



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

March 9, 2020

New Recommendations for Indoor Events in Marin

Public Health Officer's guidelines address large, non-essential indoor gatherings

San Rafael, CA – Out of an abundance of caution, the [Marin County Department of Health and Human Services](http://www.marincounty.org) (HHS) is recommending the cancellation or postponement of nonessential indoor gatherings of more than 100 people to prevent the spread of [COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/), commonly called the novel coronavirus. This recommendation is in place for two weeks and will be re-evaluated as new information becomes available.

Marin HHS' [Public Health Division](http://www.marincounty.org) is not making the same recommendation for outdoor events at this time because the risk for transmission outdoors is low.

"We recognize that gathering together is vital for community well-being, and we do not take these steps lightly," Public Health Officer Dr. Matt Willis said. "With increased transmission of COVID-19 regionally, we have to prioritize health first. We will reevaluate our recommendations as the situation unfolds here in Marin."

Event organizers should consider the [California Department of Public Health guidelines](http://www.cdph.ca.gov) if they choose to move forward with an event. In addition, organizers should:

- Collaborate and coordinate with community partners including the local public health department, hotels where participants are staying, airlines, event venues, and other partners.
- Use event messaging and communications to promote everyday preventive health messages to your participants and staff, including Marin HHS's educational posters in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- Recommend that participants minimize close contact (e.g., recommending no hand shaking or hugging)
- Promote messages that discourage people who are sick from attending events.

"While Marin has not seen evidence of community transmission, Marin is a popular destination for community events and activities," Willis said. "These guidelines are in response to increased COVID-19 activity across the region."

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Contacts: Dr. Matthew Willis

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER
Department of Health
and Human Services

3240 Kerner Blvd.
San Rafael, CA 94901
415 473-4163 T
CRS Dial 711

mwillis@marincounty.org
www.marinhhs.org

Dr. Lisa Santora

DEPUTY PUBLIC HEALTH
DIRECTOR
Department of Health
and Human Services

3240 Kerner Blvd.
San Rafael, CA 94901
415 473-4163 T
CRS Dial 711

lsantora@marincounty.org
www.marinhhs.org

Marin HHS announced the [first local case of COVID-19](#) on March 9, the same day it [launched a hotline service](#) (415-473-7191) to answer public questions about the disease.

The best way to reduce the risk of becoming infected with a respiratory virus, whether the flu or COVID-19, is to practice good hygiene

- Wash your hands *frequently* with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or crook of your elbow (not your hands). If you use a tissue, throw it away and wash your hands afterward;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Stay home from work or school if you have a fever or are feeling sick;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe;
- Get your flu shot to protect against flu.

Visit the official [Marin County coronavirus webpage](#) to review answers to frequently asked questions or subscribe to receive email updates. Individuals can contact Marin HHS with nonmedical questions about the coronavirus by calling 415-473-7191 weekdays between 9:30 a.m. and noon and 1-5 p.m. or by emailing COVID-19@marincounty.org.

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