



## CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

---

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council      **DATE:** October 19, 2020  
**FROM:** Matthew Bronson City Manager  
**PREPARED BY:** Matthew Bronson, City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 Response Update

---

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive an update on the countywide and City response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

---

### **BACKGROUND**

The City continues its work in addressing the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic following the direction of the County Public Health Department in coordination with other local agencies. The following is an update on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the county as well as the City's continued response since the last Council meeting on October 5. This update is provided for the Council's information and staff can address questions that the Council may have.

#### **Countywide Status**

As of September 30, San Luis Obispo County has 3,933 confirmed COVID-19 cases with two current hospitalizations and 190 individuals at home and 3,708 individuals recovered (approximately 94%). The increase in the number of confirmed cases has continued to slow considerably over the past two weeks along with a sizeable reduction in hospitalizations. Surrounding counties continue to have significantly more cases including Monterey (10,748), Santa Barbara (9,503), Kern (33,089), and Kings (4,464). Approximately 40% (1,722) of the confirmed cases in this county are in North County with 952 in Paso Robles and 770 in Atascadero, Templeton, and elsewhere. In South County, there has been a total of 950 confirmed cases with 358 in Nipomo, 227 in Arroyo Grande, 166 in Grover Beach, 133 in Oceano, and 65 in Pismo Beach. The County is hosting a South County testing site at the South County Regional Center in Arroyo Grande with an average of 100 tests conducted daily. On a South County comparison, case numbers in Grover Beach per 1,000 residents (12.3) are lower than Arroyo Grande (12.8) and Oceano (18.5) though higher than Pismo Beach (8.0).

As highlighted previously, the State of California is using an approach called *Blueprint for a Safer Economy* to determine what businesses can and cannot open safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the *Blueprint*, every county in the state is assigned to a tier based on its test positivity and adjusted case rate. At a minimum, counties must remain in a tier for at least three weeks before moving forward. Data is reviewed weekly and tiers are updated on Tuesdays. To move forward, a county must meet the next tier's criteria for two consecutive weeks. If a county's metrics worsen for two consecutive weeks, it will be assigned a more restrictive tier.

Table 1 on the following page is a listing of the four tiers of the *Blueprint* approach and the two metrics used to determine placement (new cases per 100,000 population and percentage of positive tests):

Table 1

County risk level	New cases	Positive tests
<p><b>WIDESPREAD</b></p> <p>Many non-essential indoor business operations are closed</p>	<p><b>More than 7</b></p> <p>daily new cases (per 100k)</p>	<p><b>More than 8%</b></p> <p>Positive tests</p>
<p><b>SUBSTANTIAL</b></p> <p>Some non-essential indoor business operations are closed</p>	<p><b>4 - 7</b></p> <p>daily new cases (per 100k)</p>	<p><b>5 - 8%</b></p> <p>Positive tests</p>
<p><b>MODERATE</b></p> <p>Some indoor business operations are open with modifications</p>	<p><b>1 - 3.9</b></p> <p>daily new cases (per 100k)</p>	<p><b>2 - 4.9%</b></p> <p>Positive tests</p>
<p><b>MINIMAL</b></p> <p>Most indoor business operations are open with modifications</p>	<p><b>Less than 1</b></p> <p>daily new cases (per 100k)</p>	<p><b>Less than 2%</b></p> <p>Positive tests</p>

While SLO County began in the purple” or “Widespread” tier with most indoor business operations closed, the county on September 22 moved down to the “red” or “Substantial” tier after two consecutive weeks of meeting the metrics for this tier. This lower tier allows for 50% indoor occupancy for retail, indoor dining of up to 25% occupancy, indoor activities at gyms and fitness centers of up to 10% occupancy, indoor operations at personal care services, and other indoor uses. Schools are allowed to reopen in the red tier though this is ultimately a decision by each individual school district or private school. Continued improvement in the metrics will further enable the county to move to lower tiers with fewer restrictions though worsening of the metrics consequently could lead to going back to higher tiers. Based on the health metrics data since September 22, the county has continued to remain in the red tier though has not made significant progress towards getting to a lower tier. Attachment 1 shows the listing of what business uses are allowed under each tier.

Lastly, on October 6, the State implemented a new equity metric for counties to ensure that the positivity rate and new cases rate in disadvantaged neighborhoods are not worse than countywide rates. The intent is to require more intensive efforts to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among people of color in California who have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic. Counties must meet this metric to move to the next tier in the State’s *Blueprint* and the County is working to make sure this metric is met within SLO County. There are 12 census tracts identified in the county that are affected by this new metric with one of them located in Grover Beach. The County will be working with each jurisdiction on additional testing and community outreach for these affected census tracts.

The City continues to monitor these overall trends carefully in conjunction with the County and other local agencies. County Public Health continues its work in serving as the lead agency countywide with referral of specific compliance complaints to the City to ensure that businesses comply with State guidance. The City remains committed to helping achieve community compliance with State and local orders focused on education and awareness with enforcement action as a last resort if other steps are not successful. This approach includes frequent communications through social media and other platforms to inform the community of public health guidance and encourage compliance. Staff's assessment continues to be that businesses overall are complying with the public health requirements including the face coverings ordinance that mirrors the State's order mandating face coverings usage in high risk environments including indoor public spaces. The City recently issued a citation to a business for not complying with the face coverings ordinance and will work with this business to achieve compliance. This compliance work is important to helping our community meet the public health thresholds for greater reopening of businesses and activities.

Staff is also continuing to implement the Council's direction to help businesses affected by the State order to use outdoor spaces and to date the City has approved 20 temporary use permits for outdoor business use and set up two outdoor dining parklets on West Grand Avenue near 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Staff has permitted large tents for outdoor dining at two businesses and is providing a matching grant of up to \$5,000 to businesses for constructing a permanent outdoor structure. In addition, the City has recently completed the second round of business assistance microgrants to help businesses with the financial impacts of COVID-19 and provided up to \$5,000 to 23 local businesses using \$110,000 of the City's CARES Act funding. The City has allocated a total of over \$250,000 in grant assistance provided to 40 local businesses.

