

County of Imperial
Order of the Health Officer

Pursuant to sections 101040, 120175, and 120175.5(b) of the California Health and Safety Code, the Imperial County Health Officer (“Health Officer”) hereby ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:

Effective 12:00 a.m. on Friday, March 20, 2020, and continuing until 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2020, the following will be in effect for the County of Imperial (“County”):

1. All public and private “gatherings” as defined in Section 17 below are prohibited. All gatherings of any size are strongly discouraged.
2. All bars, adult entertainment establishments, and other business establishments that serve alcohol and do not serve food shall close.
3. All restaurants and other business establishments that serve food shall close all on-site dining. All food served shall be via delivery, drive-thru, or pick-up on site. Social distancing shall be required when picking up food on-site.
4. All businesses shall enact social distancing, increased sanitation standards and environmental cleaning in accordance with the guidelines issued by the California Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), and shall make every effort to implement telecommuting options for its workforce. All businesses shall suspend any policy or procedure that requires an employee to obtain a doctor’s verification or approval before utilizing sick leave or other forms of leave.
5. It is strongly recommended that all persons who: (a) are sixty-five (65) years or older, (b) have a chronic illness or underlying condition, or (c) have a compromised immune system, to self-quarantine themselves at home.
6. “Nonessential personnel”, as defined in Section 17, are prohibited from entry into any hospital or long-term care facility.
7. Hospitals and healthcare providers shall take measures to preserve resources, including delaying non-emergent or elective surgeries or procedures when feasible.

8. All persons arriving in the County from locations found on the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) Warning Level 3 Travel Advisory, as may be amended, shall be subject to a fourteen (14) day home quarantine and self-monitoring for fever and respiratory symptoms. The Travel Advisory List can be accessed at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

9. It is strongly recommended for any person exhibiting mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19 to self-isolate themselves in their place of residence unless seeking medical treatment.

10. This Order is issued as a result of the World Health Organization’s declaration of a worldwide pandemic of COVID-19, also known as the 2019 novel coronavirus, which as of the date of this Order, has infected at least 179,165 individuals worldwide in 155 different countries, and is implicated in over 7,000 worldwide deaths.

11. This Order is based on the increasing transmission of COVID-19 in California, and the significant risk of widespread introduction and transmission of COVID-19 into the County.

12. This Order will reduce the likelihood that many individuals will be exposed to COVID-19, and will assist in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the County. By assisting in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19, this Order will help to preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in the County.

13. This Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference: (a) the Declaration of Local Health Emergency issued by the Health Officer on March 5, 2020; (b) the Proclamation of Local Emergency issued by the County Director of Emergency Services on March 5, 2020; (c) the action of the County Board of Supervisors to ratify and extend both the local health emergency and local emergency on March 10, 2020; (d) the Health Officer Order dated March 9, 2020, (e) the Proclamation of State Emergency issued by the Governor of the State of California on March 4, 2020; (f) Executive Order N-25-20 issued by the Governor of the State of California on March 12, 2020; (g) Executive Orders N-27-20 and N-28-20, issued by the Governor of the State of California on March 16, 2020; and (h) Proclamation 9984 regarding COVID-19 issued by the President of the United States on March 11, 2020.

14. This Order is issued to prevent circumstance often present in gatherings that may exacerbate the spread of COVID-19, such as: (a) the increased likelihood that gatherings will attract people from a broad geographic area; (b) the prolonged time period in which large numbers of people are in close proximity; (c) the difficulty in tracing exposure when large numbers of people attend a single event; and (d) the inability to ensure that attendees follow adequate hygienic practices.

15. This Order comes after the release of substantial guidance from the Health Officer, the California Department of Public Health, the CDC, and other public health officials throughout the United States and the world. The California Department of Public Health, the Governor of State of California, and the Whitehouse have all recommended the postponement or cancellation of large public gatherings.

16. This Order comes after the CDC has issued multiple guidance documents concerning the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

17. For the purposes of this Order the following definition shall apply:

(a) “Gathering” means any event or convening that brings together fifty (50) or more people in a single room or single space at the same time, including but not limited to an auditorium, stadium, arena, theatre, church, casino, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, gym, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

(b) “Long-term care facility” means a facility serving adults that require assistance with activities of daily living that is licensed by the California Department of Community Care and Licensing, or the California Department of Public Health. For the purposes of this Order, long-term care facilities include skilled nursing facilities.

(c) For the purposes of section 6, “non-essential personnel” means any employee, contractor, or member of the public who does not perform treatment, maintenance, support, or administrative tasks deemed essential to the health-care mission of a hospital or long-term care facility.

(d) “Social distancing” means maintaining a six (6) foot separation from all persons except for family members.

18. This Order does not prohibit any of the following:

(a) The operation of airports, public transportation, or other spaces where fifty (50) or more people may be in transit, but are able to practice social distancing.

(b) The operation of businesses deemed essential where fifty (50) or more people may be present, but are able to practice social distancing.

(c) The operation of emergency shelters, homeless shelters, or other similar essential gatherings that are for the protection of public health and safety, and where appropriate precautions are taken that follow federal, State, and local public health guidelines regarding COVID-19.

19. It is strongly encouraged that social distancing be practiced at any gathering consisting of less than fifty (50) people, pursuant to California Department of Public Health guidelines.

20. Pursuant to section 120175.5(b) of the California Health and Safety Code, all government entities in the County shall take all measures within the governmental entities' respective control to ensure compliance with this Order, and to disseminate this Order to venues or locations within the respective entities' jurisdictions where large gatherings may occur.


21. In accordance with section 120295 of the California Health and Safety Code, violation of this Order may be punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.

22. To the extent necessary and permitted by law, this Order may be enforced by the Imperial County Sheriff's Office or the police departments of respective City jurisdictions in accordance with section 26602 and 41601 of the California Government Code, and section 101029 of the California Health and Safety Code.

23. This Order shall be reevaluated and extended, if appropriate, on or before March 31, 2020.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

Date March 17, 2020



Stephen Munday, M.D., MPH
Health Officer