

NEWS RELEASE



**Chief Administrative Office
El Dorado County**

EL DORADO COUNTY TEMPORARILY CANCELS SOME OLDER ADULT PROGRAMS AND GATHERINGS TO PROTECT HIGHER RISK RESIDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 2020

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(PLACERVILLE, CA) – El Dorado County officials announced today that they will temporarily cancel several programs and gatherings for older adults in an effort to prevent the potential spread of Coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) among higher risk people, and in line with new State directives.

“We are taking these precautions as measures to safeguard the health of one of our most vulnerable populations, our older residents, even in the absence of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in El Dorado County” said Public Health Officer, Dr. Nancy Williams.

Beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020, and at least through the remainder of the month, all El Dorado County Senior Nutrition Program congregate meal sites will be closed for dine-in lunches. Meals will be available for pick-up only, by reservation, at designated congregate meals sites. Seniors interested in reserving a meal for pick-up and who have questions should call Senior Nutrition at (530) 621-6160. The Senior Nutrition Program will continue to operate its Home Delivered Meal Program to serve more homebound older adults.

El Dorado County Older Adult Services will also be canceling some of its services and gatherings as a precaution, at least through the end of March. Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, the El Dorado County Older Adult Day Services (also known as The Club) in Placerville and El Dorado Hills will temporarily suspend the program, and all non-essential services, meetings and group gatherings at the Placerville Senior Center will be cancelled or postponed.

The Placerville Senior Center will remain open to provide essential community services such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization Programs, In-Home Supportive Services - Public Authority, Senior Legal, Peer Counseling, and Information & Assistance Programs.

According to El Dorado County Health Officer, Dr. Nancy Williams, the County is receiving daily updates and guidance on COVID-19 from state and federal health officials, such as the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and is taking steps to ensure that the most vulnerable residents in the county are protected. CDPH has stated that people currently at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are older adults, people with compromised immune systems and those with serious medical conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes and lung cancer.

This week, El Dorado County Public Health provided additional guidance to long-term care and skilled nursing facilities, encouraging these facilities to implement protocols such as screening visitors to prevent sick individuals from entering, monitoring residents daily and postponing social gatherings in common areas.

COVID-19 is a virus that can cause respiratory symptoms similar to seasonal flu, such as fever, cough and shortness of breath. Some people have no symptoms. While COVID-19 has a high transmission rate, it's believed to have a low mortality rate. There are several types of Coronavirus; COVID-19 is one type. Most people who become ill from coronaviruses that circulate in the U.S. recover on their own. Higher risk individuals may require more intensive medical care.

On March 11, 2020, CDPH issued a new statewide directive regarding public gatherings, in an effort to slow the potential spread of COVID-19. The State is asking the following guidelines be implemented across California at least through the remainder of March:

- Postpone or cancel large gatherings of 250 people or more. This includes gatherings such as concerts, conferences, and professional, college and school sporting events.
- Postpone or cancel smaller gatherings held in venues that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person.
- In addition, gatherings of people who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people.

Williams reminds the public that everyone can do their part to protect themselves and those around them by taking these steps:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze
- Stay home from work and school if you're sick
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with regular household cleaning spray or wipes

- If you're sick enough to seek medical care and think you have any respiratory illness, including COVID-19, be sure to alert the medical facility before arriving and follow directives to avoid exposing others

El Dorado County Public Health is continuing to provide updated information about COVID-19 on its website.

The website also has prevention tips and helpful resources. To access the EDC COVID-19 web page, go to:

<https://www.edcgov.us/Government/hhsa/Pages/EDCCOVID-19.aspx>

For information about CDPH directives, go to:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx>

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