### **City Response Update**

The City continues to provide services to our community in accordance with statewide orders and public health guidelines though City facilities including City Hall and Community Centers remain closed to public access. City employees work predominantly remotely in accordance with the red tier guidance on offices while continuing to provide services for the public. The public can call the City's main telephone line at (805) 473-4550 or send an email to [cityhall@groverbeach.org](mailto:cityhall@groverbeach.org) to ask questions or get more information about the City's response or services during this time. Given new State guidance allowing use of outdoor playgrounds, playgrounds at City parks have been reopened and users will need to follow public health guidance regarding face coverings and distance. The City's sports courts and skate park are also open under distancing requirements and the City has several outdoor fitness classes available at City parks including yoga and roller skating. At this time, there is still no specified timeframe for resuming public access to City facilities including the public counter at City Hall and walk-in visits to the Community Center along with in-person Council and Commission meetings though continued improvement in public health metrics and case numbers will advance the timeframe for allowing safe public access.

With regards to parks and recreation facilities and services, the Ramona and Community Centers will reopen for rental use when such indoor activities are allowed by the State along with the Tiny Tots preschool program. Similar to the cancelation of the Sizzlin' Summer Concert Series, the City has cancelled in-person fall and winter events including holiday events such as the Holiday Parade to discourage large group gatherings. However, the City is planning to put on a series of virtual holiday events including a Pumpkin Carving and Decorating contest, Halloween House Decorating contest, Thanksgiving Thankfulness entries, Holiday of Lights Decorating contest, and a virtual Holiday Tree Lighting. Staff will provide additional information about these activities at the October 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The Council has the following alternatives to consider:

1. Receive information on the updated countywide and City response to the COVID-19 pandemic; or
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. *Blueprint for a Safer Economy* List of Business Operations by Tier

SECTORS	Widespread Tier 1	Substantial Tier 2	Moderate Tier 3	Minimal Tier 4
<b>Critical Infrastructure</b>	Open with modifications	Open with modifications	Open with modifications	Open with modifications
<b>Limited Services</b>	Open with modifications	Open with modifications	Open with modifications	Open with modifications
<b>Hair Salons &amp; Barbershops</b>	Open Indoors with modifications	Open indoors with modifications	Open indoors with modifications	Open indoors with modifications
<b>All Retail</b> (including critical infrastructure, except standalone grocers)	Open Indoors with modifications • Max 25% capacity	Open Indoors with modifications • Max 50% capacity	Open Indoors with modifications	Open Indoors with modifications

SECTORS	Widespread Tier 1	Substantial Tier 2	Moderate Tier 3	Minimal Tier 4
<b>Shopping Centers (Malls, Destination Centers, Swap Meets)</b>	Open Indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity</li> <li>• Closed common areas</li> <li>• Closed food courts</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> <li>• Closed common areas</li> <li>• Reduced capacity food courts (see restaurants)</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed common areas</li> <li>• Reduced capacity food courts (see restaurants)</li> </ul>	Open Indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced capacity food courts (see restaurants)</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Care Services</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications	Open indoors with modifications	Open indoors with modifications
<b>Museums, Zoos, and aquariums</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor activities max 25% capacity</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor activities max 50% capacity</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications

SECTORS	Widespread Tier 1	Substantial Tier 2	Moderate Tier 3	Minimal Tier 4
<b>Places of Worship</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity or 200 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Movie theaters</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open Indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity or 200 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Hotels and lodging</b>	Open with modifications	Open with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• +Fitness centers (+10%)</li> </ul>	Open with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• +Fitness centers (+25%)</li> <li>• +Indoor pools</li> </ul>	Open with modifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• +Fitness Centers (50%)</li> <li>• +Spa facilities etc</li> </ul>
<b>Gyms and Fitness Centers</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 10% capacity</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity</li> <li>• +indoor pools</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• +Saunas</li> <li>• +Spas</li> <li>• +Steam rooms</li> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> </ul>

SECTORS	Widespread Tier 1	Substantial Tier 2	Moderate Tier 3	Minimal Tier 4
<b>Restaurants</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity or 200 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Wineries</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity indoors, or 100 people, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity or 200 people indoors, whichever is fewer</li> </ul>
<b>Bars, Breweries, and Distilleries</b> <b>(where no meal provided)</b> <b>(follow restaurants where meal is provided)</b>	Closed	Closed	Open Outdoors with modifications	Open indoors with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Family Entertainment Centers</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kart Racing</li> <li>• Mini Golf</li> <li>• Batting Cages</li> </ul>	Outdoor Only with modifications e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kart Racing</li> <li>• Mini Golf</li> <li>• Batting Cages</li> </ul>	Open Indoors for naturally distanced activities with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 25% capacity</li> <li>• Bowling Alleys</li> <li>• Climbing Walls</li> </ul>	Open indoors for activities with increased risk of proximity and mixing with modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 50% capacity</li> <li>• Arcade Games</li> <li>• Ice and roller skating</li> <li>• Indoor playgrounds</li> </ul>



SECTORS	Widespread Tier 1	Substantial Tier 2	Moderate Tier 3	Minimal Tier 4
<b>Cardrooms, Satellite Wagering</b>	Outdoor Only with modifications	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications • Max 25% capacity	Open indoors with modifications • Max 50% capacity
<b>Offices</b>	Remote	Remote	Open indoors with modifications • Encourage telework	Open indoors with modifications • Encourage telework
<b>Professional sports</b>	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications