

**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
JOINT INFORMATION CENTER**

825 5th Street, Conference Room A, Eureka, CA 95501
Telephone (707) 441-5000



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information, contact:

JIC PIO

(707) 441-5000

covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us

Local Health Officials Provide Information on Social Distancing

Many Humboldt County residents are seeking additional guidance on recommended social distancing measures following school and business closures across the county.

County Health Officer Dr. Teresa Frankovich said, “Social distancing is one of the Public Health tools that’s used to help prevent or slow the spread of an infection within a community.” She added that social distancing can include closing bars or restaurants and cancelling or postponing events and mass gatherings.

All Humboldt County schools are closed or implementing distance learning curriculum due to concerns about community spread of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services Public Health Director Michele Stephens said, “The decision to close a school is made in order to help keep our community safe and healthy. It’s not a snow day. It’s not a playdate. These kids still have an important assignment, which is to keep from spreading the illness to others.”

To further reduce spread of the virus, state health officials urge people 65 years old and older and those with chronic diseases to self-isolate at home. These vulnerable populations are encouraged to maintain outdoor activities to the extent possible but to cancel any non-essential travel or appointments.

“These strategies are an important part of addressing this outbreak; however, they do not replace ongoing measures we can all take to help decrease transmission,” Dr. Frankovich said. Some of the ongoing measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) include washing your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, promoting good hand hygiene, performing routine surface cleaning and staying home when you are sick. Additionally, residents can lower risk of infection by maintaining six feet of distance from others and not congregating, especially in groups of 10 or more.

Stephens said people being tested for the virus should self-isolate at home while awaiting results, and those exposed to someone who tested positive should call Public Health and self-isolate at home for 14 days while they monitor their symptoms.

“If you have mild symptoms that do not warrant a visit to your primary health care provider, stay home until you are well,” she said. People should call ahead before showing up to an emergency department if they are concerned they may have COVID-19 because of travel or exposure to a confirmed case.

As of this morning there were more than 560 confirmed cases of the virus in California. Humboldt County had one confirmed case last month. The person was cleared from isolation on Feb. 28 after meeting all the conditions for clearance required by the CDC .

For current information about COVID-19, visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or [CDPH.ca.gov](https://www.cdph.ca.gov). Local information is available at humboldt.gov/HumboldtHealthAlert, or during business hours by emailing covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us or calling 707-441-5000.

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