medical devices, will provide 75 point-of-care testing sites, where results can be quickly produced in about five minutes, according to Newsom.

The efforts respond to the relatively low number of people within California who have been tested and received results so far. Newsom said that 126,700 people have been tested and 13,000 of those are still awaiting results.

"The issue of testing — I own that," Newsom said. "You deserve more and better."

Newsom also unveiled a new website, covid19supplies.ca.gov, for businesses and organizations interested in providing any critical equipment, from ventilators to viral testing media.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 3

On Friday, Santa Clara County's total of coronavirus cases went up to 1,094 with the announcement of 75 new cases, according to new data.

Of the total 1,094 cases, 53%, or 580, people are male and 47%, or 514, are female. Another 0.2% were identified as "other" and 0.6% as unknown. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 2.9%.
- 21 to 30 years old: 11.7%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 18.8%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 19.2%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 19.2%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.2%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 8.7%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 4%.
- 91 years old or over: 1.2%.
- Unknown: 1.1%

Two more people died of the disease, raising the death toll to 38, 27 of whom were male (making up 71% of the total) and 11 of whom were female (making up 29% of the total).

In addition, 76% had pre-existing conditions, 10.5% had none and 13.2% were unknown.

Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 21 to 30 years old: 2.6%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 0%
- 41 to 50 years old: 10.5%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 13.2%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.2%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 31.6%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 26.3%.
- 91 years old or over: 2.6%.

Nearly 10,000 people have been tested for the virus. Out of the total 9,910 people, 1,094 received positive results, 8,609 received negative results and 207 results are pending. The testing dashboard indicates a test positivity rate of 11% and an average turnaround time of 2.4 days.

Forty-two more people have been hospitalized with COVID-19. The number of coronavirus patients in the county now stands at 287, 199 of whom are in acute hospital beds (with 767 more available in the county) and 88 in intensive care unit beds (with 95 more available in the county). No COVID-19 patients were using surge beds or ventilators according to the county's hospital data.

Housing the homeless

To reduce the strain on homeless shelters during the [statewide stay-at-home order](#) that went into effect on March 19, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced during a Friday press conference that California is looking to secure a total of 15,000 hotel rooms in various counties as part of an initiative called, "Project Roomkey."

California has acquired 6,867 housing units so far throughout the state to protect the homeless from COVID-19.

"It's all around making sure that we address the most vulnerable Californians," Newsom said.

Federal and state funding will support the new project. Newsom touted how California was the first state in the U.S. to receive support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to purchase hotel and motel rooms. FEMA will reimburse 75% of the costs to buy rooms and fund a staff that will provide security, meals and custodial services.

The rest of the funding gap, according to Newsom, will be filled through state grants. California has already provided \$650 million worth of emergency grants, as well as \$150 million, for local governments to use for emergency homeless aid.

Project Roomkey is reserved for a certain subset of homeless individuals — specifically those who already tested positive for COVID-19, may have been exposed to someone with the virus, or are high-risk individuals, such as people who are 65 years or older or have underlying health conditions.

Newsom said that the rooms are "noncongregant" sites that will be used to separate those who need to be isolated from those who can still use available shelters.

In addition to identifying new sites, Newsom said he hopes to use the project as a template for more long-term solutions to homelessness. In the future, the state will look into purchasing some of the properties that have month-to-month occupancy leases, with contracts that allow right of first refusal — the ability to enter into a transaction before any other party can — or at least right of first offer.

"This was the crisis we needed to address before the COVID-19 crisis," Newsom said. "And we're not walking away from meeting that crisis head-on as we move through this process."

In Santa Clara County, all individuals who are homeless and tested positive for COVID-19 have now been placed in a shelter, according to a press release issued Friday from the county's Emergency Operations Center.

The statement did not reveal the number of homeless individuals who have tested positive for the coronavirus, but did outline that an additional 174 "vulnerable community members" were housed and another 215 will be sheltered in the next few days.

The Valley Homeless Healthcare Program and Gardner Health Services helped identify those who are most vulnerable, specifically anyone who has three or more underlying health conditions identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that can be exacerbated by COVID-19.

"We have prioritized sheltering these at-risk individuals," the statement said.

Heavy crowds lead to closure of Bedwell Bayfront Park

Menlo Park shut down Bedwell Bayfront Park at 8 p.m. Friday in response to continuous heavy crowds, the city said in a press release.

The decision was fueled by damaged signs, sports team holding practices and a jump in complaints, city officials said.

The closure will be in place until further notice. It applies to all park trails, parking spaces and the gate to the parking lot at 1600 Marsh Road, where the street crosses Bayfront Expressway, to prevent vehicles from entering the site.

The public can enjoy the city's other parks, which remain open, to enjoy the outdoors while keeping a safe social distance from others, according to the press release.

Low volume of virus tests completed through Verily

Only 50 people per day are being tested per day at San Mateo County's COVID-19 testing center run through Verily, which is capable of testing about 250 people, San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy told reporters on an April 3 conference call. This is likely because of strict guidelines for who can get tested at the site, he noted. Callagy said the county is in conversations to see if rules can be relaxed.

Verily, a subsidiary of Alphabet, launched an online tool to help screen patients for [COVID-19 testing](#). The tool, called Project Baseline, triages people who are concerned about their COVID-19 risk and — if they fit certain criteria — sends them to testing sites based on their symptoms, according to an announcement by the company.

The pilot program is available to residents of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, who can take the screener survey. The program is open to adults ages 18 and older and seeks to help people who are the most vulnerable.

People who take the survey and meet eligibility requirements for COVID-19 testing will be directed to mobile testing sites based on the site's capacity, where they have a nasal-swab test. They will be informed of the test results within a few days.

Obtaining more PPE

San Mateo County has committed \$12 million to obtain personal protective gear for local medical workers, San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy told reporters on an April 3 conference call. There is a two- to five-week lag on the products ordered though, he noted. He said the county is prepared to spend up to \$30 million for medical supplies to last the next 90 days.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 2

Santa Clara County's total cases of the coronavirus surpassed the 1,000 mark with the announcement of 63 new cases on Thursday afternoon.

Of the total 1,019 cases, 53%, or 540, people are male and 47%, or around 479, are female. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 3.1%.
- 21 to 30 years old: 11%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 18.3%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 19.5%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 19.6%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.4%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 8.8%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 4.2%.
- 91 years old or over: 1%.
- Unknown: 1.2%

Four more people who died of the disease has brought the death toll to 36, 26 of whom were male (making up 72% of the total) and 10 of whom were female (making up 27.8% of the total).

In addition, 75% had pre-existing conditions, 11% had none and 14% were unknown.

Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 21 to 30 years old: 3%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 0%
- 41 to 50 years old: 11.1%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 11.1%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 14%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 33%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 25%.
- 91 years old or over: 2.8%.

The new data published Thursday provided testing data. Out of the total 9,218 people who were tested for the coronavirus, 1,019 received positive results, 8,025 received negative results and 174 results are pending. The testing dashboard indicates a test positivity rate of 11.1% and an average turnaround time of 2.4 days.

On Wednesday alone, the county received 16 positive results and 262 negative results.

The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 went up from 198 to 245 on Thursday, an increase of 47 patients. Of the 245 individuals, 153 are in acute hospital beds (with 778 more available in the county) and 92 were in intensive care unit beds (with 91 more available in the county).

On Thursday evening, San Mateo County announced 33 new cases of the coronavirus, raising its total to 486. Three more people died of the disease, raising its death toll to 13.

Counties recommend face protection

On Thursday evening, Bay Area public health leaders issued recommendations for the public to wear face masks before they leave their homes as a precaution against the coronavirus.

Bay Area counties are following the state's guidance, which does not encourage the public to purchase N95 or surgical masks.

Read more [here](#).

Santa Clara County unveils new data on COVID-19

According to data newly published on the Santa Clara County Public Health Department's website, 8,246 patients were tested for COVID-19, which yielded 956 positive results and 7,138 negative results — a 11.6% positivity rate — as of Wednesday.

Santa Clara County public health officials discussed the new data on the COVID-19 crisis at a Thursday press conference, including hospital capacity throughout the county and the number of people tested for the coronavirus.

"By sharing the data, in some ways, I think it will reassure people that our hospitals currently have a significant amount of remaining capacity," said Dr. Jennifer Tong, the hospital surge capacity branch chief of Santa Clara County's Emergency Operations Center. "Another reason for sharing the data is to highlight the importance of the social distancing order."

The information, which will be updated daily, can be found [here](#).

As of Tuesday, 198 people were hospitalized for COVID-19, with 108 patients in hospital beds (another 936 are available for use) and 90 patients in intensive care beds (with another 92 available for use). The dashboards on the website also reveal how many ventilators and surge beds are currently available across the county. Since Tuesday, the county has used 227 ventilators (another 392 are available as needed) and five open surge beds (another 1,456 are available as needed).

Public health officials also briefly noted their plans to increase hospital capacity by collaborating with hospitals in the area and the temporary Federal Medical Station at the Santa Clara Convention Center.

Stanford Dish to close

Due to a "persistent minority" of people not complying with public health and safety measures at the Stanford Dish, the university will close all entrances to the popular walking trail on Friday, April 3, at 5 p.m. Stanford "will be actively looking for ways to safely reopen the Dish area."

A reprieve for small business owners

California will hold off on collecting sales taxes in order to support struggling small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Thursday at a press conference an executive order that allows small businesses to keep up to \$50,000 in sales tax, "as a loan," for 12 months without fines, penalties and interest.

"In essence, it is a bridge loan," Newsom said.

The new rule extends beyond a previously signed executive order in which businesses won't have to file sales tax returns through July 31.

In addition, the state will inject \$50 million into the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank to create more "microlending opportunities." It specifically addresses small businesses that may not be eligible for programs offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration during the pandemic such as the Paycheck Protection Program, which incentivizes small businesses to keep employees on their payroll.

To address the current state of unemployment in California, Newsom unveiled a new website, onwardca.org, created in partnership with Salesforce, LinkedIn and Bitwise, that matches people to available jobs based on a set of 37 questions.

"Over 1.9 million Californians since March 12 have filed for unemployment insurance," Newsom said. "The economic consequences are profound."

For more information on statewide resources, including applications for unemployment insurance, visit covid19.ca.gov.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: APRIL 1

On Wednesday, Santa Clara County announced 66 new coronavirus cases, bringing its total to 956.

Of the total cases, about 53%, or 506, people are male and roughly 46%, or 440, are female. Here's a breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 3.1%.
- 21 to 30 years old: 11.3%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 18.8%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 19.8%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 19%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.3%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 8.6%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 4.1%.
- 91 years old or over: 1%.
- Unknown: 1.2%

The county also reported Wednesday that two more people died of the disease, raising the death toll to 32, 24 of whom were male (making up 75% of the total) and eight of whom were female (making up 25% of the total). In addition, 72% had pre-existing conditions, 13% had none and 16% were unknown.

Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 21 to 30 years old: 3%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 0%
- 41 to 50 years old: 12.5%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 12.5%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 15.6%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 28.1%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 25%.
- 91 years old or over: 3.1%.

On Wednesday evening, San Mateo County reported 453 cases of the coronavirus, an increase of 65 cases from the previous day, and the death toll stands at 10.

School closures announced in Santa Clara County, appear likely for rest of California

Santa Clara County families were informed that their students' campuses will be closed for the rest of the academic year through a letter signed by the county superintendent and 32 district superintendents across the county.

Palo Alto Unified Superintendent Don Austin took definitive local action on Wednesday, announcing that all district schools will be closed for classroom instruction for the remainder of this school year.

Read more [here](#).

Top California officials, including the governor and state superintendent, signaled this week that public school students won't return to their campuses before the end of the school year.

The "expectation" is that schools will not reopen, Newsom said during a press conference at the state Capitol with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond and State Board of Education President Linda Darling-Hammond.

Thurmond said Wednesday that he's urging all superintendents "to proceed as if we can only educate our kids through distance learning for the remainder of the school year."

"Quite frankly, no one knows when it's safe enough for our students to return to campus," he said. "We are asking everyone to accelerate their efforts to make sure our kids get a great education."

Read more [here](#).

Newsom: More hospital beds may be needed

California may need many more hospital beds by the end of May, according to Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Based on the state's modeling that monitors the spread of the coronavirus, Newsom said during a Wednesday press conference that California will need 66,000 hospital beds toward the end of May — markedly different from the 50,000 beds the state is preparing for the "Phase 1 surge."

In addition, state Health Officer Dr. Sonia Angell addressed how face masks may provide additional protection against asymptomatic infection and an additional signal to other people to keep their distance. But she emphasized that it does not replace the importance of physical distancing.

"There may be some benefit from using these (masks), but only when they're used well," Angell said. "We don't want people to have a false sense of security with these face coverings ... so if you use them, make sure you maintain that physical distance."

Retrieving ventilators remains a high priority for California. The goal is to have 10,000 ventilators in preparation for the Phase 1 surge, according to Newsom.

