



COUNTY OF LAKE

Health Services Department

Public Health Division

922 Bevins Court

Lakeport, California 95453-9739

Telephone 707/263-1090

FAX 707/262-4280

Denise Pomeroy
Health Services Director

Gary Pace, MD, MPH
Interim Public Health Officer

Carolyn Holladay, PHN
Public Health Nursing Director

Iyesha Miller
Public Health Program Manager

Carla Ritz
First 5 Lake Executive Director

Promoting an Optimal State of Wellness in Lake County

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19 Update: Increasing Cases in Lake County and throughout California; Governor Reinstating Restrictions on Bars and Restaurants in Counties on Monitoring List

Gary Pace, MD, MPH

Lake County, CA (July 1, 2020) — Lake County has experienced a significant rise in confirmed COVID-19 cases over the last week. On June 25, we were at 42 total cases. We now have 79 cases, 39 active, with 4 people currently in the hospital. Of this increase of 37 cases, at least half resulted from an outbreak in the farmworker community, with the other cases stemming from a variety of sources. This pattern of spread indicates that there is at least some community transmission.

The initial case in the outbreak in the farmworker community was identified last week, and a standup testing site was erected the following day, with over 300 people tested at that time. Because of slow-downs in lab processing at the state level, the results are just now coming in, and there have been details requiring confirmation for appropriate documentation; for example, some of those tested work in Lake County, but reside in another county, and will be added to the total in their county of residence. We are hopeful all results will be available by the end of the day.

The agricultural community and the farmworker representatives have all been extremely helpful and cooperative in testing and coordination, and their operations have been put on hold until we are able to get on top of the spread.

Some of the other cases involve several separate contacts with people out of the area that were later confirmed positive. A few of the new cases have no identifiable source.

Case Investigations and Contact Tracing: Businesses Encouraged to Inform Public of COVID-19 Activity; Face Coverings Protect Family and Friends

Our process at the Health Department with a confirmed case is to do a “case investigation” where we get information about the likely source of the infection, the people that they have been in contact with, and then provide education regarding how to isolate. Then, the people identified as contacts during the contagious period will get a call, and they are encouraged to quarantine and given information on how and where to get tested.

In situations where someone who tests positive has a job working with the public, we are encouraging the business to inform anyone that was present during the relevant time periods. Any business is at risk now, so if one of the stores you go to informs the public of an employee who turns positive, this is a very positive thing for that business to do. By being transparent about when infections may be present, the public can be reassured in those businesses that at other times, they are relatively safe. We strongly encourage the business community to work with the Health Department in letting the public know when a positive case occurs amongst their employees.

When investigating the contacts, it is clear people who wear masks and engage in social distancing are causing fewer of their friends and family to get COVID-19. Those who live in a household with individuals with underlying medical conditions or other vulnerabilities to severe complications must be particularly cautious.

Thankfully, most of the people recently infected have relatively mild symptoms. The newly diagnosed folks with mild symptoms are stable, and isolating at home with daily check-ins with Public Health.

Four have been hospitalized, none have been intubated.

Lake County Upsurge Consistent with Statewide Trends

California is seeing a large upsurge in cases, with 8,000 new cases per day being identified. More than 6,000 Californians have died. The governor and health officials are concerned loosening of restrictions and increased social mobility enabled this surge.

In trying to understand the primary causes of the spread, large groups of people mixing from different households has been a common theme. Busy bars where young people are congregating without masking, some large churches, possibly the protests, and family gatherings where people from different areas come together are suspected to be a big part of the engine driving the spread; Memorial Day seems to have been a turning point in the trends in California

Restrictions May Be Added through the State's County Monitoring Process

Governor Newsom, therefore, is beginning to clamp down on some of these activities in counties experiencing worrisome viral activity. There is a "monitoring list" for counties that are seeing a sharp rise in cases and having trouble managing the load. This list includes 19 counties currently, mainly in Southern California.

Lake County is not on the list, but with the recent rise in cases we may end up there in the next few weeks. Added restrictions generally seek to, "close operations that involve indoor activities and mixing of households in situations that make face coverings difficult. The applicable sectors are: restaurants, wineries and tasting rooms, family entertainment centers (including movie theaters), worship services, and bars (which are closed entirely, no outdoor operations allowed)."

While these additional restrictions are not currently mandated in Lake County, it is possible that they will be necessary in the coming weeks, to help manage the spread of the virus. They also give us an idea of the types of activities people should avoid if they are in a vulnerable group or concerned about getting sick.

Many of our traditional local Independence Day celebrations would carry great risk, and some have already been canceled. We will be issuing a release on how to stay safe this July 4th later today.

Information on the State's County monitoring process can be found here:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19CountyMonitoringOverview.aspx>
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19CountyDataTable.aspx>
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-30/newsom-warns-more-coronavirus-restrictions-july-4-weekend>

Personal Choices Slow the Spread

In this time of expanding infections in our community, personal choices can be very important in limiting the spread and allowing businesses and activities to continue to operate.

Please do what you can to support your community:

- Wear a mask when close to other people. This is particularly important when:
 - Indoors and around others outside of your household;
 - Whenever interacting with people fewer than six feet away;
 - Patronizing businesses;
 - Working in close contact with co-workers or customers, even while outside;
 - In high-traffic areas, or situations where maintaining social distancing is difficult, like in vehicles, elevators, and hallways

- Avoid large social gatherings
- Keep physical distancing of 6 feet from anyone outside of your immediate household
- Protect and support folks vulnerable to severe complications

More Lake County-specific COVID-19 information is available on the County of Lake Health Services Department's website:

<http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus.htm>

Statewide and County-specific COVID-19 data can be found at <https://update.covid19.ca.gov>.

CDPH's Press Releases, including daily summaries of recent trends, are posted here:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/New-Release-2020.aspx>

If you review this information and have questions, reach out to Health Services staff, at MHOAC@lakecountyca.gov, or [707-263-8174](tel:707-263-8174).

Gary Pace, MD, MPH