



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Receive COVID-19 Updates and Take Actions
*County ICU Capacity at 175 Percent; Regional Stay at Home Order to Remain in Effect***

STOCKTON – Dr. Maggie Park, San Joaquin County Public Health Officer, told the Board of Supervisors this morning that the County remains under State mandated COVID-19 restrictions that likely will stay in effect indefinitely or until ICU capacity improves. The Regional Stay-At-Home Order went into effect on December 6. These protective measures are prompted when available ICU capacity drops lower than 15 percent. As of yesterday, the San Joaquin region had zero percent ICU capacity.

San Joaquin County COVID-19 latest statistics as of January 5, 2021:

- 49,306 total confirmed COVID-19 cases to date
- 672 total COVID-19 deaths to date
- 340 COVID-19 current patient hospitalizations
- 106 COVID-19 adult cases in ICU with 76 patients on ventilators – the highest since the pandemic began
- ICU total patient capacity is at 175 percent
- COVID-19 patients currently occupy 61 percent of total ICU hospital beds
- Testing positivity countywide is at 17 percent
- The county's case rate is at 64.7 cases per day per 100,000 population

Dr. Park informed the Board that the California Department of Public Health recently distributed the "California Crisis Care Continuum Guidelines: Implementing During the Surge of COVID-19" which will require hospitals to provide their crisis care plans to the County and State based on space, staff, supplies and level of care. The plans are due on January 6. Dr. Park noted while hospitals and staff are feeling the heavy burden of working at capacity, they are currently operating at the contingency level and have not reached crisis stage.

Additionally, the State visited San Joaquin County on January 1st to see first-hand the condition of local hospitals including medical staffing, space contingencies, morgue capacity and discharge efficiencies. Dr. Park reported that the State will soon announce a Health Care Order to address the COVID-19 health care surge. It will apply to counties under the regional stay at home order, if region is at 0% ICU capacity and the county has less than 10% ICU capacity, and will be in effect for three weeks. It will cancel non-urgent surgical procedures, implement inter-facility transfers and out of county transfers to make room in hospitals, as well as reduce documentation and charting to create more efficiencies.

"We know there is extreme COVID fatigue among the community. Despite the warnings and the surge in hospitalizations and deaths, people continue to gather understanding the consequences. That is why we now need to shift our focus to vaccinations. They are the best hope to reduce our COVID cases and hospitalizations and finally get the State to allow us to reopen businesses, schools and everyday activities," said Dr. Maggie Park, San Joaquin County Public Health Officer.

Dr. Park also gave the Board an update on the County's vaccination effort. To date, 19,450 Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been delivered to the County by the State. Over 8,000 Pfizer vaccines and 1,600 Moderna vaccines have been given to health care workers, long-term care facilities and those in the Tier 1 phase. Dr. Park said that the State has approved hospitals, county clinics and Community Medical Centers to officially administer vaccines. Dr. Park said she would encourage physicians and other health care providers to apply with the State to become official "vaccinators" so that as vaccines are delivered to the County in mass quantities that there will be an adequate number of professionals to administer the vaccine to the public in the shortest amount of time.

Dr. Park updated the Board about the plans to further reopen schools. Through the "California Safe School for All" plan, the State will be providing \$2 billion dollars to schools to support safe reopenings including testing, PPE, vaccines and contract tracing as well as hands-on oversight and assistance to help schools reopen. Schools that are open in-person can remain open to in-person instruction and will need to post updated safety plans. Schools that have not opened in-person yet are encouraged to bring back younger students by spring, but they cannot re-open in counties with case rates above 28 per 100,000. San Joaquin County's COVID-19 case rate is currently at 64.7 per 100,000.

"We need to do everything in our power to work together, mobilize assets and make plans now for not only rapid testing, but large-scale administration of vaccines in the community," said Supervisor Tom Patti, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors. "Just as important, we need to get the message out to San Joaquin residents that vaccines are safe, effective and basically our only chance to get our lives and livelihoods back on track. We need to do this for our businesses, our kids, our frontline and essential workers and everyone in the community and we need to do it now."

Dr. Park and San Joaquin County Director of Health Care Services, Greg Diederich, gave a presentation and asked the Board to consider additional financial assistance to fund COVID-19 related activities such as expanded COVID-19 testing services, external COVID-19 vaccination services, Public Health mobile vaccination teams, a Public Health warehouse and distribution management team, Public Health communications, emergency medical services, and other COVID-19 related services. The Board instructed the County Administrator's Office to explore additional funding opportunities to support these activities and report back to the Board at a future meeting.

COVID-19 Consent Items:

- Retroactive Approval of an increase to the purchase order with Stem Express for COVID-19 employee testing, increasing the amount by \$162,000 for a total not to exceed cost of \$362,000 for the period August 3, 2020 through June 30, 2021 and approval of related budget adjustments.
- Approved budget adjustments related to prior approval of acceptance of funds from the California Department of Public Health received through the Federal Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases Program.

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