Since Wednesday, Newsom confirmed there are 8,155 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Sheriff's office confirms 11 COVID-19 cases

Eleven members of the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office have tested positive for the coronavirus, the agency announced in a press release.

Nine were deputies, one of whom worked in the patrol division and eight others in the custody bureau (one has since recovered and returned to work).

The deputies are under isolation at home and "remain in high spirits," according to the release.

The other two employees are a custody support assistant at the county's Main Jail in San Jose and a sheriff's records technician.

The agency is working with the county Public Health Department to prevent further exposure to the virus.

San Mateo County prepares for COVID-19 patients

San Mateo County officials showed off a new treatment center for the novel coronavirus pandemic at the San Mateo County Event Center to reporters on Wednesday.

The triage center was constructed with the assistance of the California Air National Guard. It is the fourth site statewide where they've established such a treatment center after setting them up in Santa Clara County, Los Angeles, and Coachella.

The big challenge in getting the site up and running, if necessary, will be finding staff, said Travis Kusman, San Mateo County director of emergency medical services.

He said that how many staff might be necessary depends on need and the condition of the patients that are taken in there. No one accepted at the site will require a ventilator since it is not equipped for intensive care patients, so they would stay at hospitals while patients who are less sick would be housed at the event center.

Still, because it would need around-the-clock staffing, the facility would need substantial staff and volunteers to operate effectively.

But if residents of the county and region continue to follow social distancing guidelines, Kusman said the facility may never need to open.

"We're hopeful this facility will never have to be used," Kusman said.

The county is building a roster of volunteers and raising money for its response. Anyone interested in volunteering or donating can do so at smcgov.org.

Read more [here](#).

San Mateo County report by Bay City News Service.

Virtual town hall

East Palo Alto plans to hold a virtual town hall meeting on the coronavirus this Friday when the community can ask questions, make comments and offer insights on the pandemic and its impact on the city. The meeting, scheduled for 4:30-6 p.m. via Zoom, can be found [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MARCH 31

The current shelter-at-home order for seven Bay Area jurisdictions has been extended to May 3, health officials announced Tuesday.

The new order builds on the "shelter-in-place" order that was announced March 16 by the seven jurisdictions, including Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, and was set to expire April 7.

The updated mandate requires all businesses that remain in operation to prepare and post a "social distancing" plan detailing the measures they are taking to ensure compliance with county guidance.

Read more [here](#).

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County has reported 42 new cases, bringing its total to 890. Two more people died of the disease, raising the death toll to 30.

[San Mateo County](#) reported four more people who died from the coronavirus in San Mateo County, where the death toll now stands at 10.

San Mateo County also released a [new data dashboard](#) on patient demographics. Of the 309 people with COVID-19, more than half are between 40 and 69 years old. Here's a full breakdown by age group:

- 0 to 9 years old: 0.7%.
- 10 to 19 years old: 1.6%.
- 20 to 29 years old: 9.1%.
- 30 to 39 years old: 16.5%.
- 40 to 49 years old: 16.5%.
- 50 to 59 years old: 16.2%.
- 60 to 69 years old: 19.7%.
- 70 to 79 years old: 9.4%.
- 80 years old or over: 9.7%.
- Unknown: 0.7%.

On Tuesday evening, San Mateo County reported a total of 388 cases of the coronavirus, an increase of 79 cases from the previous day.

All of the 10 people who died were over age 60 years old and 70% were over age 80 years old. Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 60 to 69 years old: 20%.
- 70 to 79 years old: 10%.
- 80 years old or over: 70%.

The county notes in its dashboard that "due to the current testing capacity, the number of cases detected through testing represents only a small portion of the total number of likely cases in the County. This means the number of cases by age group is skewed toward those who are high risk and tested."

Stanford University is now aware of 32 individuals connected to the Stanford community either as faculty, staff, students or postdocs and who have received positive COVID-19 test results. The university is also now asking anyone who traveled outside of California over spring break and is returning to campus to self-isolate for two weeks.

New hotline for seniors unveiled

Gov. Gavin Newsom unveiled a new hotline number on Tuesday aimed at helping isolated seniors in California stay connected.

The hotline number, 833-544-2374, will provide residents with the latest information on the coronavirus pandemic and services available to them, he said during a Tuesday press conference.

The governor also announced a partnership with the 2-1-1 help line center to connect Californians, on a case-by-case basis, to specific local services in their community, such as supplemental food and nutrition programs as well as shelter options. The call center is open 24 hours a day.

In addition, Newsom provided updated numbers of COVID-19 cases in the state. Since Tuesday, there have been 150 COVID-19 related deaths, 1,617 people currently hospitalized and 657 individuals in the intensive-care unit due to COVID-19.

Newsom also said that since the launch of the California Healthcorps initiative on Monday, more than 25,000 licensed health care professionals have signed up to aid the effort to relieve the current health care workforce.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MARCH 30

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department has reported a total of 848 coronavirus cases, 202 of which were announced on Monday. The large jump is due to a reporting delay, as opposed to a one-day increase, the county wrote in an update on its [new data dashboard](#).

Of the 848 people with COVID-19, 53%, or about 450, are male and 46%, or roughly 390, are female. A majority of the cases are people between 41 and 50 years old, which made up 20% of the total. Here's a full breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 3.1%.

- 21 to 30 years old: 11.2%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 19%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 20.2%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 18.8%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 13.2%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 8.3%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 4.1%.
- 91 years old or over: 1.1%.
- Unknown: 1.2%

The county also reported Monday that three people died of the disease, raising the death toll to 28, 75% of which were male and 25% of which were female. Of the total, 71% had pre-existing conditions, 14% had none and 14% were unknown.

Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 21 to 30 years old: 3.6%
- 31 to 40 years old: 0%
- 41 to 50 years old: 11%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 14.3%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 17.9%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 25%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 28.6%.

Also on Monday, San Mateo County announced a total of 309 people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and six people who have died from the disease. On a conference call with reporters on Monday, County Manager Mike Callagy said he will share more information on the demographics of county COVID-19 patients by Wednesday. San Mateo County is working on sharing data in a similar way to [Santa Clara County's new data dashboard](#). Until now, the officials haven't released ages or genders of county COVID-19 patients.

View our interactive charts on the number of cases and deaths [here](#).

Extended shelter-at-home order

The public can expect the current shelter-at-home order for seven Bay Area jurisdictions, including Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, to continue through May 1. Health officers in each of the jurisdictions expect to announce an updated order in the coming days.

The health officers had previously said their jurisdictions could see an extension to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, according to a joint press release from the city of Berkeley and Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Santa Clara, San Francisco and San Mateo counties. The updated order is expected to be finalized in the next day or two.

Increasing health care staff

At a Monday afternoon press conference, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the California Health Corps initiative to increase the state's health care workforce and prepare for a surge in COVID-19 cases predicted by the state's modeling.

Newsom cited a "universe" of 37,000 retired health care professionals or those with inactive licenses that he hopes to tap into in order to staff additional health care sites throughout the state and increase the number of medical professionals treating patients who don't have COVID-19. Interested participants can find more information [here](#).

The initiative calls for physicians, pharmacists, dentists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses (RN, LVN, CNA), behavioral health professionals, respiratory therapists, paramedics, emergency medical technicians and medical assistants as well as medical and nursing students, according to the website.

To quickly meet the demands of the state's health care system, Newsom announced an executive order that provides temporary flexibility in staffing ratios and licensing processes for retired health care professionals as well as medical and nursing students close to receiving their degree or license.

"We have an executive order that went out that will provide flexibility through June 30," Newsom said. "This is temporary flexibility on staffing ratios (and) on scope of practice for nurse practitioners and EMTs and others."

Dr. Mark Ghaly, the state's secretary of health and human services who helped prepare the executive order and joined Monday's press conference, said that the staffing ratios are not specifically outlined down to the

number "but does give us the flexibility and room to work within reasonable measures with the current conditions we expect."

In terms of accelerating retired professionals and students into the workforce, Ghaly did not explain what exactly that process looks like, but did provide an example of who the order addresses.

"There are a number of things that have to do with who can get licensed, how they can reinstate their license and being flexible and waiving some of those tried and true conditions that allow us to — for example, somebody who has been out of the workforce for just under five years — allow them to come in immediately to meet the surge demand," Ghaly said.

In addition, Newsom outlined several potential "surge sites" that the state will be looking into, including the Oakland Coliseum and Sleep Train Arena in Sacramento, in order to increase the available hospital beds statewide to 50,000.

San Mateo Event Center prepared to house 250 hospital beds

San Mateo County officials [announced Monday](#) that they are preparing for a possible surge of COVID-19 patients by setting up a makeshift hospital at the San Mateo Event Center.

The National Guard is delivering and staging equipment and supplies to the temporary hospital, which county officials expect to be completed on Tuesday. The hospital, which is located in San Mateo, will be jointly operated by the county, which owns the Event Center, and the state.

Officials are accepting personal protective equipment donations Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Maple Street Correctional Facility, 1300 Maple St. in Redwood City, for the hospital. These items include unused N95 respirators and surgical masks (packages can be opened, as long as they have not been used); unopened packages of disposable gloves; unopened containers of hand sanitizer; unopened containers of disinfectants and disinfectant wipes; and packaged, unused protective goggles.

"The latest projections estimate that a medical surge could push the hospitals in our county to capacity and we'll need another location to house patients requiring particular levels of care," Callagy said in a prepared statement. "We can't just wait to see if this will happen. We need to prepare now so that we can be ready to care for our friends, neighbors and loved ones when they need it most."

During the Monday conference call, Callagy said he isn't sure when there will be a peak in the number of cases. It's also too soon to tell if the shelter-at-home efforts have been effective at flattening the curve of the contagion, he said.

New mapping tool

On Friday, March 27, San Mateo County released a [new mapping tool](#) to help residents find open grocery stores, medical services, social services, parks and restaurants offering takeout.

Telephone town hall

A telephone town hall on the status of the coronavirus in Santa Clara County is scheduled for this Sunday, April 5, at 11 a.m. The meeting will feature Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody and Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian and other health care professionals. Anyone interested in joining can call 855-866-6313.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MARCH 28-29

The number of coronavirus cases sharply rose in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties over the weekend. As of Sunday, San Mateo County has 277 cases and six deaths. Santa Clara County has 646 cases, 72 of which were reported on Saturday and Sunday, and 25 deaths.

Santa Clara County has the most people with the coronavirus compared to the eight other Bay Area counties. The county's 646 cases as of Sunday afternoon make up over a quarter of the region's total cases. The county's death count now stands at 25, five of which were reported on Saturday.

Stanford University is now aware of 29 people who are connected to the Stanford community either as faculty, staff, students or postdoctoral students and who have received positive COVID-19 test results.

State bans vehicle access at state parks

California State Parks announced on Sunday that it is temporarily closing vehicle access at all 280 state parks to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The department issued the restriction following a noticeable increase of visitors at parks statewide over the start of the weekend.

"On Saturday, many state parks once again experienced visitation surges that made it impossible for the public to implement appropriate social/physical distancing practicing," according to the announcement.

The Parks Department recommends that residents stay close to home when going outdoors. "This is not the time for a road trip to a destination park or beach," according to the announcement.

The department said it will continue to monitor visitation at all state parks, and if the current restrictions are not sufficient to protect public health, additional measures may be taken to fully close parks, including trails, bathrooms and other amenities.

For more information about park closures, go to the [State Parks COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

Ventilator acquisitions increase and positive cases rise

Gov. Gavin Newsom held a press conference at the Sunnyvale manufacturing plant of Bloom Energy on Saturday to highlight work the company is doing refurbishing ventilators. On March 16, Newsom called for 10,000 additional ventilators to meet a projected surge in serious COVID-19 cases. Since making the plea, the state has procured an additional 4,250 ventilators toward that goal, he said.

Bloom's CEO K.R. Sridhar said the company shipped 80 refurbished ventilators to the state on Friday — on top of 24 it originally shipped — and was shipping another 120 on Saturday. The company expects to increase production in the next weeks to handle 250 per day.

Bloom is also refurbishing 170 broken ventilators received by Los Angeles from the federal stockpile. That shipment should be delivered on Monday, he said.

Newsom said the state had a 105% surge in the number of people in intensive care units between Friday and Saturday, more than doubling from 200 to 410 cases. Hospitalization rose from 746 to 1,034 patients — a 38.6% increase. He added that while those numbers may be startling, they are much lower figures overall than in other states.

He strongly urged the public to continue to shelter in place. It is the only way to prevent further deaths and spread of the disease and to not overwhelm the hospital system.

San Mateo County closes its parks

All San Mateo County parks have been closed until further notice due to a sharp increase in visitors despite the shelter-at-home and social distancing orders enacted to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, county officials said on Friday.

The county had kept 17 of the 23 sites it manages open before Friday.

An increase in visitors last weekend and observations of park and trail use over the past several weeks led to the closure order.

