



PRESS RELEASE

COUNTY OF SONOMA

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County Announces Alternate Care Site at Sonoma State University for Coronavirus Patients

SANTA ROSA, CA - The County has partnered with Sonoma State University (SSU), and the Petaluma Health Center to establish an Alternate Care Site (ACS) in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Last week, the County received preliminary modeling data for COVID-19, which is being used to inform the development of an ACS to support local hospitals build their capacity to respond to the health needs of more serious COVID-19 acute patients in need of hospital care.

The County has been working with health care providers and partners to identify the types of patients and facilities needed to support specific populations that otherwise would seek care at their facilities. SSU was selected after County staff evaluated a number of sites.

Additionally, Gov. Gavin Newsom has allowed jurisdictions to use State-owned properties as an ACS, which meant SSU could be used for this purpose.

"We're grateful to Sonoma State for filling such an important role," said Susan Gorin, chair of the Board of Supervisors. "Having alternate care sites will be crucial if our hospitals experience a surge in patients. We hope we won't be in that situation, but it's imperative we plan for it and have resources ready."

County staff solicited significant input from local health care provider organizations to design the ACS that could fit the needs of the County health care system.

The ACS will be able to accommodate approximately 580 individuals, however capacity can be increased if necessary.

State Sen. Mike McGuire who represents a significant portion of the County was also a proponent of having an ACS at SSU.

"This is a historic, all-hands-on-deck effort to expand our hospital capacity across this state and here at home in Sonoma County. Opening up these over 500 beds will be a huge boost to expanding our local surge capacity. We are truly grateful for the one hundred percent partnership between Sonoma State University and the County of Sonoma – we know there's much more work ahead," Senator McGuire said.

State Sen. Bill Dodd, who represents Rohnert Park and the university, also supported having an ACS at SSU.

"The establishment of this alternate care site is a great example of the State, County and local health care providers working together. The COVID-19 pandemic requires us to collaborate and innovate to protect public health, and that's what's happening here in Sonoma County," he said.

The ACS will be operated by the Petaluma Health Center, and patients will be placed in the Recreation Center and in a portion of the residential housing area on the SSU campus.

"We are committed to working with the County of Sonoma and our community partners to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 virus on our community, and particularly on the most vulnerable," said Kathryn Powell, CEO of Petaluma Health a Center. "Over the last five years, Petaluma Health Center has built up its emergency management capacity, and stands ready to respond to this current pandemic."

More specifically, the gymnasiums in the Recreation Center will be used for COVID-19-positive patients with mild- to moderate symptoms while the residential units will be used for those who are awaiting test results for COVID-19. A separate residential housing complex will be used for COVID19 vulnerable individuals – those who are over the age of 65 and those with underlying medical conditions.

For more information about the Public Health Order, essential businesses, available County services, or updates regarding the public health emergency, please visit [SoCoEmergency.org](https://www.socoemergency.org). Residents may also call 2-1-1 or text their zip code to 898-211 in order to text with a 2-1-1 operator. Additional updates are available on County of Sonoma (@countyofsonoma) social media.

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