



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sonoma County to move to orange tier on Wednesday, April 7

SANTA ROSA, CA – After just three weeks in the red tier within California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, Sonoma County will move into the less restrictive orange tier beginning on Wednesday, April 7. This change is a result of the state's decision to adjust the minimum case rate requirement for the orange tier from 4 to 6 per 100,000 now that California has finished administering 4 million vaccine doses in the state's 400 zip codes that have been hardest hit by the pandemic.

With the adjustment of the requirements for the orange tier, the state credited Sonoma County with two weeks of maintaining less than 6 cases per 100,000. Based on this decision, Sonoma County is being allowed to enter the orange tier at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday. The change will allow many businesses and stores to open up 25 percent more than in the red tier and additional businesses to resume limited operations.

"The move to the orange tier is yet another important sign that we are on our way out of this pandemic," said Supervisor Lynda Hopkins, Chair of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors. "Getting into the orange tier also is validation of all the hard work our entire community has done over the past year. But we still have a ways to go, which means we all need to continue to be smart and safe until we achieve herd immunity. That means wearing our masks, avoiding large gatherings and getting tested. All of this will help us get into the yellow tier as soon as possible."

Moving from the red tier into the orange means:

- Restaurants, including wineries, breweries, and distilleries that serve meals, are allowed to operate indoors with 50 percent capacity or a maximum of 200 people, whichever is fewer.
- Retail establishments are allowed to operate indoors at normal capacity.
- Places of worship and movie theaters are allowed to operate indoors with 50 percent capacity or a maximum of 200 people, whichever is fewer.

- Gyms and health clubs, including yoga studios, are allowed to operate indoors with 25 percent capacity.
- Museums, zoos, and aquariums can offer indoor activities at 50 percent capacity.
- Breweries, wineries and distilleries that do not serve meals may open indoors with modifications: 25 percent capacity indoors, or 100 people, whichever is fewer.
- Bars that do not serve meals may open outdoors with modifications.
- Non-essential offices can open indoors with modifications. However, telework is still strongly encouraged.
- Graduation and commencement ceremonies can be held outdoors at 33 percent capacity with assigned seating and other modifications.

To move to the orange tier, the County's new case rate had to be fewer than 6 per 100,000 population, less than 4.9 percent of the County's COVID tests could be positive, and the positivity rate for its lowest health equity quartile had to be less than 5.31 percent. Sonoma County's metrics have been well below all those thresholds for two consecutive weeks:

- 4.3 new cases per 100,000 as of today.
- 1.6 percent of overall tests are positive.
- 2.3 percent positivity rate in lowest health equity quartile.

"All in all, we are doing quite well as we enter the orange tier," said Dr. Sundari Mase, Health Officer for Sonoma County. "We should all feel good about our progress against COVID-19. We also want to move safely through the orange tier and not lose ground. Even as more of us are getting vaccinated each day, it is crucial to be aware of the surges happening in other parts of the country and avoid outbreaks here. That is why it is vital to keep getting tested and to be safe."

However, health officials say they remain concerned that the recent decline in COVID cases in Sonoma County has slowed, and cases started to creep back up last week, leaving the County at just above 4 cases per 100,000. The County urges everyone to keep in mind that outdoor activities are far safer than indoor ones and to do whatever is possible to minimize their risk even as restrictions are lifted -- and until more of us are fully vaccinated.

Meanwhile, progress continues in the rollout of vaccines. Half of Sonoma County residents 16 years and older have now received at least one dose of vaccine while 30 percent have been fully vaccinated. More than 313,000 doses have been administered to Sonoma County residents to date. Sonoma County also continues to work on multiple fronts to make vaccines available to the residents of our most impacted communities as part of its health equity mission.

The state made all residents age 50 and older eligible to receive a vaccination on April 1. On April 15, all residents 16 and older will become eligible. The County encourages

eligible residents who have not been vaccinated to make an appointment through their health care provider or use the state's [MyTurn](#) site or the County's [clinic list](#).

For more information the County of Sonoma's COVID-19 response and vaccine rollout, go to www.socoemergency.org

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