"The decision to close parks is not easy, especially now when people are looking for outdoor experiences, but the safety of San Mateo County residents must always be a priority," said San Mateo County Parks Director Nicholas Calderon. "In that spirit we had to take this action."

Data collected from mid-February to March 25 showed increases of 50% to 300% in park use following the shelter-at-home order.

Park staff also noticed people gathering in groups and failing to keep a safe distance, county officials said.

"We have a limited amount of time for the shelter-in-place order to truly save lives," County Manager Mike Callagy said. "The sheer number of people crowding our parks and driving to reach them made them unsafe for our community. I appreciate the desire for our residents to get outside and enjoy our open spaces, but we cannot have them descending on our parks in large groups now."

Entrance gates and parking lots will be locked and notices will be posted that the parks and trails are closed.

Patrol of parks will continue during the closure.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MARCH 27

Santa Clara County now has a total of 574 cases of the coronavirus, 32 of which were announced on Friday, according to a [new dashboard](#) launched by the county this afternoon. The dashboard provides a daily count of the cases since Feb. 28 and charts of the totals cross-tabulated with age, gender and underlying health conditions.

Of the 574 people with COVID-19, 53%, or a little over 300, are male and 46%, roughly 264, are female. A majority of the cases are people between 41 and 50 years old, which made up 21% of the total. Here's a full breakdown by age group:

- 20 years old or under: 3.5%.
- 21 to 30 years old: 9.9%.
- 31 to 40 years old: 17.8%.
- 41 to 50 years old: 21.4%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 19%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 12.4%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 9.2%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 4.4%.
- 91 years old or over: 1.2%.

- Unknown: 1.6%

The county also reported one more person died of the disease, bringing the death toll to 20, 70% of which were male and 30% of which were female. Of the total, 75% had pre-existing conditions and 15% had none.

Here's a full breakdown of the people who died by age group:

- 41 to 50 years old: 5%.
- 51 to 60 years old: 20%.
- 61 to 70 years old: 25%.
- 71 to 80 years old: 20%.
- 81 to 90 years old: 30%.

On Friday, March 27, San Mateo County announced a total of 239 people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and six people who have died from the disease. That's an increase of 44 new confirmed cases since Thursday.

San Jose predicts county's total COVID-19 deaths over next three months

San Jose Deputy City Manager Kip Harkness presented preliminary data regarding the potential spread of the coronavirus in Santa Clara County during the City Council's March 24 meeting. The city's models estimated that between 9,000 and 19,000 people in the county of 1.9 million residents might currently be infected with the virus.

The city's models also predicted the worst, moderate and best-case scenarios for hospitalizations and deaths and the number of people who might require life-saving ventilators. It also estimated a timeline for each scenario and the impact of each.

"We have to bend the curve now," he said, referring to the trajectory of the contagion.

If residents do comply with the shelter-at-home order, hospitals could mostly handle the number of people needing ventilators. But under the moderate and worst scenarios, in which residents do not stay at home, the number of seriously ill people would overwhelm the system.

Even in the best-case scenario, an estimated 2,000 people in Santa Clara County could die in the next 12 weeks.

Santa Clara County public health leaders distanced themselves from the San Jose report, however. In a statement released on Thursday, they said the modeling and data had not been vetted by their department. On Friday, Executive Officer Jeff Smith said that statistical models of the future spread of the coronavirus are not what people should focus on. The only thing that matters at this point is for people to stay home and consistently refrain from being in contact with others as much as possible.

"Statistics can be misleading," said Smith, a physician.

The county is contracting with Stanford Medicine to analyze detailed data to determine factors that cause spread of the virus so health departments can have "internal projections about what we can expect in the future," he said.

Moratoriums on residential evictions

Gov. Gavin Newsom on Friday signed an executive order that banned evicting renters impacted by the coronavirus crisis through May 31. Under the order, landlords can't evict tenants who don't pay rent and law enforcement or courts can't enforce the removal of renters.

The executive order also requires tenants declare their inability to pay rent in writing within seven days after their due date. A copy over the order can be found [here](#).

Newsom's order comes a day after the East Palo Alto City Council unanimously passed an emergency law that temporarily bans tenants from getting evicted as a result of the pandemic. Under the emergency law, also effective through May 31, tenants are required to provide a written notice about their inability to pay rent within 30 days. More information on the moratorium can be found [here](#).

Known cases of COVID-19 in California sharply rise

Confirmed cases of the coronavirus rose 26% in one day, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced on Friday. Statewide, there are 746 hospitalizations, 200 of which are in the intensive-care unit, 3,180 positive cases and 78 deaths.

Newsom said the figures are the result of additional testing, which has been lagging since the pandemic reached California in January. The state has now recorded 88,400 tests, including testing by private, state and county laboratories. Newsom said the results of those tests are coming in too slowly, however, with some patients waiting six days or more to learn if they have the disease.

Speaking in front of the federal hospital ship the USNS Mercy, which is docked in Los Angeles, Newsom said that the city saw a 50% surge in cases in two days. At that rate, the city could reach similar numbers of positive cases as New York City in a week and the state could match New York in 12 days. He urged

everyone to stay inside and continue to respect the shelter-at-home order as the only way to flatten the curve of the contagion.

The state has ordered 98 park facilities, mostly on the coast, to shut their parking lots to prevent people from gathering.

JCC suspends most operations

The Oshman Family Jewish Community Center in Palo Alto has decided to suspend most operations starting this weekend as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, which has left "an insurmountable financial impact," CEO Zack Bodner said in an email addressed to the community. The community center has also placed most of its staff on furlough and some remain hired at "significantly reduced compensation."

The JCC is continuing to offer programs and resources through its [virtual hub](#).

Students map COVID-19 cases, free meal distributions

Two Palo Alto High School students, Jonathan Kao and Victor Lin, have created a real-time website with coronavirus data provided by counties across the nation, according to a post by Kao on neighborhood social network Nextdoor.

Users can search for information on their county by searching their ZIP code or county and sign up for daily emails updates on new data from their county. View the website at clearcov19.com/.

A group of Stanford University students, in partnership with local school districts and nonprofit organizations, have created a digital map with detailed information about where local children can access free meals during the school closures in 10 Bay Area counties. View it [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATE: MARCH 26

Santa Clara County recorded 83 new cases of the coronavirus on Thursday and two more deaths from the disease. The new cases represent the second-highest one-day jump nearly two months since public health leaders announced the first local COVID-19 patient.

The county provided a breakdown of the age ranges for the total 542 people in the county with the coronavirus. A majority of the cases are people between 41-50 years old.

- People 20 years old or under: 19.
- People between 21 and 30 years old: 48.
- People between 31 and 40 years old: 99.
- People between 41 and 50 years old: 115.
- People between 51 and 60 years old: 104.
- People between 61 and 70 years old: 68.
- People between 71 and 80 years old: 51.
- People 80 years old or over: 30.
- People of unknown age: 8.

The county's total represents nearly half of the cases reported in the Bay Area, which has 1,322 cases.

No further details on the two deaths. The county plans to release a new website with "additional aggregate data" on its cases.

A sixth sheriff's deputy has tested positive for the coronavirus, the sheriff's office announced Thursday evening. The employee, assigned to the custody bureau, is in isolation at home and is one of three deputies who the agency determined was possibly exposed to the disease.

The sheriff's office is working to identify other staff members and inmates possibly exposed to the coronavirus.

In San Mateo County, 195 people have tested positive for COVID-19 and five people have died from the disease as of Thursday, March 26. That's an increase of 30 new confirmed cases over the last 24 hours.

Transit

A light-rail operator trainee for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has tested positive for the coronavirus, forcing the transit agency to suspend light-rail service until further notice, a VTA spokeswoman said Thursday.

Six light-car trains were running when service was suspended at 11:30 p.m. Wednesday. Agency personnel checked train platforms to make sure no riders were left stranded, according to spokeswoman Brandi Childress.

Light-rail trains will stay at the VTA's operating division and "undergo thorough cleaning," in addition to the operating division, Childress said.

Read the more from the VTA's Headways blog, which can be found [here](#).

Starting Monday, Caltrain will reduce weekday service indefinitely. The rail commuter service will run 42 trains instead of 92, according to a press release issued Thursday. The trains will make all stops between San Francisco and San Jose about every 30-60 minutes. Limited and Baby Bullet has been temporarily shut down until further notice. An updated schedule can be [here](#). The agency's weekend service will remain normal.

Donation drive

A group of Stanford School of Medicine students is holding donation drives for personal protection equipment this Friday, March 27, from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. outside of the Stanford Shopping Center.

They plan to set up in the parking lot just north of the Neiman Marcus department store. Donations can be opened or unopened but must be new. If items are open from the packaging, they must be placed in plastic zip-close bags. The group plans to safely sanitize any items before they are given away. Read more [here](#).

Telephone town hall

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, plans to discuss new federal funding to address the coronavirus crisis and available community resources at a telephone town hall meeting on Thursday, March 26, starting at 7:35 p.m. Those interested in joining can register [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATE: March 25

The latest Santa Clara County total of 459 coronavirus cases released Wednesday shows nearly half of the people presumably caught the disease within the community.

Of the 459 cases, 217 are presumed to have been community transmitted, 137 people are hospitalized and 88 are close contacts of known cases, according to the Public Health Department. No information was provided on cases associated with international travel.

The county also reported one more person died of the disease, bringing the death toll to 17.

A fifth Santa Clara County sheriff's deputy has tested positive for the coronavirus, the agency announced on Twitter. The individual, assigned to the custody bureau, is in isolation at home. Four of the five deputies worked on the same team.

In San Mateo County, 165 people have tested positive for COVID-19 and five people have died from the disease as of Wednesday, March 25. That's an increase of four new confirmed cases and four more deaths over the last 24 hours.

Stanford University [announced](#) that it's aware of 24 individuals who are connected to the Stanford community either as faculty, staff, students or postdocs, who have tested positive for COVID-19. They are living in the Bay Area and beyond, Stanford said. The university had previously reported one on-campus case involving a student who is self-isolating on campus. The new count "should not be considered comprehensive, given that it is partly based on self-reporting to the university ... and given the quickly changing nature of the COVID-19 spread," Stanford said, it is encouraging its community members to report test results to the university. Later on Wednesday, the university learned of two more people who have tested positive for COVID-19, raising the total to 26 individuals.

Social media giant's contribution

Facebook contributed \$250,000 to the Sequoia Union High School District to give 2,000 students access to Wi-Fi hotspots for distance learning. High school district officials had reached out to Facebook because they anticipated the need for tech support for many of its families.

"We're proud to partner with the District and contribute \$250,000 to ensure 2,000 SUHSD (Sequoia Union High School District) students — who would normally not have access to reliable internet at home — can access their online schoolwork from home," said Chloe Meyere, a Facebook spokesperson. "We're grateful for the District's leadership on this critical issue, and will continue to support our neighbors struggling with the impact of COVID-19."

Transit service

On Wednesday, SamTrans implemented a new practice, having riders board at the rear of busses with multiple doors, to follow social distancing recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Passengers with disabilities or in need of assistance will be exempt from the practice. The agency is calling on patrons to stay 6 feet apart as requested by the CDC. Rides are currently free until further notice.

SamTrans has seen its weekday ridership drop 65-70% and expects to see lose \$1.3 million in monthly revenue fare.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority plans to reduce service on its bus, light-rail and paratransit services starting Monday, March 30. The agency aims to prioritize service to hospitals, food banks and shelters.

"We find ourselves in an unprecedented situation of balancing how we provide that service amid a health pandemic in which ridership is extremely sparse," spokesman Ken Blackstone wrote on the VTA's "Headways" blog.

The changes include cutting down light-rail service frequency to every 30 minutes; ending bus and light-rail trips after 9 p.m., with the exception of Route 22 (which will continue to run 24/7 between the Palo Alto Transit Center and San Jose's Eastridge Transit Center); and adjustments to the Express 181 bus to coincide with BART's reduced service schedule.

A map of the reduced service changes can be found at vta.org.

PREVIOUS UPDATE: March 24

On Tuesday, Santa Clara County joined six other Bay Area jurisdictions in issuing new reporting requirements for laboratories testing for the new coronavirus, the county said in a press release.

The county, along with the city of Berkeley and Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo counties, are seeking more detailed information to help health leaders understand the rate of infection and possibly identify areas of dense infection.

Altogether, the jurisdictions have reported 930 confirmed cases, which makes up over half of the state's total, and 19 deaths. (Those numbers have since changed since Santa Clara County announcements of additional cases and deaths on Tuesday afternoon.)

Under the order, labs not only need to report positive results, which has prevented public health leaders from knowing the total number of people tested, but also negative and inconclusive readings. The test results for residents in each jurisdiction must be sent to the health care provider seeking the test and appropriate state and local authorities.

Public health labs are limited in the number of tests they can run compared to the commercial and academic labs, where testing is more readily available, according to the Santa Clara County press release.

"Receiving this critical information from those labs will help local health departments respond to COVID-19 during this unprecedented time," Dr. Sara Cody said in the press release.

