



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2021

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**San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Receive COVID-19 Updates and Take Actions
*County Could Move into the Red Tier by Next Week***

STOCKTON – San Joaquin County Public Health Officer Dr. Maggie Park provided an update on the state of the County’s vaccine roll out, and the County’s Blueprint reopening metrics which continues to show case rates steadily dropping and progressing closer toward the seven cases per 100k daily average needed for the County to move from the Purple to the Red Tier.

“It’s been one year since the County declared a public health emergency and recorded our first COVID-related death,” Park said. “Sadly, San Joaquin County has lost 1,199 lives to COVID-19 to date, but with the addition of a third vaccine from Johnson & Johnson and our robust efforts to vaccinate residents as quickly and efficiently as possible, we see real and positive signs toward ending this pandemic.”

Dr. Park stated that the County is almost entirely focused on distributing and administering vaccines that is based on a revised and simplified State framework which now includes only Phases 1A and 1B. The County continues to administer vaccines to both phases, which includes persons 65 years and older, people working in food and agriculture, education and childcare, and emergency services until the State authorizes opening up eligibility to another age phase. The County foresees being able to offer vaccinations to those aged 16-64 with pre-existing medical conditions, homeless residents, and incarcerated inmates beginning March 15, 2021.

The County received credit for being in the Red Tier for one week by having met the positivity rate for the entire county (between 2% and 4.9%) and for the health equity quartile (between 2.2% and 5.2%) in the Orange Tier. San Joaquin County can also reach the Red Tier if the Statewide vaccination rate reaches 2 million in lowest healthy places index zip codes and the County case rate is between 4 and 10 per 100,000 residents. Dr. Park noted that both of these are highly likely by next week.

“Gaining access to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine this week will have a huge effect on our ability to increase our vaccinations numbers,” Park told the Board. “It means we can effect change more rapidly and if we can keep our health equity rates on pace, we have a good chance of qualifying for the Red Tier next week.”

Dr. Park noted that to date, over 50,000 out of 95,000 seniors in the County have received at least one vaccine dose, and over 20,000 have received their 2nd dose. The County has been working closely with

elderly and long-term care facilities through numerous outbreaks since July and is now seeing outbreaks starting to diminish as more residents and staff are vaccinated.

The California Department of Public Health has issued a new statewide vaccine equity metric that augments vaccine distribution patterns toward areas of the State that comprise the most disadvantaged, lower income zip codes. Of the 8 million people living in the State's 400 most vulnerable zip codes, 1.8 million have been vaccinated which accounts for 40 percent of total cases and deaths Statewide.

Because higher income areas with more access to care, transportation, medicine, and higher education are getting vaccinated in larger numbers comparatively, the State's new equity framework incentivized counties to increase vaccinations across underserved and under-vaccinated populations.

In San Joaquin County, there are 10 zip codes that fall in the Healthy Places Index (HPI) bottom quartile. Because the Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires only one dose, and is easier to store and transport, the majority of the allotment San Joaquin County receives will be dedicated to mobile teams that will set up mobile units in the underserved parts of the County where access to transportation is limited or nonexistent. The County has recorded 67,657 COVID-19 cases to date and 1,199 total virus-related deaths.

"We are one year into this tragic pandemic and we are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel," said San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Chair, Tom Patti. "San Joaquin County residents have stayed strong and their hard work and sacrifices are now paying off as we start moving through the tiers and begin reopening. Once we move into the Red Tier, we will finally progress to a point where restaurants, gyms, movie theaters and other everyday activities could open in a broader capacity. This is a big victory for businesses, families, essential workers and all residents."

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors also voted unanimously to authorize the expenditure of \$29.3 million of new federal and state emergency rental assistance funds.

In December, the County allocated \$5 million for Family COVID Assistance Program to help tenants and owners cover COVID-related financial hardships. The County received more than 3,700 applicants seeking rent, mortgage and utility assistance. At an average grant of \$3,900, that funding will soon be fully allocated.

The additional funds will allow the County to continue providing critical assistance to households below 80 percent of the Area Median Income beginning March 15, 2021.

COVID-19 Consent Items:

Approval of the first amendment to consulting services schedule 2 to the master service agreement with Owens & Minor Distribution, Inc., for Supply Chain Consulting Services, extending the term From March 10, 2021 through September 9, 2021, and increasing the amount by \$169,000, to an overall total amount not-to-exceed \$344,000.

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