



**Edward D. Hill**  
Director

**Milton Teske, M.D.**  
Health Officer

To promote and protect the health and well-being of Kings County residents through education, prevention, and intervention.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE: May 1, 2020

Contact: Kings County Department of Public Health, 559-852-4991  
EMAIL: KCDPH.PIO@co.kings.ca.us

Over the past several days, the County has seen an increase in its residents being diagnosed with COVID-19. As a result, concerns have been expressed that perhaps there is a causal link between the County rescinding its shelter-in-place order and this new increase in cases. The County does want to stress that while the County's shelter-in-place order has been rescinded, the State of California's shelter-in-place order within the County has not been lifted. The State's rules and regulations have not ceased to apply at anytime, and residents are still subject to the stay-at-home orders provided by the State. While the County order did mirror the State's, having only one order governing conditions within the County allows for more clarity about where to go for guidance on complying with stay-at-home directives.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak started here in the County, there have been 123 confirmed cases of infected residents within the County. There are reasons for this increase, which the County believes providing some context is prudent. First, testing has become more available and widespread. With improved testing and monitoring, an increased number of confirmed cases can be expected. In partnership with the State, a new expanded testing site will be soon be opening in the County. The County expects an increase in confirmed cases will continue from the greater availability of testing, especially as testing becomes more readily available for asymptomatic cases or those who are infected but show no symptoms.

Over the past several weeks, the County's Department of Public Health has been stressing that the growth in cases for Kings County would be delayed beyond the growth in cases for other areas and regions. Due to the more rural location of Kings County, the County tends to experience the results of these types of events a little later than other regions. That has been the case during the COVID-19 pandemic. County Public Health staff did anticipate and expect to see an increase in confirmed cases, especially as testing capabilities have improved and increased. As other regions begin to taper off in their number of COVID-19 cases, the County expects to see a similar pattern occur here, which would take place sometime later.

Additionally, a portion of the County's increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases can be attributed to infections at the Central Valley Meat processing plant here in the County, where a large number of cases were recently found. The County, in coordination with the California Department of Public Health and the Counties of Fresno and Tulare, will be providing special testing for employees of this business to monitor and protect their health, and to prevent the spread within the community.

This coordination is necessary as large organizations within Kings County employ residents from all of our neighboring counties, and this expanded testing will increase their number of COVID-19 cases as well. As this situation continues to evolve, the County does expect to find additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, but through monitoring and continuing to work with the business, the County expects to see those numbers improve in the near future.

The County continues to stress the importance of following the State's shelter-in-place guidelines, as well as following best practices known to limit the spread of communicable diseases. The County recommends residents take the following actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Kings County and protect themselves and others from respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unclean hands.
- Stay in your home as much as possible. The only exceptions should be for getting food and/or necessary household supplies, medications and medical treatments.
- Wear a face mask or covering, and practice social distancing of at least six feet if it is necessary to leave your home.
- Limit close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, or your elbow.

Visit [www.kingscovidinfo.com](http://www.kingscovidinfo.com) for current information and guidance.