



## COUNTY OF VENTURA COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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April 18, 2020

### **County of Ventura Takes Steps Forward on Road to Reopening *Public Health Officer Extends Modified Stay Well At Home Order***

VENTURA, CA. – County of Ventura Public Health Officer, Doctor Robert Levin, has announced the extension and modification of the Stay Well At Home Order. The Order is in effect as of April 18 at 11:59 pm and shall be in effect until 11:59 pm on May 15, 2020.

“It’s understandable that our community members want to get back to work and return to normal life as quickly as possible,” said Doctor Robert Levin. “The best path forward is a cautious one — a path that proceeds gradually, carefully, and incrementally. A path that relies on science and facts to determine each step forward. The data is looking good, thanks to the diligence of our community members in following these Orders, but we must be cautious in how we move forward. We must continue to save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19. Community members must continue to practice social distancing. In line with the Governor’s Order, we will review the Order in two weeks to assess for any further modifications.”

The modified Order allows exceptions for limited business operations allowing nonpublic serving businesses to operate using no more than 10 employees, allows for gatherings of up to 5 people, modifies some essential businesses, allows for gatherings in motor vehicles, reopens golf courses and other forms of recreation with appropriate restrictions, allows bike shops to open and permits in-person sale of vehicles.

“We are positioned to focus on the road to reopening because our residents and businesses have sacrificed so much to comply with the Public Health Orders and slow the spread of the virus in our community,” said Mike Powers, Ventura County CEO. “Our current situation is further strengthened by the work of our local hospitals to expand their capacity.”

“These steps are critical because we know that, while the virus poses an unprecedented health threat, efforts to stem the virus come at a significant economic and health toll as we have seen with so many business closures and lost jobs,” Powers emphasized. “Along with the business leaders in our community, including local cities, chambers, the Economic Development Collaborative, Women’s Economic Ventures, the Workforce Development Board, Ventura County Community Foundation and Small Business Administration, the County will continue to work to support these impacted individuals and businesses.”

“We will scrutinize the data to see the impact these changes have on our rates of COVID-19. I don’t expect to see any new trends for about 3 or 4 weeks. If we find that we are losing ground, we’ll have to make adjustments,” said Dr. Levin.

The 19-page Order provides clear guidance and details on many areas. The Order continues to protect the most vulnerable with guidance for Hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities. Those who are 70 or older with preexisting



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conditions and those 75 or older must remain in their place of residence and follow social distancing requirements to the greatest extent feasible.

Staying home, as much as possible, and practicing social distancing when conducting essential business continues to be required. Getting exercise outside of the home is permitted but gyms are to remain closed.

“We are not out of the woods. We must continue to practice social distancing to protect our community. We will continue to expand our testing capacity and focus on protecting populations most at risk including seniors, homeless, and the brave farmworkers who work every day to put food on our tables,” added Powers.

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