



COVID-19 Guidelines: SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

MARCH 9, 2020

For You To Know Right Now

*Yolo County's Health Officer strongly recommends that all community organizations, schools, religious organizations, other entities and event planners cancel any non-essential **mass gatherings** or **large community events** starting on March 10, 2020. The Yolo County Health Officer will reassess this recommendation on or before April 1, 2020.*

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Yolo County is working with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) in monitoring COVID-19 and providing guidance and resources to prevent, detect and respond to the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in Yolo County and California. All organizations hosting events should prepare for possible impacts of event cancellations due to COVID-19 and take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as well as other infectious diseases, including influenza. We are now seeing cases of COVID-19 that represent community spread.

STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED IN YOLO

The goals of the Health Officer's recommendations are:

- 1) To protect people attending and working at large gatherings in the local community from contracting COVID-19; and
- 2) To reduce community transmission and introductions of COVID-19 into new communities.

Mass gatherings and large community events bring people from multiple communities into close contact with each other and have the potential to increase COVID-19 transmission. **Mass gatherings are events** where large numbers of people are within an arm's length of one another for an extended period of time. Mass gatherings may include: religious services, sporting events, plays, music concerts, assemblies, and conferences.

One method to slow the spread of respiratory virus infections, including COVID-19, is by increasing **social distancing** (reduce close contact), especially for the more susceptible or immuno-compromised populations. **Social distancing** also helps prevent our healthcare system from becoming rapidly overwhelmed.

STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Everyone can do their part to help plan, prepare for, and respond to this emerging public health concern. Schools and colleges who have a COVID-19 exposure or case should make decisions about closing or other actions in collaboration with their local health department. Schools and educational institutions are strongly recommended to cancel large gatherings such as assemblies, conferences, sporting events, etc. Schools should also follow the guidance posted by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

- Review and update emergency operations plans, including continuity plans for education.
- Send students, faculty, and staff who present with fever and/or respiratory infection symptoms home immediately. Separate the individual as much as possible from others.
- If the institution is a college or university and the individual resides in a group setting, make arrangements for the individual to be placed in a private room and bathroom.
- Encourage flu vaccine for those who have not taken it this season.
- Develop a communications plan to use with the campus community.
- Contact your public health department immediately if you notice any concerning clusters of respiratory disease or spikes in absenteeism.
- Encourage all students, faculty, and staff to take everyday preventive actions, including staying home when sick, covering cough with a tissue or sleeve, and washing hands frequently.
- Enhance cleaning consistent with CDC guidance.
- Faculty and staff with any fever and/or respiratory infection symptoms should not be at work. Faculty and staff should self-screen (check themselves for symptoms) each morning before interacting with students.
- Ensure sick leave policies allow faculty and staff to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Limit visitors to the campus by not allowing those with symptoms of fever and/or respiratory infection or who have a travel history over the course of the last 14 days.
- Develop communication plans for campus closure to include outreach to students, faculty, staff, and the community.
- Provide guidance to students, faculty and staff reminding them of the importance of community social distancing measures.
- Consider developing a plan for continuity of education, medical and social services, and meal programs and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.
- Maintain regular communications with the local public health department.

RESOURCES

- www.yolocounty.org/coronavirus
- www.yolocounty.org/coronavirusguidance
- [CDC Guidance for Administrators of Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s0501-cdcguidance-childcare-k12.html)
- www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/School%20Guidance_ADA%20Compliant_FINAL.pdf CDPH Guidance for colleges/universities