Read the Santa Clara County order [here](#).

Shelter-at-home order could last 12 weeks

Gov. Gavin Newsom said on Tuesday, March 24 that a shelter-at-home order would last through April and as long as 12 weeks. Newsom said Californians have much to do to flatten the curve to levels where contagion of the COVID-19 virus would be greatly reduced.

Newsom's comments made over Facebook Live are at odds with those of President Donald Trump, who wants the country to get back to work by Easter, April 12. Newsom said it's "misleading" to think the state could reduce its stay-at-home order by that date.

"April, for California, would be sooner than any of the experts that I talk to would believe is possible," he said.

Newsom said the next six to eight weeks will be pivotal. California couldn't make any potential adjustments to the order for at least six weeks. In eight to 12 weeks "we will be in a very different place," he said.

He noted that people must do more to heed the shelter and social distancing order, and the impact of the disease on younger people can't be underestimated. Disproportionately, 50% of the positive coronavirus cases are among people ages 18 to 49, he said, although the majority of hospitalizations and deaths are still among people ages 60 and older. A teenager in Lancaster, a city about 70 miles north of Los Angeles, has died from the disease, he said.

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County reported 54 new cases of the coronavirus on Tuesday. The county now has a total of 375 cases, 125 of which are people hospitalized, 91 of which are presumed to have been community transmitted; 82 of which are close contacts of known cases and 30 of which are associated with international travel.

The county also announced three more deaths from the disease, raising its death toll to 16. Further details on the new deaths weren't released.

San Mateo County added 19 cases to its total, which is now 161 as of Tuesday morning, March 24.

Fourth deputy has COVID-19

A fourth Santa Clara County sheriff's deputy has tested positive for the coronavirus, the agency announced on Twitter. The employee works at the custody division and is under quarantine at home. The sheriff's office announced its three other cases on Monday.

Federal Medical Station

A temporary Federal Medical Station that Santa Clara County is setting up in collaboration with the U.S. Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response will serve less-acute COVID-19 cases, the county clarified on Tuesday in a press release. The county had previously said the station wouldn't care for coronavirus patients.

The station will be set up at the Santa Clara Convention Center to accommodate up to 250 people. It will also care for short-term inpatient patients with subacute medical, mental health or other needs. The station will be supplied with beds, supplies and medicines, the county said. More information on the stations can be found at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/2019-2020/0303/0303.aspx).

Food closet

Downtown Street Team's food closet located at All Saints Episcopal Church in Palo Alto is staying stocked with fresh groceries to help a community in need during the coronavirus pandemic.

According to the organization's senior manager David Vyfvinkel, the downtown food closet has received two to three times more fresh produce than it usually serves thanks to donations from various retailers and organizations such as Trader Joe's and Second Harvest Food Bank.

And besides a few newcomers coming in from the South Palo Alto Food Closet at Covenant Presbyterian Church, which is currently closed, the team is serving fewer clients than usual.

"We usually have about 60-75 people on any given day," Vyfvinkel said. "Now we're getting 40 to 45."

The three volunteers, including Vyfvinkel, who were operating the food closet on Tuesday wore masks and gloves to protect themselves while they handled food. To keep 6 feet of distance from the public, as recommended by public health officials, Vyfvinkel said they now make visitors wait outside while the team fills people's grocery bags with food and brings it outside.

The food closet is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; Thursday from 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; and Saturday from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

PREVIOUS UPDATE: March 23

Santa Clara County has reported a total of 321 cases, 19 of which were announced on Monday. Of the 321 cases, 116 people are hospitalized, 91 presumed to have been community transmitted; 77 are close contacts of known cases; 28 are associated with international travel; and 13 people have died, according to the county's public health department.

Also on Monday, the county started releasing data on the people who have died. Of the 13 deaths, nine were men and four were women. The county also reported age ranges for the deceased:

- One person was between 41 and 50 years old.
- Two people were between 51 and 60 years old.
- Four people were between 61 and 70 years old.
- Two people were between 71 and 80 years old.
- Four people were between 81 and 90 years old.

Also, eight of the deaths involved people with pre-existing conditions and the remaining five had no pre-existing conditions.

San Mateo County now has 142 coronavirus cases, 25 of which were reported Monday morning, and one death.

At a press conference on Monday, Gov. Gavin Newsom said California needs 50,000 hospital beds, up from 20,000, in response to the coronavirus after the state recalibrated its needs based on updated modeling. The increase means the state will seek to identify places to establish an additional 17,000 net new beds to add to its existing stock.

Coronavirus testing

On Monday, March 23, Santa Clara County issued an update on local testing for coronavirus. It has tested 1,044 samples for 647 patients as of Sunday, March 22.

The county noted that its public health laboratory can only run up to 100 tests daily through kits provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The lab is neither able to run tests at the high rates of private, commercial labs nor structured to handle such a volume. Its current focus is to test hospital patients; people living or working in high-risk places, such as long-term care facilities; health care professionals; and first responders.

In light of these limitations, the county has called on large commercial laboratories to report all positive and negative results for COVID-19 tests, plus other key information, according to the update. The details would allow the county to determine which parts of the community are seeing "more intense transmission."

Read the rest of the statement [here](#).

State parks, beaches 'soft' close

Following a weekend of packed beaches despite a state order to shelter at home due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Newsom ordered parking lots at most state parks and beaches to close. Newsom called the move a "soft closure" to discourage people from overcrowding the open spaces. Park rangers would also enforce the 6-foot-distance rule between people. All campgrounds are closed. Locally, the following parking lots are closed: Año Nuevo and Burleigh Murray state parks; Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park; and Bean Hollow, Cowell Ranch, Gray Whale Cove, Half Moon Bay, Montara, Pescadero, Pomponio and San Gregorio state beaches. A full list of all of the park closures is available [here](#).

Air National Guard arrives

Following Gov. Newsom's order, members of the California Air National Guard deployed to five counties around the state, including Santa Clara County, to help package and distribute food.

Newsom decided to use the National Guard for food distribution to the needy after nonprofit organizations around the state saw a large decrease in volunteers. Many of those volunteers are traditionally seniors and retired people, and they are among the most vulnerable to having serious complications from the COVID-19 illness and are adhering to the statewide stay-at-home order.

Last week, Newsom activated nearly 500 soldiers with Joint Task Force 115 to support county food banks. Soldiers and air personnel from the California National Guard began supporting food-bank warehouses in Sacramento. On Monday, March 23, the National Guard will send service members to support food banks in Amador, Monterey, Riverside, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties. The personnel will assist at Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, 750 Curtner Ave. in San Jose, in Santa Clara County, according to a statement released Monday evening.

Air personnel from the Fresno-based, 144th Fighter Wing, California Air National Guard, deployed their Medical Detachment 1's Homeland Response Force to support the California Emergency Medical Services Authority and assist at a medical supply warehouse in Sacramento.

Another 10 personnel from the 144th Flight Wing were sent to Pacific Grove to assist the California Emergency Medical Services with caring for 19 quarantined passengers from the Grand Princess cruise ship.

Inmates, deputies confirmed with COVID-19

A county inmate has tested positive for coronavirus, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office announced Monday. The inmate is a 31-year-old man who was arrested on Friday and booked into the county's Main Jail in San Jose. While he was getting booked into jail, he reported feeling sick and told deputies that a family member returned home from Europe days earlier, according to a sheriff's office press release.

Once booked, the man was "masked" and placed under isolation in an infirmary, where he was tested for coronavirus, according to the press release. The results showed a positive reading for COVID-19, medical staff learned on Sunday.

The inmate remains in quarantine and is being monitored. The sheriff's office notified San Jose police that the initial arresting officer or officers may have been exposed to the disease.

In response, custody medical staff plans to screen new arrestees outside of the jail's sally port area and health care workers will assess whether they have dry cough, shortness of breath, fever or been exposed to someone with the coronavirus.

Three sheriff's deputies — two assigned to the patrol division and the other assigned to the custody bureau — have also tested positive for the new coronavirus, the agency announced Monday. Of the three deputies, were confirmed with COVID-19 Sunday and the other on Monday.

Two of the three deputies are under self-quarantine and the other is in stable condition at a hospital.

Telephone town halls

Santa Clara County Public Health Department is partnering with local Congressional leaders to host a telephone town hall on Tuesday, March 24, at 1 p.m. to answer the community's questions on COVID-19.

The event is a collaboration with Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto; Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-San Jose; Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Fremont; and Rep. Jimmy Panetta, D-Carmel Valley.

The community can join the call when the event begins by calling 855-962-1194. Questions about the event can be made to the Public Health Department at 408-271-8700.

More information on the event can be found [here](#).

The Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System also plans to host a tele-town hall for veterans on March 30 from 6-7 p.m. Those interested in joining the meeting will need to register online at dashboard.teletownhall.us. Registrants will receive a call before the event starts.

Supplying respirators

Foothill College has made respirators from its respiratory therapy program available for the state Health and Human Services Agency to use in response to the pandemic. Of the 12 respirators on its Los Alto Hills campus, two of them are the same ones used at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose, according to Dr. Ram Subrahmaniam, the college's dean of STEM.

PREVIOUS UPDATE: March 21-22**Increasing health care capacity**

Santa Clara County is working with local hospitals to prepare for an expected surge in coronavirus patients, County Board of Supervisors President Cindy Chavez and Santa Clara Valley Medical Center CEO Paul Lorenz said at a press conference on Sunday.

Lorenz said there are approximately 2,500 hospital beds in the county. Roughly 400 of the beds are dedicated to pediatric care and 350 are for critical care, 75% to 80% of which are currently occupied. Approximately 290 additional beds can be converted to an "ICU level of care," he said.

"If in fact the demand goes beyond our capacity, we are working with the county emergency operations center to come up with a communitywide search plan," he said. "That plan would include looking at all 2,100 adult beds that we can equip and staff for critically ill patients."

The Valley Medical Center Foundation is continuing to collect monetary donations [online](#) and protective equipment, which can be dropped off beginning at 8 a.m. Monday, March 23, at the foundation's office on the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center campus, 2400 Clove Drive in San Jose.

Read more from the press conference [here](#).

The county has teamed up with the U.S. Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response to establish a temporary Federal Medical Station at the Santa Clara Convention Center to accommodate up to 250 people, according to a statement issued Saturday. The station will be managed by the federal office to serve patients in need of short-term, subacute care and do not have COVID-19. It will be equipped with beds, supplies and medicines, according to the county.

The state can also increase capacity at clinics, mobile health care units and adult day care facilities as part of its COVID-19 response under an executive order issued by Gov. Gavin Newsom on Saturday.

New COVID-19 cases, deaths

Santa Clara County now has 302 cases of the new coronavirus, 106 of which were announced on Saturday and Sunday. The COVID-19 death toll now stands at 10 with the announcement of two more deaths over the weekend.

Of Santa Clara County's COVID-19 cases, 108 people are hospitalized; 77 are presumed to have been community transmitted; 75 are close contacts of known cases; 22 are associated with international travel; and 10 people have died, according to the county's public health department.

The ninth and 10th recorded deaths in the county were women in their 60s and 40s, respectively. Both women died Saturday, March 21. The woman in her 40s was hospitalized Monday, March 16, according to the county. Further information was not provided.

San Mateo County announced 10 new COVID-19 cases on Saturday and seven more on Sunday, bringing its county total to 11. The county currently has one death stemming from the disease.

Menlo fire begins pandemic response unit

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District now has a Pandemic Emergency Response Unit staffed by a two-person team. The unit is tasked with taking calls of suspected COVID-19 cases, according to a press release issued Saturday.

The district recently received seven calls of suspected COVID-19 in one day and expects to see that number go up.

Staff assigned to the unit will utilize the "highest level of Emergency Medical Services" and personal protective equipment. The district said they will aim to minimize contact with whoever may have COVID-19 while on a call to decrease possible exposure to the disease.

PREVIOUS UPDATE: March 20

Santa Clara County now has 196 cases of the new coronavirus, seven of which were announced Friday. The county also reported two more deaths, bringing its total to eight. San Mateo County's total case count hit the 100 mark on Friday morning.

On Friday afternoon, Santa Clara County reported two more deaths and seven new infections as a result of the coronavirus. The seventh recorded death was an adult male in his 80s who was hospitalized on Tuesday, March 3, and died on Tuesday, March 17. The eighth reported death was an adult male in his 70s.

In San Mateo County, [100 people have tested positive](#) for COVID-19 and one person died from the disease as of Friday, March 20, at 8:57 a.m.

Also on March 20, Gov. Gavin Newsom issued an executive order extending the deadline for the official canvass of the March 3 election by 21 days. The certification of election results was initially due by April 2; it will now be by April 23. The change was made because of the difficulties presented by the social distancing order of public health officials in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Despite the extension, Friday's executive order stated: "Counties are urged to complete activities related to the official canvass according to the deadlines ordinarily imposed by state law, to the extent possible."

