

MEMORANDUM

Office of the City Manager



DATE: October 16, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
THROUGH: Steve McHarris, City Manager *Steve McHarris*
FROM: Ashwini Kantak, Assistant City Manager *Ashwini Kantak*
SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus/COVID-19 Update #26

The health of our employees, residents, and businesses remains the highest priority for the City of Milpitas.

Overview:

The City of Milpitas continues to implement its response to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease in Santa Clara County, in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health. The previous Council update on October 7 discussed updates on Congressional Legislation with the passing of the updated [Heroes Act](#) and State Legislation on a number of priorities enacting protections for Californians in light of COVID-19.

As the lead agency on public health, the County is regularly updating its guidance, which is available in five different languages and can be viewed [here](#). The County also has a [data dashboard](#) that is updated with all the latest information. The City continues to work closely with the County to ensure the safety and security of our community.

Key Updates:

State

On October 9, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the release of \$147 million in the [fourth round](#) of awards for Homekey, California's innovative, nation-leading \$600 million program to purchase and rehabilitate housing – including hotels, motels, vacant apartment buildings and other properties – and convert them into permanent, long-term housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The most recent round of Homekey awards were provided to 12 applicants for 20 projects totaling 1,109 units.

The Governor also announced a partnership with Enterprise Community Partners, a nonprofit dedicated to developing affordable housing, to distribute \$45 million in funding – \$20 million from Blue Shield of California and \$25 million from Kaiser Permanente – to support operating subsidies for Homekey projects. This funding will provide critical support to local jurisdictions to ensure that those housed through this initiative receive critical services like case management, job training, substance abuse counseling and more.

County

On October 13, the County of Santa Clara moved into the State of California's Orange Tier (Tier 3). The Public Health Officer's new Revised Risk Reduction Order (issued October 5) went into effect October 14 at 12:01 a.m., which allows additional services in the County to operate, in accordance with the State order.

Changes include allowing indoor dining and indoor gatherings, with limitations, and capacity increases for museums, zoos and retail operations.

While the County is moving into a new tier, there are differences between what the State allows and what the County permits. Unless otherwise indicated in the local health order, all County businesses and activities can resume to the extent allowed under the Orange tier. The following business categories are now allowed to be open indoors with the following capacity limitations:

- Outdoor gatherings of up to 200 people and indoor gatherings of up to 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer. This includes movie theaters, churches, cultural ceremonies. The State generally prohibits other gatherings.
- Indoor dining up to 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer.
- Indoor museums and zoos up to 50% capacity
- College sports activities without fans following County and State requirements
- No capacity limitation for malls and other retail businesses.

More information on the local health order is available in the [Executive Summary](#) and [Revised Risk Reduction Order](#).

Many traditional Halloween celebrations – such as parties and in-person, door to door trick-or-treating – pose a high risk of spreading COVID-19 and could put the community at risk. These activities involve face to face interactions with people from different households, and if an infection is detected among a participant, it will be very difficult to find and notify those who may have been exposed.

Lower-risk celebrations are highly encouraged, such as:

- Joining online parties for costume contests or pumpkin carving
- Enjoying activities from a car like drive-through Halloween displays or drive-in movies
- Having fun at home with scary movies, a candy scavenger hunt, or converting a room into a haunted house
- Putting on costumes and going on a physically distanced walk
- Dressing up a home or yard with Halloween decorations

County of Santa Clara residents are reminded that [local](#) and State Health Officer Orders are still in effect. Halloween gatherings, Día de los Muertos celebrations, events or parties with non-household members are not permitted unless they are conducted in compliance with local and State Health Orders: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/covid19/Pages/mandatory-directives-gatherings.aspx>.

The county's ability to loosen business restrictions reflects its recent success in containing the number of COVID-19 cases. The county's case count is now 3.7 cases per 100,000 residents, below the state's threshold of 4 cases per 100,000 for the Orange tier. The county's overall positivity rate is now 1.7%, well below the state benchmark of between 2% and 4.9% to qualify for the moderate tier. The promising trends have allowed the county to be the first large county in California to move into the Orange tier.

City of Milpitas

Moderate Rate of Community Infection

The rate of COVID-19 infection has been decreasing in the City over the past several weeks. These factors all suggest the importance of wearing face coverings when social distancing is not possible, the importance of regular testing in all populations in the County and continuing to subscribe to the core principles that activities are better outside and more distance is better than close contacts. Visit the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health Covid-19 [data dashboard](#) for more information.

Cooling Center Opening and PSPS Event

Due to increased weather events, the City has opened a cooling center from October 15 to 16 at the Barbara Lee Senior Center. Hours vary, please check [here](#) for more information. This coincides with a Public Safety Power Shutdown (PSPS) which may begin on Wednesday, October 14 at approximately 8 pm. The impact to Milpitas is generally within the Vista Ridge, Old Calaveras, Uridias Ranch Road, Ed Levin Park, Spring Valley Golf Course, Alviso Adobe Park and Piedmont Road areas. PG&E will notify affected households via phone, text, and email, at 24 hours before the shutoff and just prior to shutting off power.

