

NEWS

March 16, 2021

For Immediate Release

State Moves San Mateo County Into “Orange Tier”

Less restrictive tier increases capacity at restaurants, shopping malls & places of worship

Redwood City — The state of California today announced beginning tomorrow San Mateo County is moving into the less restrictive “orange tier” which allows the easing of certain restrictions and most indoor businesses to operate with modifications.

The shift to orange at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, March 17, 2021, comes one year to the day of the Bay Area’s first stay-at-home order. The county was last in the less-restrictive orange tier in the state’s color-coded plan for reducing COVID-19 in October 2020. The county had been in the red tier for three weeks.

“This is an important milestone for San Mateo County and every resident should be proud of the role they played in bringing us here by continuing to wear a mask, social distance, test and receiving the vaccine when they are eligible,” said Board of Supervisors President David J. Canepa. “However, this is not the time to grow complacent. This is the time to remain strong as a community and to help those around us so that we can continue to open up our economy further.”

The county moved to the orange “moderate” tier due to two metrics calculated by the state: the adjusted case rate has fallen to 2.8 per 100,000 in population and test positivity rate, excluding prisons, is 1.1 per 100,000. The health equity quartile positivity rate is 1.9 per 100,000 in population. The health equity quartile measures rates of infection with the virus in the county’s most disadvantaged communities based on the [California Health Places Index](#).

With the move to orange tier, the following is now allowed:

Shopping malls: Can open indoors with modifications

- Closed common areas
- Reduced capacity food courts

Places of worship: Can open indoors with modifications

- Open at 50% capacity or 200 people, whichever is fewer

Dine-in restaurants: Can open indoors with modifications

- Capacity must be limited to 50% or 200 people, whichever is fewer

Offices (non-essential businesses): Can open indoors with modifications

- Encourage working remotely

Bars/Breweries (where no meal provided): Can open outdoors with modifications

Movie theaters: Can open indoors with modifications

Gyms & fitness centers, including indoor pools: Can open indoors with modifications

- Capacity must be limited to 25%
- Indoor pools can open
- Indoor hot tubs, saunas and steam rooms must close
- Climbing walls can open

Family entertainment centers:

- Can open indoors for naturally distanced activities, with modifications
 - Capacity must be limited to 25%
 - Bowling alleys and escape rooms allowed
- Can open outdoors with modifications for activities like kart racing, mini golf, batting cages

Amusement parks and theme parks: Smaller parks can open with modifications

- Capacity must be limited to 25% or 500 people, whichever is less
- Outdoor attractions only can open
- Reservations or advanced ticket sales required
- Local attendees only (from the same county as the park's location)
- Additional activities will be permitted starting April 1, 2021

Hotels, lodging and short-term lodging rentals: Can open with modifications

- Fitness centers can open to 25% capacity
- Indoor pools can open
- Indoor hot tubs, saunas and steam rooms must close

Museums, zoos and aquariums: Can open indoors with modifications

- Indoor activities limited to 50% capacity

Schools

- California has updated the guidance and framework for reopening-12 schools for in-person learning for the 2020-21 school year. Learn more in the [K-12 schools reopening framework and guidance](#). Individuals interested in the potential impact on local schools should contact local school districts.



Youth and adult recreational sports

Follow this [guidance for youth sports programs, including school-based, club and recreational programs, and adult recreational sports including limitations for competitions.](#)

For further information by industry sector, visit the state's [Industry Guidance website.](#)

Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines in San Mateo County:

<https://www.smchealth.org/covidvaccine>

Learn more about COVID-19 testing options in San Mateo County: <https://www.smcgov.org/testing>

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