PREVIOUS UPDATES: MARCH 19

The state of California has issued a [mandatory, stay-at-home order](#), Gov. Gavin Newsom announced at a press conference on Thursday evening, March 19. Employees of "critical sectors" are advised to go to work, according to a [tweet](#) from Newsom. Businesses such as grocery stores, pharmacies and banks will remain open. More information is available on the state's new website dedicated to coronavirus updates, covid19.ca.gov.

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department has reported a total of [189 coronavirus cases](#), 14 of which were announced on Thursday, March 19.

Of the 189 cases, 70 are presumed community transmitted; 62 people are hospitalized; 18 are associated with international travel; 43 are close contacts of known cases and six people have died, according to the public health department.

In **San Mateo County**, [89 people have tested positive](#) for COVID-19 and one person died from the disease as of Thursday, March 19, at 10:24 a.m.

Education

Stanford announced Thursday, March 19, that the university doesn't expect to be able to hold this year's commencement "in its traditional form" due to the "strong likelihood that prohibitions on large gatherings will remain in place by later this spring." Classes will also be taught online for all of spring quarter, through June. "We are making the decision in recognition of the seriousness of the global public health challenge in front of us, and we are making it now in order to assist your planning to the greatest extent possible," Provost Persis Drell said.

The Palo Alto Unified School District released on Thursday [answers to a set of frequently asked questions from students and families](#), related to online learning offerings, teacher availability during school closures, grades and other issues. The district also said it will no longer send out announcements if students are diagnosed with COVID-19. "The County Public Health Department has said we should all operate as though everyone is exposed," the district said.

Businesses

Tootsie's at the Stanford Barn in Palo Alto has launched an ["adopt a doc and a nurse" menu](#) for people to donate meals to Stanford Hospital staff. People can choose a designated department or the hospital will determine where the food is most needed. To place an order, email catering@tootsiesbarn.com or text Tootsie's owner Rocco Scordella at 347-633-7132.

Preserves open, with restrictions: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves and trails are open to the public as is allowed during the current shelter-at-home directive but has [put new health and safety measures in place](#), including: restrooms are closed effective Friday, March 20; areas with high use will be intermittently closed without notice to promote safe social distancing; group gathering areas are closed; and group activities are suspended. Preserve visitors are reminded to stay at home if they are sick, and to maintain social distances of at least 6 feet from others.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 18

A man in his 60s died from the coronavirus on Tuesday, March 17, marking the sixth death in Santa Clara County, the Public Health Department announced on Wednesday, March 18.

The man had been hospitalized since March 5 and died of the disease 12 days later, the department said in a press release Wednesday morning.

City declares emergency

The East Palo Alto City Council declared a local state of emergency during a meeting on Tuesday, March 17. The declaration allows the city manager to ask Gov. Gavin Newsom to proclaim the city to be in a state of emergency and to request a federal declaration to aid residents with financial aid for losses and emergency repairs.

Under the order, the city manager can also award contracts to repair, alter or improve city facilities without multiple bids and direct staff to roll out measures to respond to the spread of COVID-19. In addition, the city manager has jurisdiction over all public facilities and parks, which includes the ability to change hours of operations, close, or restrict access to public facilities.

The council will vote on additional emergency measures, including an emergency moratorium on evictions and protections for tenants, seniors, children, RV dwellers, small businesses, nonprofits, homeowners and other impacted groups at a later date.

For updates on the city's response to the coronavirus, visit facebook.com/CityOfEastPaloAlto.

Health organization responds

Sutter Health, which includes the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, has added an online [symptom assessment for COVID-19](#), which builds on its existing medical symptom checker. Palo Alto Medical Foundation and other Sutter Health patients can access the assessment tool through their My Health Online portal.

The platform assesses the patient's symptoms and gives appropriate care options, from self-care to attending a walk-in clinic to seeking emergency assistance.

Sutter is also collecting test samples for COVID-19 and influenza in high-risk patients. Patients who feel ill should [schedule a video visit](#) or call their doctor to receive guidance and see if they meet the criteria for testing.

"It is important for patients to contact us first before visiting a care site, as you need a referral and appointment to get tested," Sutter said in a statement. "If your symptoms are mild to moderate, you do not need testing. Please stay home to rest, get well and prevent exposure to others."

Businesses

On March 17, Stanford Shopping Center closed temporarily to comply with the shelter-at-home order, stating: "We must all adhere strictly to these governmental orders — these are not merely advice or guidance, but instead mandatory legal requirements." Some restaurants at the mall remain open for takeout and/or delivery.

Grocery stores in Palo Alto have made special accommodations for seniors, who public health officials say face a higher risk for the coronavirus, amid the pandemic.

The downtown Whole Foods Market at [774 Emerson St.](#) will exclusively service customers ages 60 and older from 8-9 a.m. (The store has also adjusted its hours to 9 a.m.-8 p.m.) The company also plans to restock shelves and sanitize surfaces after closing each day.

Piazza's Fine Foods at [3922 Middlefield Road](#) at the Charleston Shopping Center will give seniors priority checkout from 7-8 a.m. daily. The store observed many seniors shopped during the store's first hours of operation, according to an Instagram post by the Piazza family.

"As with other matters during the current virus crisis, developments are fluid and we are prepared to make proper adjustments immediately as needed," the post states.

Piazza's recently adjusted its hours, which are now from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and has dedicated the last hour for "comprehensive cleaning, sanitizing and restocking of shelves."

In a [tweet](#), Country Sun Natural Foods at [440 California Ave.](#) announced that seniors will be given special access to its store on Wednesdays from 8-10 a.m. The market has also reduced its hours to 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

On Wednesday, Safeway [announced](#) that it would be reserving early-morning shopping hours for seniors and other vulnerable populations. Though the accommodations may change for each store, the company said in a social media post that all locations will designate 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays for seniors and at-risk community members, including pregnant women and those with compromised immune systems.

Those seeking to order online for pickup or delivery from Safeway may be faced with waits as long as one week as stores scramble to restock popular items after a surge of [panic buying](#) starting this month.

There are 10 Safeway locations on the Midpeninsula in Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Los Altos, Mountain View, Woodside and Los Altos.

Raley's, the parent company operating the Nob Hill Foods on Grant Road in Mountain View, announced a long list of accommodations for seniors rolling out starting this week. Starting Thursday, March 19, the store will offer curbside pick-up for pharmacy prescriptions, though customers are expected to call and notify pharmacy staff ahead of time. The store will also have more time slots available for pickup and delivery for groceries starting Sunday.

Nob Hill is also expected to launch on Saturday a new program called "Senior Essential Bags," essentially pre-bagged groceries that will be available for curbside pickup at a discounted price for customers ages 65 and older or are otherwise considered at-risk. The company will have a \$20 bag with fruit and pantry staples and a \$35 bag with cooked, ready-to-eat meals.

"We call upon our customers to respect the intended purpose of this program, which is to serve seniors or those at risk," according to a statement released by the company.

The Rose International Market on Castro Street and El Camino Real in Mountain View is taking precautions amid concerns over the spread of COVID-19, but has not designated any store hours specifically for seniors.

Ava's Downtown Market & Deli in Mountain View is considering adjustments to its store schedule to accommodate at-risk customers starting Friday, store management said Thursday. The market does not have a large population of senior clients, they said. The Poke Bar inside the store has temporarily closed down because of the reduced foot traffic into the store, management said.

Bianchini's Market, which runs at Portola Valley store, will be open from 9-10 a.m. daily for people ages 65 and older, expectant mothers and community members with disabilities. The market has adjusted its operating hours to 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

Roberts Market has designated a daily seniors shopping time from 9:30-10 a.m. at its Woodside store.

Target has also set aside the first hour of shopping on Wednesdays to "vulnerable guests," including seniors and people with underlying health conditions, according to a [message](#) from Chairman and CEO Brian Cornell. The company has locations in East Palo Alto and Mountain View.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 17

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department has reported a total of [175 coronavirus cases](#) as of 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17.

Of the 175 cases, 70 are presumed community transmitted; 56 people are hospitalized; 18 are associated with international travel; 38 are close contacts of known cases and five people have died, according to the public health department.

The fifth death from COVID-19 was a man in his 50s. He was hospitalized on March 9 and died earlier in the day on Tuesday, according to the department.

The coronavirus pandemic continues to take a hit on daily life on the Midpeninsula, including in Palo Alto, where the City Council [extended its state of emergency](#) declaration by 60 days.

On Wednesday, March 18, at 1 p.m., the city of Palo Alto plans to roll out a Community Support Call Center where residents and businesses can find information related to the coronavirus crisis on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Residents can call the center at 650-272-3181.

The city has also created utility rate relief programs for residences and businesses. Palo Alto Utilities customers can expect a temporary ban on service shut-offs for not paying a bill, and extended repayment plans. The city has also expanded medical rate and financial rate assistance programs to help customers in financial hardship with a 25% discount on gas and electricity charges and 20% on storm drain charges, if eligible. More information on the programs can be found at cityofpaloalto.org. The city currently has a program that offers one-time bill assistance supported through customer donations. More details about that program can be found [here](#).

The public health crisis has forced numerous operational changes at City Hall, however, the city will continue to stream meetings through the Midpeninsula Media Center. The Palo Alto-based company will also broadcast Palo Alto Board of Education meetings and other public meetings with its partner cities, according to Midpen Media CEO Keri Stokstad.

"Continuing this coverage is especially crucial for our cable viewers that depend on their local channels for information from their city representatives," Stokstad told the Weekly in an email.

The center has closed classes, events and equipment reservations, among other nonessential functions.

On Tuesday, March 17, Palo Alto Unified reported a Fletcher Middle School student has [tested positive for the coronavirus](#).

Local residents have raised concerns about construction work continuing despite a shelter in place order that went into effect at midnight Tuesday. The [order](#) allows for work related to "Essential Infrastructure," such as public works construction and housing construction.

Local playgrounds

Midpeninsula cities have advised families to keep children away from playgrounds, reinforcing a public health order issued by local leaders to prevent COVID-19 from spreading to other community members.

In an email issue Tuesday, the Magical Bridge Playground called on the public to stay away from its playground in Palo Alto and other public playgrounds in the Bay Area.

"While this breaks our hearts, we know these necessary steps are needed to stop the spread of the Covid-19," the email states.

East Palo Alto's parks, in addition to restrooms at those sites, remain open, but playgrounds have been shut down through April 7, according to a press release.

Menlo Park has also suspended services at its playgrounds, which falls under the list of the city's closed buildings and facilities in response to the pandemic, according to an email sent Monday morning. Parks will stay open, but organized or team activities have been banned.

Congresswoman taking questions

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, is holding tele-town hall meetings to provide an update on Congress' actions in response to the new coronavirus and to answer questions. The meetings will be held on Wednesday, March 18, from 2:55-3:55 p.m. and Thursday, March 19, from 4:15-5:15 p.m.

"During these challenging and uncertain times, it's essential for me to hear from you directly, and ensure that you and your loved ones have the information you need to stay safe and healthy," Eshoo said in a statement.

Anyone interested in participating in the meetings can sign up [here](#). Constituents can also register by texting "REPANNAESHOO" to 833-898-5483.

Jewish Family and Children's Services, which runs a center in Palo Alto, remains open with staff functioning as first responders, Executive Director Anita Friedman said in a statement on Tuesday, March 17. The

organization is offering specific services for seniors, adults, families and parents during the COVID-19 crisis through its action alert program.

All JFCS clinics and group social programs have been canceled. Instead, social work and medical staff are serving every client in their own home, Friedman said. Clients and patients receiving services can call the JFCS Bay Area Critical Help Line at 415-449-3700. The agency is continuing to provide home care to its older adult clients and patients and deliver cooked meals and groceries. It has implemented a "Safe At Home Program" to closely monitor high-risk and lone elderly and disabled clients.

Emergency counseling is available for people who need help coping with the crisis. Online workshops are available to help parents understand how to help their children with the added anxiety that they may be experiencing. Parents can also find tips on supporting children [here](#) and how to help children manage stress [here](#).

JFCS is also asking for donations to its Community Emergency Fund, which has a \$500,000 matching grant. In addition, volunteers are needed for several activities, including making phone calls to isolated, homebound seniors and purchasing and delivering groceries (such as Passover care packages) to Holocaust survivors, frail seniors and homebound disabled adults. Details on services, volunteer opportunities and making donations can be found [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 16

Residents of six Bay Area counties, including Santa Clara and San Mateo, are being [ordered to stay at home](#) for all but "essential reasons" for the next three weeks starting at 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, March 17, as the cases of COVID-19 continue to rise.

The order makes exceptions for people to leave their homes for work related to health care, infrastructure and "essential activities," such as gathering necessary supplies (for example, canned foods, dry goods and pet supplies).

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department has confirmed 24 additional cases of COVID-19 virus, totaling 138 as of 5 p.m. on March 15. Of those, 63 are presumed community transmitted; 52 people are hospitalized; 17 are associated with international travel; 30 are close contacts of known cases and two people have died, the health department announced on Monday afternoon. In **San Mateo County, 41 people have tested positive** for COVID-19 as of Monday, and the county announced its first death due to the coronavirus.