Capacity Limitations and Re-Registration

With the transition to Orange tier, the following facilities that are required to calculate [capacity limitations](#) includes but not limited to indoor gyms, fitness centers, dining facilities, family entertainment centers, card rooms, any facility hosting indoor gatherings including places of worship and movie theaters. With the facilities having 14-days to update and complete their new Santa Clara County Public Health Department registration, the Fire Marshal's Office is preparing to proactively conduct applicable on-site inspections to ensure that their Site Specific Plans, October 5, 2020 COVID-19 Signs, and County Maximum Capacity Signs are posted accordingly. On October 14, the Fire Marshal's Office completed the re-registration process for all applicable City Facilities to comply with the new [Public Order](#).

New Directives for Gatherings, Dining and Personal Care

Existing directives for [Personal Care Services](#), [Gatherings](#) and [Dining](#) now reflect important changes for specific business sectors and activities moving to the Orange tier. Personal Care Services that require removal of a face covering (such as facial treatments) is now allowed when personnel staff wear proper personal protective equipment. Additionally, Outdoor Dining was updated to broaden the definition of "outdoor facility," prohibiting smoking lounges and allowing some limited forms of live entertainment.

Fourth Annual Manufacturing Day

On October 9, the Office of Economic Development and Economic Development and Trade Commission co-hosted the Annual Manufacturing Day event. A virtual panel discussion focused on COVID-19's impact to the manufacturing supply chain, workforce development and reshoring of jobs back to the United States. The event was well-attended by hundreds of participants including City Council members.

Milpitas Response and Preparations

The City of Milpitas continues to operate at Stage 5 (Extremely High Response) of our Pandemic Management Plan. Operating at Stage 5 translates into the suspension of all non-essential City programs and services, the closure of City facilities, and full activation of the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Our City's response will enable us to fulfill the four priorities of our Pandemic Response Plan:

1. **Protecting Our People:** Ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees.
2. **Continuity of Essential City Operations:** Sustaining delivery of critical City services.
3. **Effective Communication:** Ensuring timely and consistent communication internally with our employees and externally with our community.
4. **Support the Santa Clara County Public Health Department:** Provide resource and communication support to assist the County Public Health Officer, the County, and all our partners in mutual commitment to protect the people of our communities.

Current Status on City Services and Operations:

All City facilities are closed to the public until further notice. The Office of Emergency Services continues to operate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at a full activation level.

- **Police Department Public Lobby:** The Milpitas Police Department lobby is open during business hours, 8 AM to 5 PM. Supplemental safety measures are in place to ensure the safety of our staff and visitors. Community members can contact the non-emergency number (408-586-2400) for any further questions.
- **Public Meetings:** Starting with the October 6 City Council meeting, live, audio-only comments at public meetings was introduced. This was based on requests from the Council and community. The majority of Board, Commission, and Subcommittee meetings are transitioning to this new format to engage live public participation. The public may livestream the meeting on the City's [Website](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube channel](#) if not able to attend the live virtual meeting.
- **City Employees:** The City is continuing to have employees work in person or remotely on essential services and other City functions. City staff has developed a self-check protocol that enables the safety of all employees. The protocols apply to all employees who are regularly coming to work to perform an essential service and may interact with the community or with other employees. Each City Department is responsible to coordinate the process for their respective employees. The self-check protocols are based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and will be updated according to any changes to CDC guidance.
- **Permit Center and Inspection Services:** Although the Permit Center located at City Hall is closed for in-person services, staff continues to provide permit and plan review services via email, website information, telephone, and tele or web conferencing. All construction is currently allowed in Santa Clara County. However, construction activities must implement mandatory risk reduction measures, and comply with the [Mandatory Directive for Construction Projects](#). For detailed City service descriptions, refer to the latest [Permit Center and Inspection Services Information Flyer](#).

- **Recreation and Community Services:** All community programs and gatherings remain cancelled until further notice, including private rentals in City facilities and park picnic areas. The Senior Center remains closed for programming. The center offers “to-go” lunches, as a continuation of its Senior Nutrition Lunch Program.
- **Other City Services:** Water, sewer, stormwater, and traffic signal operation services continue to operate at normal levels. Staff also continues to provide maintenance services for facilities, fleet, parks, enhanced cleaning for some City facilities, emergency services for trees and streets, and Underground Service Alert services for construction projects that are allowed under the County order. Staff continues to work with Milpitas Sanitation to ensure adequate staffing is available for solid waste collection in the City. Public Works staff are also working to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations for all public works services. The City has established a virtual Utility Call Center from employees’ homes to ensure continuity of services. Meter reading staff will continue to respond to water service calls and maintain the City’s meter reading schedule.
- **Volunteers:** The City's Milpitas Volunteer Program (MVP) continues to recruit volunteers for various community support efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members looking to register as a volunteer and receive regular monthly updates on local volunteer needs can [visit our volunteer page](#).

Public Information:

The City will continue to update its [COVID-19 webpage](#) that has been established specifically for information about coronavirus. We will also be providing regular public updates through our social media accounts on Facebook, Nextdoor, and Twitter.