ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS IMPOSING A COUNTYWIDE MORATORIUM ON MASS GATHERINGS OF 1,000 OR MORE PERSONS TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

DATE OF ORDER: MARCH 12, 2020

Please read this Order carefully. Violation of or failure to comply with this Order is a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. (California Health and Safety Code § 120295)

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTIONS 101040, 101085, AND 120175, THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS ("HEALTH OFFICER") ORDERS:

1. Effective as of 12:00 a.m. on Monday, March 16, 2020, and continuing until 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2020, public or private mass gatherings, defined below, are hereby prohibited in Stanislaus County ("County").

2. This Order is issued based on evidence of transmission of COVID-19 within the County, scientific evidence regarding the most effective approaches to slow the transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, as well as best practices as currently known and available to protect vulnerable members of the public from avoidable risk of serious illness or death resulting from exposure to COVID-19. The age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of the County places it at risk for serious health complications including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, persons with mild symptoms and asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk.

3. This Order will reduce the likelihood that many individuals will be exposed to COVID-19 at a single event and will thereby slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community. By reducing the spread of COVID-19, this Order will help preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in the County.

4. This Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the March 4, 2020 Proclamation of a State of Emergency issued by Governor Gavin Newsom, the March 11, 2020 Proclamation by the County Executive Officer Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency in the County, the March 11, 2020 Declaration of Local Health Emergency Regarding Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) issued by the Health Officer.

5. This Order is issued in light of the existence of 2 cases of COVID-19 in the County, as of the morning of March 12, 2020, including an assumed case of community transmission. Widespread testing for COVID-19 is not yet available but is expected to increase in the
coming days; this moratorium is necessary to slow the rate of spread while further data become available.

6. This Order is issued to prevent circumstances often present in mass gatherings that may exacerbate the spread of COVID-19, such as: (a) the increased likelihood that mass gatherings will attract people from a broad geographic area; (b) the prolonged time period in which large numbers of people are in close proximity; (c) the difficulty in tracing exposure when large numbers of people attend a single event; and (d) the inability to ensure that attendees follow adequate hygienic practices.

7. The Health Officer will continue to assess the quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this Order, or issue additional Orders, related to COVID-19.

8. Definitions.
   a. For the purposes of this Order, a "mass gathering" is any event or convening that brings together one thousand (1,000) or more persons in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, theater, or any other confined indoor or confined outdoor space.
   
b. For the purpose of clarity, a "mass gathering " does not include normal operations at airports, shopping malls and centers, or other spaces where 1,000 or more persons may be in transit. It also does not include typical office environments or retail or grocery stores where large numbers of people are present, but it is unusual for them to be within arm's length of one another.
   
c. To the extent the Sheriff or any chief of police has any questions regarding the definition of a "mass gathering" under this Order, the Health Officer hereby delegates authority to the County Counsel to answer such questions in writing.

9. Pursuant to Government Code sections 26602 and 41601 and Health and Safety Code section 101029, the Health Officer requests that the Sheriff and all chiefs of police in the County ensure compliance with and enforce this Order.

10. This Order shall become effective at 12:00 a.m. on March 16, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2020, or until it is earlier rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer or by the State Public Health Officer.

11. Copies of this Order shall promptly be: (1) made available at the County Offices at 1010 10th St, Modesto, CA 95354; (2) posted on the County Public Health Department website (schsa.org); and (3) provided to any member of the public requesting a copy of this Order.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

Julie Vaishampayan, MD, MPH
Health Officer, County of Stanislaus

Date: 03/12/2020

Approved as to form:

Thomas E. Boze, County Counsel

Date: 03/12/2020