

# NEWS

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March 4, 2020

**For Immediate Release**

## **County of San Mateo Opens COVID-19 Public Call Center** *Local emergencies announced to position resources for extended response*

**Redwood City** — The County of San Mateo today announced the opening of a public call center for residents with non-medical questions about COVID-19.

The number is (650) 363-4422. The call center will open no later than noon Thursday, March 5. The center will take calls from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and use a three-way language line to help non-English speakers seeking information about the novel coronavirus.

“We are receiving a tremendous number of calls to our emergency dispatchers and County Health from people seeking guidance on how they can prepare for and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus,” said County Manager Mike Callagy. “Opening the call center will both relieve those departments and connect the public with resources and information related to COVID-19 and its impact on our area.”

The opening of the call center follows the proclamation of a local emergency in San Mateo County by Callagy and the declaration of a local health emergency by San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow. Following the state’s own emergency declaration, the County’s two emergency announcements makes the County eligible for reimbursement dating back to when the documents were signed. The County chooses to take both actions because the COVID-19 response has the potential for countywide disruptions beyond the impact to public health.

The Board of Supervisors is expected to ratify both documents at its March 10 regular meeting. Several other Bay Area counties have made similar proclamations.

“The effort to protect our community’s health is a coordinated, countywide effort, and the Board’s expected ratification of these two documents places the County and its resources in the best position to respond,” Callagy said. “Our use of the term ‘emergency’ in the declarations is legally required and doesn’t suggest that the situation has escalated.”

On Monday, March 2, the County of San Mateo activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to support the local County Health response with coordinated resources and communication. The EOC will operate through Friday, March 6, at which time its need will be reassessed.

County Health has reported that an adult resident of San Mateo County tested presumptively positive for COVID-19 and the case is pending confirmatory testing by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This brings the county's total cases to two; an earlier case is an individual repatriated to the United States by the CDC and currently in isolation. County Health is also actively monitoring other individuals based on CDC guidelines.

General information about the novel coronavirus is available at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or <https://smchealth.org/coronavirus>

The Board of Supervisors meets at 9 a.m. Tuesday, March 10, 2020, in Board Chambers, 400 County Center, Redwood City.

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