Two more people have died from COVID-19 infections, bringing the total to four within Santa Clara County, county public health officials said on Monday afternoon, March 16. Two men — a man in his 50s and one in his 80s — died on March 15. The man in his 50s was hospitalized beginning March 12; the older man entered the hospital on March 7.

San Mateo County has issued guidance regarding its county "shelter-in-place" order for COVID-19: smcgov.org/shelter-place-faqs.

Santa Clara County Superior Court

The clerk's office will be closed to the public. Potential jurors scheduled to appear March 16-30 for service are excused and mustn't arrive at court. Empaneled jurors already in trial will receive instruction on a case-by-case basis. The court strongly encourages social distancing and using CourtCall (1-888-88-COURT) to appear telephonically whenever possible.

Only the following essential functions will go forward during this time: Criminal Courthouse Hall of Justice: In-custody arraignments including: misdemeanors, felonies, domestic violence and parole violations. In- and out-of-custody family violence arraignments, time not waived preliminary hearings and collaborative courts parole violations.

Family Justice Center Courthouse: Domestic violence restraining orders; juvenile dependency detentions; mental health emergency review.

Civil Courthouse Downtown Superior Courthouse: Civil harassment restraining orders; mental health conservatorships; conservatorship and elder abuse; writ temporary restraining orders.

Juvenile Justice: Juvenile detentions.

To check the status of continued matters visit [here](#).

Coronavirus testing

Verily, a subsidiary of Alphabet, has launched an online tool to help screen patients for COVID-19 testing. The tool, called Project Baseline, triages people who are concerned about their COVID-19 risk and sends them to testing sites if they fit criteria based on their symptoms, according to an announcement by the company.

The pilot program is available to residents of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties who can take the screener survey starting Monday, March 16.

To use the screening tool, visit projectbaseline.com.

Local schools respond

In light of school closures, announced on Friday, March 13, both the Palo Alto Unified and Ravenswood City school districts are providing free meals for all students at pick-up sites during the school closures. More information about the Palo Alto Unified meals and pick-up locations can be found [here](#) and Ravenswood, [here](#).

The Ravenswood Education Foundation has [launched an emergency fund](#) to provide financial relief related to the school closures for families, teachers and staff in the Ravenswood City School District in East Palo Alto. The district is working to identify needs for the funds, including food access and distribution; support with rent, bills and groceries; and distance learning.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 14-15

New cases of COVID-19

In Santa Clara County, which has the most cases of any county in California, the number of people confirmed to have COVID-19 jumped from [79 to 114](#) between Friday and Sunday. Of those, two people have died, 48 are hospitalized; 52 cases were a result of community transmission.

San Mateo County reported its first death due the coronavirus this weekend, an older adult with underlying medical conditions. The county did not release further information. In San Mateo County, [31 people have tested positive](#) for COVID-19 as of Sunday, March 15. The number of cases stood at 20 on Friday.

State of California

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced new state restrictions in a Sunday press conference, including home isolation of everyone in the state over age 65, closure of all bars, wineries and nightclubs and requiring restaurants to reduce their occupancy by half. Newsom also said that 51% of all California school districts have closed and that 80-85% of all students statewide will no longer be in class starting Monday, March 16.

"These are profoundly significant steps in real time and they're significant steps up from two days ago," Newsom said. "We're guided deeply not by anxiety, not by fear but a very pragmatic response to meet this moment without creating other unintended consequences."

City of Palo Alto

The City of Palo Alto activated its emergency operations center on Sunday, March 15, and is launching a community support call center early this week. Mayor Adrian Fine is also convening a meeting of the Citizen Corps Council, which provides coordination between government and community institutions including Stanford University and Healthcare, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Palo Alto Unified School District, as well as business and volunteer organizations.

Palo Alto will keep all libraries and community centers closed starting Saturday in response to the coronavirus and recent guidance from Santa Clara County, the city announced Friday evening. As of Friday, all in-person library programs and services in Mountain View have been canceled or postponed through April 6.

The city, which had already canceled more than 30 events, is also instituting a hiring freeze, City Manager Ed Shikada announced Friday.

In addition to libraries, the city will keep the Palo Alto Art Center, the Mitchell Park Community Center, the Lucie Stern Community Center, the Junior Museum and Zoo, the Children's Theatre and Rinconada Pool closed as of Saturday. The Palo Alto Animal Shelter will also be closed and all events at programs at Cubberley Community Center will be suspended.

Tenants at Cubberley may modify or suspend their activities in accordance with county guidance, the city announced, referring to the county's Friday order banning all events with more than 100 people and requiring precautionary measures for all events with more than 35 people.

Stanford Health Care

Stanford Health Care announced on Sunday, March 15, that [drive-through appointments](#) for Stanford Medicine's COVID-19 test are now available for patients who have been referred by their medical providers. Patients remain in their cars for the tests, which take a few minutes and are administered by a physician, advanced practice provider or nurse outfitted in protective clothing, including a gown, goggles, mask and gloves, Stanford Health Care said. Patients will be notified of their COVID-19 test results within 24 hours; if the result is positive, their doctors will make sure they get appropriate care, which can range from hospitalization for people showing severe symptoms to telemedicine visits and self-quarantine for those with mild cases. The drive-through tests are available from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week, at Express Care's Hoover Pavilion location in Palo Alto. Patients can call 650-498-9000 to speak with a nurse who will assess the next step for their care.

Businesses

Safeway supermarkets in Palo Alto, Mountain View and Menlo Park have shortened their hours to enable staff to restock the shelves and clean the stores, according to signs posted on the doors and phone recordings. The Safeways are open 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. with the following exceptions, which are open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.: Menlo Park at 525 El Camino Real; Mountain View at 645 San Antonio Road.

Mass transit

Caltrain is reducing its weekday service "in response to a significant decline in ridership stemming from efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus." The [changes](#) are effective Tuesday, March 17.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), the multi-billion dollar agency that plans and operates the county's road and transit network, [announced today](#), March 14, that starting on Monday, March 16, it will reduce capacity on its light rail vehicles, running one-car trains instead of two- and three-car trains. It will also suspend its school-trip service for three weeks in light of school closures.

Churches

Bishop Oscar Cantu [asked all parishes](#), missions and chapels in the Diocese of San José to suspend public masses beginning today, March 14, until further notice. There are diocese churches in Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos.

San Mateo County

The San Mateo County health department [announced Saturday](#) evening that it is banning gatherings of more than 50 people for three weeks starting on Sunday. The order also advises against get togethers of more than 10 people. This amends its Thursday order, which [barred all gatherings larger than 250 people](#) starting on Friday.

The health department [issued an order](#) on Friday to close all schools in the county for three weeks starting Monday.

San Mateo County Libraries [announced on Friday](#) that all of its library branches would close starting Monday until March 31.

On Friday, the San Mateo County Probation Department [suspended visitation](#) at the Youth Services Center – Juvenile Hall and the Margaret J. Kemp Camp (Camp Kemp) facilities until further notice to curb the spread of the virus.

San Mateo County and Parks will stay open, but the county is taking immediate protective actions, [county officials said Friday](#). Visitors will pay at designated pay stations rather than at gate house; all staff and docent-led events, including hikes and tours, are canceled through March; the Bicycle Sunday event is canceled through March and the Parks department's main office in Redwood City and Coyote Point Marina office will be closed to the public indefinitely.

Menlo Park declared a local state of emergency [on Thursday](#), closing City Hall and other facilities. Atherton followed suit on Friday, canceling events and scaling back public meetings.

Nonprofits and events

Organizations are also announcing temporary closures. In Palo Alto, the Oshman Family Jewish Community Center will close for at least two weeks starting Sunday night, March 15, according to a March 13 email from CEO Zack Bodner.

Preschool and Club J will be closed as well. However, he wrote, "In the coming days, we will be working to find creative ways to keep connecting people with each other, whether that is through distance learning or exercise broadcasts or check-ins with isolated people in our community."

There has not been any confirmed case of COVID-19 at the JCC, the email stated.

"At this time, we will not be able to issue refunds for March membership or tuition," Bodner wrote.

The annual Stanford Powwow, which takes place on Mother's Day weekend, has also been canceled, organizers said on [their website](#).

On Thursday, Little House Activity Center and the Rosener House Adult Care center, two Menlo Park programs that cater to seniors, will be closed as of the end of the day Friday for two weeks.

For a look at how the public health emergency has affected arts organizations, go [here](#) .

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 13

Public health

A second person in Santa Clara County has died of COVID-19, the Santa Clara Public Health Department announced on March 13. The woman was in her 80s, and she was hospitalized on March 9. The department did not include any information on the woman's city of residence. It also did not make a spokesperson available to the media.

She was among the latest cases of COVID-19 announced by the department. There are 79 cases as of March 13, which accounts for more than a quarter of the cases in the state, which has 277, including four deaths.

Santa Clara County Public Health officials on March 13 ordered all public schools to close for three weeks, starting Monday, March 16, through April 3. [Palo Alto schools](#), [Mountain View and Los Altos schools](#) will be closed for one month since spring break is scheduled to start on April 4. [San Mateo County](#) health officials also directed their county's schools to close.

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department also banned all [gatherings of 100 persons or more](#).

Restaurants in Santa Clara County were [also given new restrictions](#) on March 13 to reduce spread of the novel coronavirus, including specific guidance on intensive cleaning, personal hygiene and options for delivery of foods.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 12

Cities respond

On March 12, both [Palo Alto](#) and [Mountain View](#) declared states of emergency. Emergency declarations allow local jurisdictions to activate their emergency plans and become eligible for reimbursements from federal and state governments.

East Palo Alto also announced several steps it would be taking to minimize the spread of the virus, including making arrangements for delivery of meals for senior citizens, increasing its cleaning of public areas under the city's jurisdiction and hiring a contractor to supplement the cleaning efforts.

The city also stated it will close the Senior Center Management for one week, a decision that was made by agreement with the facility, Mayor Regina Wallace-Jones said. City officials are participating in daily briefings with regional emergency management staff and minimizing public gatherings that have more than 50 attendees and that may include vulnerable populations. These gatherings are being reviewed on a case-by-case basis, according to the announcement.

Wallace-Jones urged residents to take seriously the guidelines that have been provided to the community by the San Mateo County Health Department.

"As the medical experts guiding our county through this crisis, their advice is science based and intended to save lives," Wallace-Jones wrote. "This is not the time to question the practices they have recommended, as not doing so may put your health at risk or illness or even death."

East Palo Alto is also monitoring developments in the coronavirus outbreak and is communicating with San Mateo County leaders and the CDC. East Palo Alto residents can find more information from their city and county at smchealth.org.

Local schools respond

On March 12, the Palo Alto Board of Education decided that [it will not close schools](#) in the face of the coronavirus but has decided to offer online-learning options to families who wish their children to remain at home. (This decision was reversed the next day, following county orders.)

Tech companies respond

Read the latest update on how local tech companies and their employees are impacted by the coronavirus: [Local tech companies' best defense against the coronavirus — work from home](#)

State of California responds

[California could have thousands of more test kits](#) and multiple new laboratories up and running to detect the virus associated with the COVID-19 infection as soon as next week, Gov. Gavin Newsom said during a Thursday press conference. Only 48 hours ago, Santa Clara County officials said their county laboratory could only process 30 to 40 tests per day, and Stanford University's laboratory, which has a new FDA-approved test, could only run 80 to 100 tests per day.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 11

SCC Public Health

On Wednesday, March 11, the White House coronavirus task force announced 30-day "mitigation strategies" for Santa Clara County. The [strategies](#), the task force announced, are "designed to address the effects of COVID-19 on areas that are experiencing community spread." The group also released a separate set of strategies for Seattle-King, Pierce and Snohomish counties in Washington state, which as of Wednesday has the most cases in the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The plan for Santa Clara County includes strategies for individuals, schools, senior facilities, workplaces and community- and faith-based organizations. Individuals are being advised to monitor local information, ensure a 30-day supply of medicine and wash their hands. Those at risk of severe illness should stay at home and avoid gatherings with 10 or more people.

Schools are advised to arrange distance learning and e-learning for students at risk of severe illness. They are also asked to adopt "social distancing" measures by canceling large gatherings, limiting interschool interactions and altering schedules to reduce mixing, possibly by staggering recess times. Other measures include extending spring breaks, canceling all school-associated congregations and conducting regular health checks.

The task force recommends assisted-living and senior-living facilities to undertake "social distancing" measures and limiting programs with external staff. They should also consider suspending visitor access, implementing short-term closures as needed for cleaning and contact tracing and opting for longer-term closure or quarantine of facilities until the situation is resolved. The group recommends facilities screen temperature and respiratory symptoms of attendees and staff. Staff should wear masks and wash hands before entering and after existing rooms of inhabitants.

Workplaces are asked to encourage staff to telework, expand sick leave policies, eliminate large work-related gatherings and cancel nonessential work travel as well as work-sponsored conferences.

