



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

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Four news cases of novel coronavirus recorded within county



San Bernardino County today reported four news cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The county now has a total of nine confirmed cases and no deaths attributable to the disease.

The county reported its first case on Sunday, March 15. Additional cases are expected to emerge as more test results are reported to the County.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom and the State Public Health Officer on Thursday issued a statewide stay-at-home order with exceptions for essential tasks and services. See details here: <https://covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/>.

"Complying with public health orders is essential to our continued health and safety," said Acting County Health Officer Dr. Erin Gustafson. "These orders are not intended to spark panic, but rather reduce the spread of infection and minimize the number of people who get sick at any one time to keep our healthcare system functioning."

"We must assume and behave as if the virus is everywhere," Dr. Gustafson said.

On March 10, the County Public Health Officer and the Board of Supervisors declared a local health emergency to help ensure county government and the public would be prepared and allow flexibility in response.

Various county departments and agencies have been working together since Jan. 25 to prepare for the possible arrival of the virus within the county. The County Department of Public Health activated its Department Operations Center on Feb. 13.

As with any virus, especially during the cold and flu season, there are a number of steps you can take to protect your health and those around you:

- People experiencing symptoms of contagious illness should seek medical guidance.
- Persons aged 65 years and older and persons of any age with certain underlying health conditions are at increased risk should they contract COVID-19 and are encouraged to self-quarantine.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning spray or wipes.
- N95 masks are not recommended outside a healthcare setting. Surgical masks can be worn by sick individuals to reduce the likelihood of spreading germs to others.

For information about the coronavirus crisis, visit the County's coronavirus website at wp.sbcounty.gov/dph/coronavirus, contact the coronavirus public information line from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday at (909) 387-3911, or email the County at coronavirus@dph.sbcounty.gov.