



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **MAY 15, 2020**

#### **SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PUBLISHES REOPENING IN SAFE ENVIRONMENT (RISE) GUIDE**

*The County Public Health Department, County Executive Office and Board of Supervisors Sponsor Countywide Community Recovery Team*

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** -- Santa Barbara County is taking steps to safely reopen society and our economy within the framework of Governor Newsom's Resilience Roadmap. To support implementation of the roadmap for phased reopening, a localized supplemental guide has been produced.

The Santa Barbara County RISE Guide, or Reopening In Safe Environment, was developed by medical and public health experts and supported by feedback from many sectors of the community to create a science-based framework for residents, businesses and organizations by which to reopen in a staged manner, while prioritizing public health and protecting our most vulnerable populations.

It's important to note this guide is a living document that will change to reflect additional input, changing conditions and new information. It is designed to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of public health as well as economic well-being. The guide provides recommended parameters for safely loosening or tightening restrictions, and will be used when greater local discretion is allowed by the state.

"Governor Newsom makes the decision on when we move through the stages of reopening California, but it's critically important that we are ready and prepared to safely reopen Santa Barbara County," said County Supervisor Gregg Hart, Chair of the Board.

The RISE Guide outlines the steps for reopening that can be safely taken in our community, balanced with the importance of resuming individual and economic activities as the COVID-19 epidemic evolves. The reopening approach is broken down into four phases, each with public health criteria for moving to and from phases:

- Stage 1: Safety & Preparedness
- Stage 2: Lower Risk Workplaces
- Stage 3: Higher Risk Workplaces
- Stage 4: End of Stay-at-Home Order

The County Public Health Officer, Dr. Henning Ansorg, is responsible for determining guidelines on how the county will reopen and when restrictions are loosened or tightened, depending on discretion allowed by the Governor.

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## **PHASED GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ADD 1-1-1**

“We set out to create a broad public health strategic plan with specific guidelines to limit the spread of COVID-19, and establish tools and approaches to minimize future outbreaks that are also consistent with the Governor’s framework and phases for reopening,” said Ansorg.

The expert panel was tasked with developing a framework for reopening decisions. The panel consists of epidemiologists, physicians and public health experts from Marian and Cottage hospitals; University of California, Santa Barbara; and the Public Health Department.

“As a representative panel of medical experts, we considered the capacity and resources necessary to effectively manage the spread of COVID-19 in Santa Barbara County, as well as the risks surrounding likelihood of transmission through a phased reopening of the community,” said Dr. Melissa Smith, who is chairing the expert panel. “We also wanted to ensure vulnerable populations and workers are protected in this transition to reopening.”

Development of the guidelines included engagement with more than 25 roundtable meetings that included city leaders, local elected officials, chambers of commerce, industry sectors, faith-based communities, representatives of essential workers, and organizations that regularly work with minority and underserved populations. These stakeholders – more than 350 in all – provided valuable insight on the practicalities of what reopening means across diverse communities and uncovered ideas for how to reopen safely across a broad range of community settings.

The Public Health Officer will make the final determination on the guidelines that will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, May 19 and go into effect once the Governor lifts his order. The RISE Guide is available for public review and feedback at [ReadySBC.org](https://www.readySBC.org).