

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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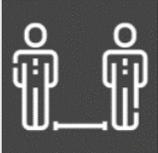
Merced County Department of Public Health Attestation Approved to Move into Stage 2.5

MERCED COUNTY, CA – The Department of Public Health (Department) is pleased to announce that Merced County is now approved to move more quickly through Stage 2 of California’s Roadmap for reopening. The approval is posted on the California Department of Public Health website and is available for public review at: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/County_Variance_Attestation_Form.aspx

“We are pleased that several businesses will return to a new sense of normalcy,” said Dr. Salvador Sandoval, Merced County’s Public Health Officer. “As we prepare to move forward and start to slowly re-open, it is imperative that we all follow the safety measures in place. This is a new normal and the County cannot afford to let its guard down. The Department is committed to the health and safety of each individual in our County. This disease remains prevalent in our community.”

MERCED COUNTY MEETS STATE CRITERIA FOR STAGE 2.5

- More businesses are allowed to reopen
- All open businesses must meet 5 State safety requirements
- Community can help Merced County stay open by:





The Stay-At-Home Order is still in place.

Gatherings of more than 10 people are not allowed.




Learn more at www.reopenmercedcounty.com

STAGE 2.5

OPEN	NOT OPEN
Essential Businesses (Stage 1)	Movie Theaters
Dine-In Restaurants	Bars, Nightclubs, Wineries
In Person Retail Stores and Manufacturing	Gyms
In Person Offices (teleworking encouraged)	Religious Services
Pet Grooming, Car Washes	Salons, Barbershops (hair, nail, tattoos)
Outdoor Museums, Open Gallery Spaces	Convention Centers, Sports Arena
Childcare Facilities * * Open after May 27	Zoos, Libraries, Gambling
Malls and Swap meets * * Open after June 3	Public Pools, Playgrounds, Picnic Areas

Icons made by [Lineator](#) and [Freepik](#).

To download infographic in English, Spanish and Hmong visit the www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus

Merced County is now in Stage 2.5, which allows additional business sectors to reopen with modified operations that include safety and social distancing precautions. The business sectors cleared in Stage 2.5 will be opened over the next two-week period. Businesses will need to review State requirements and prepare a plan to show customers and employees that they've implemented appropriate safety plans. Sector-specific guidance for business owners is available at: www.reopenmercedcounty.com/guidelines/. Public Health officials strongly encourage business owners to refer to the website for further detail on how to safely reopen.

If an outbreak or cluster of two or more COVID-19 cases occurs in a local restaurant or other business, the Department is required to publicly report that information in order to identify other people who may have been exposed. Business owners and patrons alike are strongly encouraged to follow social distancing and health protocols to help prevent an uptick in cases.

Schools will remain closed for the rest of the academic school year. The Department is collaborating with school districts to modify graduation plans and to develop safe practices for reopening in the Fall of 2020.

Gatherings should continue to be limited to 10 or fewer individuals. Phase 2.5 does not allow mass gatherings of any kind, including religious services at this time. Incorporated cities within Merced County can adopt stricter criteria than the County, but cannot legally be less strict. Businesses included in Stages 3 and 4 who have state licensure cannot legally open without risk to that licensure. The County is not involved in State licensure in any way.

For additional information pertaining to COVID-19, please visit the Department's resource website at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus or call the Department information line at **209-381-1180** (English, Spanish, Hmong).

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