Community- and faith-based organizations are advised to cancel large gatherings, as well as professional and college sporting events. Those organizations that serve high-risk communities are asked to cancel gatherings of more than 10 people and to stagger access to support services.

According to the task force's announcement, the mitigation strategies are recommended for 30 days, after which time local and state public health officials, in coordination with CDC, will reassess the individual community situations.

Hours after the strategies were released, Santa Clara County issued a statement that said it was "pleased" the White House adopted many of the local Public Health Department's previously issued recommendations. At the same time, the county also called on local residents to adhere to the county's ban on events with 1,000 people or more that went into effect Wednesday and cancel large events, including but not limited to ones expected to bring 250 people or more.

"We continue to work in partnership with public health experts at the CDC, the state of California, and other significantly impacted communities to issue guidance to the public," according to the statement. "We will continue to make decisions based on the best evidence available, locally relevant data on COVID-19, and the expertise of our public health officials."

San Mateo County update

As of Wednesday, March 11, San Mateo County has reported 15 confirmed cases of the coronavirus. The county issued a statement that [signaled an aggressive approach](#) to minimizing the risk of contracting coronavirus.

Stanford University responds

Stanford University announced on March 11 two new confirmed coronavirus cases, including one in Stanford Medicine as well as one on the main campus. [A School of Medicine faculty member](#) also tested positive for COVID-19 last week.

Also on March 11, Stanford University Athletics closed upcoming competitions to the public through May 15. The action is in accordance with a Santa Clara County order banning events expected bring to 1,000 people or more. Read more [here](#).

State of California responds

On March 11, California public health officials stated that non-essential gatherings of 250 or more people should be postponed or canceled until the end of March. At smaller events, attendees should keep six feet between themselves.

"Changing our actions for a short period of time will save the life of one or more people you know," said Gov. Gavin Newsom. "That's the choice before us. Each of us has extraordinary power to slow the spread of this disease." The full public health policy is posted [here](#).

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 10

San Mateo County update

San Mateo County has [opened a call center](#) to take questions from residents with nonmedical questions about novel coronavirus and [declared a state of emergency](#) on March 10.

SCC Public Health response

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors on March 10 unanimously voted to extend the county's health emergency in its effort to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus, which has killed one person and infected 44 others over the past six weeks.

The supervisors heard from several agency heads and elected officials, including county Chief Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody, Sheriff Laurie Smith and representatives from the Social Services Agency, Emergency Medical Services, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Office of Supportive Housing, Office of Education, the Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System and others.

"It's all hands on deck. We each have a role to play," Cody told the supervisors.

"This is a new virus and no one has immunity to it, so it's going to spread," she said. The goal now is to slow the virus down so that large waves of ill people aren't overwhelming the health system, she said.

The various departments are focusing on identifying people in the most vulnerable populations who might have the virus and could spread the illness within their communities, including the homeless, prisoners in county jails and the elderly, particularly those living in senior care facilities. At the same time, they want to identify ways to protect workers who don't have health insurance and might be laid off so they can still be paid, receive medical care and keep their housing.

Multiple agencies said they are ramping up their deep cleaning efforts. VTA Chief of System, Safety and Security Angelique Galleda said the transportation agency, which operates the county's bus and light-rail systems, is looking to do advanced cleaning on buses, ticket-vending machines and other surfaces where

riders make contact and is adding messaging on light-rail platforms and buses with tips on how people can help prevent spreading the virus.

Sharon Henry, head of Envision Integrated Delivery's American Medical Response ambulance services, which operates the county's ambulance system, said portable fogging units can spray the entire interior of an ambulance with disinfectant and kill all germs, including the coronavirus, within minutes.

Smith said there are no active or suspected COVID-19 cases in Santa Clara County jail facilities, but the inmate population remains at high risk because it is a closed facility. Her office is looking for ways to limit the number of people housed in the facilities, including asking the court to postpone sentencing schedules and to find alternatives such as electronic monitoring for people who are criminally low risk. The department wants to establish isolated and quarantined areas in the jails if there is an outbreak, she said. They are also limiting who can come into the jails, suspending classes and having visits through windows rather than personal-contact visits, she said.

Churches and nonprofits

On Monday, March 10, a Palo Alto Church reported that [a person with COVID-19 had been in a classroom](#) at the Cowper Street church, and a relative of the person had been on campus on March 7. Faith communities are reporting the cancellation of in-person services and other campus activities, turning to livestreaming and social media to continue services to their members.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 9

Public Health response

Santa Clara County issued its first mandatory, legal order in response to the new coronavirus outbreak: banning all events of 1,000 people or more starting this Wednesday, March 11, at midnight. The ban will remain in place until March 31, County Counsel James Williams said during a press conference at the sheriff's office's headquarters in San Jose on Monday, March 9.

The emergency order, which was issued by Dr. Sara Cody, would make it illegal to hold any such large gathering. The rule will be enforced by the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office and police departments in individual cities. Law enforcement agencies will have discretion on how to enforce the order, Williams said.

The order, which was made under state and county health and safety ordinances, does not include airports or shopping malls, where people are in transit and are not likely to be close together. Schools are also not mandated for closure.

Twenty-one of the county's COVID-19 cases were transmitted within the community, Cody said Monday. A large proportion of those cases are hospitalized.

As more tests take place through commercial laboratories, Cody said she expects to see a smaller number of hospitalized cases in relation to a larger number of people who test positive for the infection.

Cody said her department is carefully following data on the illness and made the decision to cancel events after seeing an uptick in cases over the last five days.

"It was a tipping point for us," she said.

First COVID-19 death

The order comes on the heels of the county's first fatality from the virus, which occurred on Monday morning, March 9, when a woman who had been under treatment at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View for several weeks succumbed to COVID-19, according to the Public Health Department.

The woman, who was the county's third case reported on Feb. 28, was in her 60s; her name has not been released to the public. She was the first case in the county to contract COVID-19 without recently traveling out of the country or coming into contact with a person carrying the disease. Cody said the woman had underlying health conditions but did not specify the nature of those conditions.

The news is a "tragic development," the department said in a statement. New cases have been announced every day this week: Six on March 9, five on March 8, eight on March 7. The department did not provide further information on these new cases. Over Twitter, the department has said that it's "not unexpected to have more cases" and that the cases are currently under investigation.

The county is also looking to provide supportive housing and shelter to homeless persons who need to self-isolate, County Executive Jeffrey Smith said during the March 9 press conference.

City of Palo Alto response

On Monday, March 9, the city of Palo Alto announced [more than 30 events were modified or canceled](#) through the end of the month in an effort to prevent the spread of coronavirus. The city has also made operational changes, including supplying protective gear for field staff and setting up more hand sanitizer stations.

"The city anticipates more details to be released later this week on longer-term planning and potential service delivery modifications," according to an announcement from City Manager Ed Shikada's office.

Nonprofits' response

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation, based in Mountain View, has set up a regional response fund to support organizations that are leading public health and housing efforts in each Bay Area county. In Santa Clara County, funds will go to [Destination: Home](#), a public-private partnership which will provide financial resources and help to people at risk of homelessness if coronavirus-related disruptions worsen. In San Mateo County, funds will go to support the county's [core service agencies](#), which provide emergency housing and financial assistance for rent, mortgage, utilities, medical and transportation costs for people who risk homelessness due to hardships related to the new coronavirus outbreak. More information is available [here](#).

Tech companies respond

On Monday, March 9, NASA Ames Research Center required employees work from home after learning a day earlier that one of its employees [tested positive for the new coronavirus](#).

"The safety of our employees and their families is our top priority. Any decisions we have made, or will make, is with the safety of our workforce in mind," according to a NASA Ames statement.

Business has remained mostly normal at cloud infrastructure company VMware. The tech giant was informed last week by one of its employees that their spouse had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, the Palo Alto-based company said in an email to the Weekly on Monday, March 9.

The employee, who is in self-isolation for 14 days, and their spouse have not shown symptoms of the new coronavirus. The company reopened the office the employee worked in on Monday morning, March 9, after a temporary closure that started at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, for the company to conduct a deep clean and disinfection of the building.

"Since this is a secondary contact situation, there is minimal risk of contagion based on guidelines by the Centers for Disease Control," the company said. "Our Palo Alto campus and all other buildings remain open. However, any employee who would prefer to work from home is welcome to do so."

PREVIOUS UPDATES: March 4-8

Stanford University update

On Thursday, March 5, Stanford University announced it was treating a "few" patients who have tested positive for COVID-19.

A [community message](#) by Stanford President Marc Tessier-Lavigne didn't specify how many patients are receiving care through Stanford Medicine but said staff following reporting regulations by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention and Santa Clara County.

Stanford has an emergency operations team assessing the community's risk and advising the university on ways to respond to the evolving situation, Tessier-Lavigne said. Stanford Health Care has developed a [new diagnostic test](#) approved by the Food and Drug Administration that could offer results in 12 to 24 hours.

VA Hospital treats patient

The Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System's Palo Alto hospital confirmed that it is caring for a veteran who has tested positive for the disease and was transferred to the facility from another California county.

Due to privacy laws, Chief Communication Manager Armenthis Lester could not release information regarding the patient's age, gender or condition.

The patient is in isolation and under the care of staff trained in the latest treatment guidelines provided by the CDC. Staff members are also utilizing personal protective equipment and infection control techniques. The VA is preparing to receive other former service members diagnosed with the virus and has set aside a portion of the campus, Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie confirmed during his testimony on Capitol Hill on March 4.

"We prepared a swath, a section of our Palo Alto campus to receive veterans who have this virus. We set it up for that, and that veteran is being taken care of there," Wilkie told lawmakers on the House Appropriations Committee.

"(The) VA is screening veterans and staff who present with symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath who meet the CDC criteria for evaluation of COVID-19 infection," Lester said.

New cases confirmed

Six COVID-19 cases announced March 5 involved three women and three men, according to Santa Clara County Counsel James Williams, who also serves as director of the county's Emergency Operations Center. Of the six people, four have self-isolated at home and were contacts of other known cases; two others have been hospitalized. Many of the cases have mild symptoms or have shown no symptoms, which is consistent with other cases around the globe, he added.

Four cases announced March 6 are not related to each other, according to a statement by the department. One of the cases is a man who is a household contact of a previous county case. The second is a female who is hospitalized. The third is a male who recently traveled to India and has been hospitalized. The fourth case is a male who has isolated himself at home.

The department is looking into how the second and fourth cases might have contracted the illness.

"The Public Health Department will continue to identify anyone who has come into contact with these cases," staff said in a statement. "The department also will be conducting community surveillance to determine the extent of possible disease spread in our community."

The statement did not specify the protocols or extent of the surveillance.

The [first two cases](#) reported in January involved travelers who arrived in the county from Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the viral disease that has since been on lockdown. Though both patients had mild symptoms and did not require hospitalization, they remain in quarantine, according to public health staff. The first case has recovered, the department [announced Feb. 20](#).

SCC Public Health responds

Santa Clara County Public Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody at a March 6 press conference announced new guidance for county businesses and residents. Businesses have been urged to cancel nonessential travel and not require doctors notes from employees who are sick to alleviate the workload of already burdened medical providers.

New recommendations for businesses include expanding telecommuting options and staggering start and end times for workdays to minimize close contact between employees. The space between their contact should be no less than 3 feet apart, she added.

As it has in the past, county leaders at the press conference urged that large gatherings such as sporting events and conferences should be canceled. People who are most at risk due to pre-existing conditions or who are over the age of 50 should not attend large gatherings, she said.

Worldwide and in the U.S., there have not been many cases of children who have the disease, she said. Currently, county health leaders are not recommending school closures. The county will review that recommendation on a case-by-case basis if staff members or others in the school community are confirmed to have the coronavirus, she said.

"As much as possible, we really want children to go along with their lives and to continue their education that's so important for them," she said.

School districts should carefully consider the costs of benefits of closing their campuses, which has the potential to have a large impact, particularly for employed parents and their workplaces, she added.

Noting the recent hoarding of essentials at the Mountain View Costco and other locations, Cindy Chavez, president of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, urged people not to panic.

"If any of you've been to a Costco lately you'll know that ... we're teetering on the brink of not being calm and not being thoughtful. We want to make sure we're not hoarding goods that should be used for medical purposes and we're really being mindful that we are part of a community," she said at the press conference.

Local schools respond

On Friday, March 6, a student and staff members at the Menlo Park City School District were [asked to stay home](#) after learning they may have been exposed to the coronavirus.

Tech companies respond

Menlo Park-based Facebook is following through on the county's guidance by [recommending](#) a large portion of its workforce to begin working from home starting Friday, March 6.

Cities keep watch

As of Sunday, March 8, there were no confirmed local cases of the coronavirus in Palo Alto, City Manager Ed Shikada said in an email. The VA Palo Alto is caring for a patient who was transferred from another California county and is in isolation. The city is continuing to monitor reports of exposures to the disease.

Employees and community are advised to stay home if they are sick and alert city managers "of any unusual circumstances that could indicate exposure."

