



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 6, 2020

COVID-19 Cases Increasing in County of Ventura *Residents Urged to Use Caution*

Ventura, CA – The County of Ventura Public Health Department is reporting concerning increases in COVID-19 cases. The community is urged to use caution. The best protection against COVID-19 continues to be to wash your hands frequently, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, self-isolate if you are sick, practice physical distancing, and wear a clean face covering when in contact with others from outside your household.

The State monitors three key COVID-19 metrics in assessing how a County can move forward in the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy. The 7-day average case rate per 100,000, the 7-day testing positivity rate and the 7-day health equity testing positivity rate. The County is meeting the metrics for the testing positivity rates for the orange tier, but the 7-day average case rate is on an upward trend. The County must meet all three metrics to continue moving forward. The 7-day case rate was 4.9. It has now increased to 5.3. It is anticipated that next week the rate will be 6.0. If this trend continues and the number exceeds the State metric for the red tier of 7 the County will have to move to the more restrictive purple tier.

"Our community members and businesses have worked so hard to follow the public health guidance. We've seen this in the remarkable compliance reported by our business ambassadors and city and state inspectors. Additionally, we fortunately have one of the lowest health equity metrics in the State," said Mike Powers, County Executive Officer. "Our County, in partnership with our community, has done well but we can't lift our guard. This is now a call to action to continue to be diligent in following the guidance and to use extra caution with any type of gathering so that we can continue to move forward."

Daily cases, which are reported Monday through Friday, have increased. This week there were 638 total cases reported compared to lower numbers reported for the week of October 30 with 390 cases, the week of October 23 with 423 cases and the week of October 16 with 334 cases. The last time there was a higher weekly reported case count was on August 28 with 651 cases.

"The individual and collective actions and sacrifices of all of us as Ventura County residents today, and into the holiday season, is going to determine whether we can prevent a continued uptick leading to the possibility that we would revert to the State's more restrictive purple tier – thus causing greater sacrifice to our businesses and schools," said Rigoberto Vargas, Public Health Director.



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As the holidays approach, Public Health urges the community to use caution with gatherings. The State of California has issued [gathering guidance](#) limiting gatherings to a maximum of three households. Gatherings increase the risk for COVID-19. Residents planning to gather, following the guidance, are encouraged to get tested at one of the many County offered high volume [testing sites](#). Testing is free of charge, no appointment is needed and offered 7 days per week. Testing is for residents, those that work in the County of Ventura or those visiting the area.

“We are at a critical moment in our COVID-19 recovery journey. Over the last few weeks, businesses and public spaces have reopened, and many more people have been out and around others. With increased contact among non-household members, there are many more opportunities for transmission of COVID-19, particularly if public health directives are not followed, and the data is now showing concerning trends,” said Public Health Officer, Doctor Robert Levin. “We’re safer in the community only if we follow the very specific directives issued by public health. Our collective responsibility is to take immediate action, as individuals and businesses, to reverse the trends we are experiencing.”

It’s important if someone thinks they could be positive for COVID-19 and are awaiting testing results, to stay at home and act as if they are positive. If a community member tests positive, they should isolate for 10 days from the onset of illness and until symptoms have improved and fever has resolved. If a person tests positive for COVID-19, they should expect a call from a contact tracer to discuss services to them while they isolate and how to protect others. The contact tracer will also work with the positive person to find who they were in close contact with while infectious. These steps help prevent further spread.

“People who have underlying health conditions remain at much greater risk for serious illness from COVID-19, so it will continue to be very important for the County’s vulnerable residents to stay at home as much as possible, to have groceries and medicine delivered, and to call their providers immediately if they have even mild symptoms,” said Doctor Levin.

Updates provided at www.venturacountyrecovers.org.

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