



COUNTY OF VENTURA COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Mike Powers
County Executive Officer

800 So. Victoria Ave., Hall of Administration, Ventura, CA 93009
<http://www.ventura.org> <http://www.vcnewschannel.com>

Ashley Bautista
Public Information Officer
TEL: (805) 654-2640

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: 805-212-9484

County of Ventura Approved by State for Accelerated Reopening *Largest County in the State to be approved*

Ventura, CA - The County of Ventura is the first and largest Southern California County to receive approval from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to move forward on an accelerated Stage 2 path to reopening. With this approval, Ventura County restaurants can now offer dine-in options and all retail businesses with exterior facing entrances are permitted to have customers inside of their stores.

“So happy for our County, businesses and employees. A long way to go, but this is a major milestone. The attestation reflects a validation of our collective community and County efforts to protect our community’s health and to support our local businesses,” said Mike Powers, County CEO. “COVID-19 has had devastating impacts on both community health and our economy. We want businesses to be able to reopen and we believe they can and will do so safely.”

Given increased statewide and local capacity to respond to COVID-19, including stronger preparedness, continued stability in the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations, as well as increased ability to provide personal protective equipment to workers in essential sectors, the State announced the new attestation opportunity for counties to move through Stage 2, opening additional sectors of their economy at their own pace. The modified State guidance was issued by the Governor on Monday, May 18.

Regular Stage 2 has included curbside retail, manufacturing and supply chain businesses. The Governor has allowed counties that apply and qualify for a variance to move further along into Stage 2 with seated dining. The County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to ratify the attestation on Tuesday, May 19 at the regularly scheduled Board meeting. It was submitted to the State on that same day. The State provided approval in less than 24 hours.

“We want our community to reopen safely. Community members and businesses must continue to practice social distancing to lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure. This will help keep our numbers low so we can continue to move forward in reopening businesses throughout our County,” said Public Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin.

To qualify for the variance, counties must attest that hospitalization and test positivity rates are stable or declining; that they have a significant level of preparedness with testing, contact tracing, PPE and hospital surge; and that they have adequate plans related to county-wide containment.



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Criteria also includes 1) the rate of positive Covid-19 patients hospitalized cannot be greater than 5% in the last 7 days. The County of Ventura is at -3.4% in the past 7 days. 2) Positive test results for the last 14 days can be no greater than 8% and our local number is 3.5%.

“This is another big step on our path to reopening. We appreciate this opportunity for our local businesses, and we hope that our community members can continue to follow the public health guidance so we can continue to reopen,” said Mike Powers.

Restaurants and retail must register at www.vcreopens.com and follow the guidance. Learn more about the California Resilience roadmap for state reopening at <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap/>.

The Public Health Officer will modify the Stay Well VC Order this evening. Dine in and in store shopping will be permitted effective Thursday, May 21, 2020.

COVID-19 Industry Guidance:

Shopping Malls, Destination Shopping Centers, Strip and Outlet Malls all with exterior facing entrances are permitted to open. <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-shopping-centers.pdf>

Dine-In Restaurants: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-dine-in-restaurants.pdf>