"We're on top of it as much as any agency can be, recognizing there are unknowns and many possible scenarios ahead of us," Shikada said.

The city also plans to prioritize hygiene at upcoming city events and is conducting a review of its "operational contingency plans."

City leaders have re-emphasized hygienic practices during the flu season and special protocols to its police officers and firefighters. Palo Alto is also maintaining communication with the county, school district, Stanford University and other agencies.

The city has created a webpage that will be regularly updated with information on the coronavirus and local response to the outbreak at cityofpaloalto.org.

PREVIOUS UPDATES: Feb. 28-March 4

New cases confirmed in SCC

The number of known cases of the coronavirus has steadily increased within the county since Feb. 28, when there were only two. [On that day](#), the county's Public Health Department reported a new case — an older woman who was hospitalized for a respiratory illness and has chronic health conditions. (She [died from the disease](#) on March 9.)

On Feb. 29, the county reported [another case](#) — a woman who is a "household contact" of the case reported Feb. 28. She has isolated herself at home, the county reported. Neither woman had recently traveled nor knowingly come into contact with someone who had recently traveled — a strong indication that the virus is now spreading throughout the community, according to the department.

On March 1, the Public Health Department confirmed three more cases of the coronavirus. One case involves an adult woman who concurrently has chronic health conditions, according to public health staff. An investigation into her case is ongoing, the department said in a statement.

The two other cases involve a couple, a husband with chronic health conditions and his wife, who recently traveled to Egypt. All three people are currently being hospitalized for the disease.

Two other cases reported on March 2 were two men who have isolated themselves at home. One man is a "household contact" of a confirmed case in another county. The other man is a "household contact" of a previous case in Santa Clara County.

Two more cases involving a woman and man currently in the hospital were reported on March 3. They remain under investigation to determine the source of transmission, according to the county Public Health Department. No information regarding age or condition of the patients was released during a press conference Tuesday at the Santa Clara County Emergency Operations Center.

The county announced an additional two cases on March 4. One case is a man currently hospitalized and currently under investigation to determine how he was exposed to the virus. Two more cases are both men who "are close contacts of an existing case," according to the county. The pair are isolated at home.

SCC Public Health response

On Friday, Feb. 28, county Public Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody said the county has implemented isolation and quarantine in response to the reported cases over the past five weeks but is taking further actions.

The county's public health lab has testing kits from the CDC, she said at a press conference in San Jose. The county's emergency operations center is getting support from assistance teams from the California Department of Public Health and the CDC.

The Public Health Department encourages the public to take proactive measures to slow down the spread of the disease. Staff recommend people frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching surfaces such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, handrails and countertops. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also recommended if hand-washing is not available. Officials also instruct the public to cough into a tissue or their elbow and avoid touching their faces.

The best current evidence shows that people are at higher risk for the coronavirus if they are ages 50 or older, Dr. Sara Cody, the county's public health officer, said at a March 3 press conference.

The risk of infection and its severity accelerates with age, so someone who is 60 years old is more vulnerable to the illness than someone who is 50, and someone 70 years old is at greater risk for severe infection than someone who is 60. Persons ages 80 and above are at the greatest risk.

People with underlying medical conditions are also at greater risk. These include: cardiovascular disease, heart disease, diabetes, chronic lung conditions, cancer and compromised immune systems. Persons with these conditions should avoid large gatherings such as concerts, parades and sporting events.

Organizations serving seniors are recommended to cancel large gatherings, such as bingo games and movie screenings, and to clean all surfaces with disinfectants including phones, keyboards, tablets and door handles.

The recommendations do not include avoiding office environments or grocery stores where people do not typically gather tightly together.

The county Public Health Department is publishing updates on local cases at [sccgov.org](https://www.sccgov.org).

Local schools respond

Concerns over the disease have climbed at Palo Alto Unified School District, which sent home two students on Friday, Feb. 28, after learning their parent had been exposed to the disease. The students attend Palo Alto High School and JLS Middle School, Superintendent Don Austin said.

A team has formed at the district to evaluate the situation and provide information once it's available, Austin said in his Feb. 28 message to parents.

The district learned the parent was reportedly in "public proximity to an infected person" but that "there is no indication of infection at this time," Lana Conaway, the district's assistant superintendent of equity and student affairs, said on Feb. 28.

She encouraged parents and students to wash their hands often and to stay home if they have any symptoms, including fever or respiratory distress. Crews did an "aggressive" cleaning of all hard surfaces at JLS and Paly over the weekend, according to Conaway.

Also over the following weekend, an online petition emerged asking the district to take additional precautions, including starting spring break early and extending it to two weeks and providing online learning options to students who choose to stay home.

In a message to families on Sunday, March 1, Austin said that the district has consulted with a variety of public officials and health professionals and he does not see a reason to close schools at this point.

"As a Palo Alto resident, I see large crowds in supermarkets, parks, theaters, airports, restaurants and public places. They are operating as usual with no call for closures," he wrote. "Closing schools at this point would not eliminate the infinite interactions our students would have beyond PAUSD. We understand the responsibility afforded to PAUSD while caring for your students and treat the work seriously. We cannot control every aspect of student or community life, which is the only way a quarantine works."

He asked community members to "limit speculation and overreactions."

The district is continuing to follow guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the CDC.

(Read more about the virus' impact on local schools [here](#).)

On Tuesday, March 3, Menlo School in Atherton announced that the school would be closed through the weekend after learning a staff member had contact with a relative with the coronavirus, according to a [letter](#) by Head of School Than Healy. The school has canceled all school-related activities, including classes, sports, arts activities, club meetings and planned field trips.

In tandem with news of the VA case, parents with students in a high school work program that's held after school at the VA hospital in Palo Alto received a notice regarding the coronavirus case on Tuesday, March 3.

"We will be suspending student participation in the VA program for the present time. ... At no time has there been an elevated risk to student safety," Kristen Hardy, director of special education for the Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District, said in an email.

About 14 special education students from the district, mainly from Mountain View High School, but also Los Altos High School and the district's adult school, spend about an hour and a half at the VA hospital on weekdays gaining work experience, according to Kathy Brenner, an education specialist at the Mountain View-Los Altos district.

The decision, made in consultation with district administrators, comes out of considerations that some students have compromised immune systems and others may not always wash their hands according to best practices, she said.

"We just want to keep our kids safe. We don't want to overreact either, but we'd rather be safe than sorry," she said.

The district partners with other student work sites, so students who have been at the hospital will be temporarily reassigned and will gain exposure to other work experiences, she said.

The school district changed students' schedules and pick-up times from Mountain View and Los Altos high schools through March 30 and will be reviewing the changes with Palo Alto Unified School District. Case managers are working with students, she said.

Woodside Priory, a private school for students in grades 6 through 12, has canceled events for its Service Week scheduled March 16-20, including two trips to Guatemala and Costa Rica, according to an email from Director of Communications Kelly Sargent.

The school also plans to keep dormitories open during Easter break, scheduled April 6-13, to give students the choice to stay on campus instead of traveling and "due to international air travel uncertainty," Sargent said.

Stanford University update

On Tuesday, March 3, Stanford University decided to postpone or [cancel events](#) on and off campus likely to attract 150 or more people, including Grad Alumni Day, the SIEPR Economic Summit, Holy Week Easter Services, Second Sunday Family Days at the Cantor Arts Center and Anderson Collection, and all Department of Music concerts scheduled through at least April 15. Stanford Athletics will continue to hold all sporting competitions at this time, with limited public attendance. The University said it will offer increased opportunities for livestreaming events. A full list of event changes can be found at news.stanford.edu.

Tech companies respond

LinkedIn has heeded the county's warning, telling its Bay Area employees to do any work that can be done remotely at home through the end of March to mitigate the spread of the virus. Employees have also been asked to postpone all nonessential business travel and will not participate in external events in March and April, according to LinkedIn spokeswoman Kenly Walker. LinkedIn, headquartered in Sunnyvale and Mountain View, will not be shutting down its offices and intends to provide the same level of service to customers, members and partners, she added.

This story will be updated as more information becomes available.

Find comprehensive coverage on the Midpeninsula's response to the new coronavirus by Palo Alto Online, the Mountain View Voice and the Almanac [here](#).

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Comments

Posted by **Landlord** + 34 people like this
 a resident of Menlo Park: Suburban Park/Lorelei Manor/Flood Park Triangle
 on Mar 30, 2020 at 12:45 pm

With the new orders that Landlords cannot evict for non-payment of rent, are Newson and City Councils doing the same for Mortgage Lenders and suspending Mortgage payments on those rental properties?

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Posted by **whatever** + 27 people like this
 a resident of Menlo Park: Central Menlo Park
 on Mar 30, 2020 at 3:37 pm

Why did it take the JCC so long to curtail operations? There can be no excuse for the delay and putting the community at risk.

[Email Town Square Moderator](#) [Report Objectionable Content](#)

Posted by **MidPen is fighting the order** + 39 people like this
 a resident of Atherton: Lindenwood
 on Apr 1, 2020 at 1:58 pm

No matter how many one way trails and crowd management steps are put into place, they are encouraging and enabling community mixing by allowing their parking lots to be open. The fact that they actually have to crowd manage in certain commuter parks like Rancho San Antonio says it all. They are knowingly attracting members from various communities who then mix, maybe get gas or shop either here or somewhere on the way home, then go back to their home communities. That's a textbook and efficient way to spread this virus.

How is this still happening with all we know about the danger and the spread?!?!?
 You cannot be safe by simply avoiding the park either because of how this is spread.

Please contact MidPen directly and insist they come into compliance and stop fostering the spread by simply closing the large parking lots. We have to NOT mix communities.

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Posted by **Phil Braxton** + 10 people like this
 a resident of Menlo Park: Fair Oaks
 on Apr 27, 2020 at 2:50 pm

I hate my local government.
 I feel badly for everyone who is trying to earn a living.
 The secondary effects of this lockdown are enormous: suicide hotline call number are way up. Police report a significant increase in domestic violence and child abuses calls.
 Vote every incumbent out next election.
 By the way: the State of Texas announced the end to their lockdown on this coming Thursday.

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Posted by **Scared and Angry** + 8 people like this
 a resident of Woodside: other
 on May 13, 2020 at 2:27 pm

Yet again San Mateo County and related local Governments are putting business concerns ahead of the safety and the well-being of the elderly, people of color, our kids and the housing insecure. If they are not trying to burn us out, they are exposing us to contagion.

These Government Do-gooders will tell you it is to help some group or other. But really it is so they can gain influence and scrape tax dollars. Like building expensive housing in fire prone areas is a pretence for helping the housing insecure, we will be told that going to stage 2 will help small businesses - it will not. As infection rates go up Facebook will do well. But the small businesses, restaurant owners and employees are going to suffer both illness and continued loss of business. Stage 2 is going to be round 2, the second wave of virus infection. The San Mateo County government should be ashamed of themselves. I will only shop for necessary food in Santa Clara where it is safer.

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Posted by **West Menlo**

 2 people like this

a resident of Menlo Park: Sharon Heights
5 hours ago

@scared: You can solve your problem by self-isolating and living your life in your own personal bubble. Have groceries delivered to your house, Amazon shipments to your front door. Remember to thoroughly disinfect all deliveries. Do not go outside!

And, please, let the rest of us get on with our businesses and our lives as we wish.

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Posted by **low impulse control kids wanna play!**

 25 people like this

a resident of Menlo Park: Linfield Oaks
5 hours ago

> And, please, let the rest of us get on with our businesses and our lives as we wish.

And, please, let the rest of us - who are cautious and aware of the public safety risks, not have to pay the price for those with low impulse control who want to 'open' up.

Once your second wave hits, please suffer at home, do not clog medical facilities with your self inflicted covid cases, clogging and denying health services for those who showed personal responsibility and helped to protect the community by not "going on with their lives as they wish."

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Posted by **West Menlo**

 Like this comment

a resident of Menlo Park: Sharon Heights
1 hour ago

There were no clogged hospitals with the so-called first wave. In fact, hospitals were so under-utilized that Stanford had to give their health care workers a 20% pay cut. They had no patients. Remember when Czar Newsom predicted that 56% of Californians would be infected? Well, we're st about .2% (2 tenths of one percent) infected. Way to go Gavin!!

So I take your second and third waves with an absolute grain of salt. Sorry-no sale! I'll wear a mask, practice reasonable social distancing, but want to get back at it on a daily basis. Shopping, eating, living.

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Posted by **PV Resident**

 1 person likes this

a resident of Portola Valley: Central Portola Valley
17 minutes ago

I haven't changed my routines or habits at all. I do a minimum to be responsible but it's ridiculous to keep people inside for this long. If you don't want the virus maybe you should stay home? And if you do go out then just be reasonable. Portola Valley has fewer cases because we have more space —think of it as a Wyoming of the Bay Area. Because of this, we shouldn't have these restrictions imposed upon us. PV should open up (maybe for residents only) and everyone should go back to normal!

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