

## NEWS RELEASE

September 29, 2020

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### **County of Ventura meeting State reopening metrics *Poised to enter Red Tier in one week***

VENTURA, CA. – Today, the State of California announced that the County of Ventura has met the State COVID-19 metrics for one week. If the County meets the metrics for an additional week the State will allow the County to move into the Red Tier of the State’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy. “I am excited Ventura County has been cleared to go to this next phase,” said Supervisor Kelly Long, Chair of the Board of Supervisors. “Ventura County has consistently exceeded the standards in five of the six initial metrics set by the state. Clearing this last hurdle is a testament to the public’s patience and adherence to safety protocols. I look forward to more latitude and flexibility for our local businesses and social activities that will help our local economy and improve our quality of life.”

As of September 29, the County has met the threshold for the case rate for the Red Tier. Any county within this tier must indicate a daily case rate of between 4-7 cases and a positivity rate of between 5-8%. Ventura County currently has a daily case rate of 7.0. The County’s testing volume of 283 exceeds the State average of 248.9. This has allowed for an adjustment by the State of the case rate from 8 to 7. Exceeding the requirements for testing has helped the County advance.

“This is a huge step forward for our County,” said Mike Powers, County Executive Officer. “This advancement shows the commitment of our business community and community members to bring the numbers down. We understand the hardship faced by so many and appreciate that this next tier will offer the reopening of many areas. The economic toll of this virus continues to adversely impact the business community. We will continue to work for further progress.”

The County anticipates that establishment in the Red Tier would become effective starting Tuesday, October 6, 2020. “Businesses are encouraged to prepare now for reopening,” added Powers. The County has been actively working with the State to advocate moving forward into this less restrictive tier.

“This is a critical time at which we must continue to work together to further slow the spread of COVID-19. All residents are urged to follow all guidance so we can continue to improve our metrics and move through the tiers. Wearing masks, social distancing and only gathering with members of one’s household are important measures to keep us on the right path,” said Public Health Director Rigoberto Vargas.

Once in the Red Tier, personal care services, restaurants, places of worship, movie theaters, gyms and fitness centers, along with museums, zoos and aquariums will be able to open for indoor operations with modifications. Stores with indoor operations that are open in the Purple Tier can increase indoor capacity to 50% in the Red Tier. Restaurants can open indoors at 25% capacity. Places of worship, higher education, and zoos and museums can open indoor operations at 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is less. Fitness centers and gyms will be able to offer indoor operations at 10% capacity.



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School openings for in-person instruction are only able to be considered once a county has been in the Red Tier for 14 consecutive days. At this time, only schools that have applied for school waivers and have been approved are allowed to be open for in-person instruction. If the County continues to meet the threshold for case rate and other metrics, K-12 schools across the County could reopen as early as Wednesday, October 21, 2020.

Additionally, as of September 28, the State has allowed for outdoor playgrounds operated by a city, state, county, or federal government to open. The County of Ventura is in line with the guidance that has been provided by the State. Information about the guidelines can be accessed by visiting the State website at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Outdoor%20Playgrounds%20and%20other%20Outdoor%20Recreational%20Facilities.aspx>

During today's press conference from the California Department of Public Health, local Ventura County Star reporter Tom Kisken was featured asking questions about Ventura County. View the State response at the following link: <https://vimeo.com/463202210>

For more information on the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, visit [www.covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/](http://www.covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/). For daily COVID-19 update information from the County of Ventura, visit [www.venturacountyrecovers.org](http://www.venturacountyrecovers.org).

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