FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Due to Increasing Rates of COVID-19, County Public Health Issues New Order Cancelling Gatherings of More Than 100 People and Restricting Gatherings of More Than 35 People

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CA — As of 10:30 a.m., Friday, March 13, 2020, 79 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in the County of Santa Clara – 36 more cases than we reported on Monday, and an increase of more than three-fold within the last week.

Due to significantly increasing rates of COVID-19 in Santa Clara County, the County’s Public Health Department is taking further steps to protect the health of our community and slow the spread of the virus.

Today, Dr. Sara Cody, the County Public Health Officer, is issuing a mandatory order prohibiting public or private gatherings of more than 100 people. This order will take effect at 12:00 a.m. on March 14, 2020 and will remain in place for at least three weeks. Public Health is also banning gatherings of 35 to 100 people unless certain conditions are met to reduce the likelihood of transmission at those events.

A gathering is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, theater, restaurant, bar, or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space. The ban does not include normal operations at airports or spaces where persons may be in transit; office environments; classrooms; medical offices, hospitals, or clinics; or retail, pharmacy, or grocery stores where large numbers of people may be present.

“As the outbreak of COVID-19 in Santa Clara County continues to accelerate, our aggressive measures are designed to slow the spread of disease and protect critical healthcare system capacity and other essential services,” said Dr. Sara Cody, Santa Clara County Public Health Officer. “We recognize these actions will have a significant impact of the lives of our citizens, but we believe they are necessary to protect the well-being of our community.”

It is important that all individuals, including those who are not at higher risk for severe illness, follow this guidance. Even individuals who are not a higher risk can inadvertently transmit the virus to vulnerable people.
Today’s guidance also includes updated recommendations for workplaces and business, people who are especially vulnerable to severe illness, and the general public.

The County Superintendent of Schools, in collaboration with all superintendents in the district, is also announcing today a decision to close county schools to students for three weeks. Public Health supports this decision, which is designed to provide schools with the time needed to put plans in place to comply with public health guidance and ensure they are able to operate in a manner that facilitates social distancing.

The County of Santa Clara Public Health Department continues to work closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the California Public Health Department and other partners to protect and inform the public.

Updated information can be found online at http://sccphd.org/coronavirus.

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