

New Blueprint for reducing COVID-19 in the state with revised criteria for loosening and tightening restrictions on activities

SUMMARY: Every county is assigned to a tier based on its rate of new cases and positivity. Counties must remain in a tier for at least 3 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.

New guidance outlines an updated framework for a safe progression of opening more businesses and activities, driven by the following goals:

- 1) To progress in phases based on risk levels with appropriate time between each phase in each county so impacts of any given change can be fully evaluated.
- 2) To aggressively reduce case transmission to as low a rate as possible so the potential burden of flu and COVID-19 in the late fall and winter does not challenge our healthcare delivery system's ability.
- 3) To simplify the framework and lay out clear disease transmission goals for counties to work towards.

Tier Framework

The framework lays out the measures that each county must meet, based on indicators that capture disease burden, testing, and health equity. A county may be more restrictive than the framework. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be an evolving situation and new evidence and understanding emerges, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) will continue to reassess metric thresholds.

The framework metrics are set according to tiers based on risk of community disease transmission (from higher to lower)

- **Tier 1 - Widespread (Purple):** >7 new cases per 100k population per day with > 8% Positivity Rate; 7 day average; 7 day lag.
- **Tier 2 - Substantial (Red):** 4-7 new cases per 100k population per day with 5-8% Positivity Rate; 7 day average; 7 day lag
- **Tier 3 - Moderate (Orange) ;** 1-3.9 new cases per 100k population per day with 2-4.9% Positivity Rate; 7 day average; 7 day lag
- **Tier 4 - Minimal (Yellow):** <1 new cases per 100k population per day with < 2% Positivity Rate; 7 day average; 7 day lag

Moving through the Tiers

Rules of the framework:

1. CDPH will assess indicators weekly, starting on September 8, 2020.
2. A county will remain in a tier for *a minimum of three weeks* before being able to advance to a later tier.
3. A county can only move forward one tier at a time, even if metrics qualify for a more advanced tier.
4. If a county's case rate and test positivity measure fall into two different tiers, the county will be assigned to the more restrictive tier.
5. City local health jurisdiction (LHJ) data will be included in overall metrics, and city LHJs will be assigned the same tier as the surrounding county.

Initial step applied on August 28, 2020:

1. Each county is assigned to a tier based on an adjusted case rate and test positivity from the prior two reporting periods.
2. This tier status will be effective on Monday, August 31, 2020.
3. If a county is initially assigned to Purple Tier 1 and has met the criteria for a less restrictive tier the prior week, the county only needs to meet the criteria for a less restrictive tier for one more week to move to the Red Tier 2. (For the September 8, 2020 assignment, a county does not need to remain in the Purple Tier 1 for three weeks. For all subsequent assessments, a county must remain in a tier for three weeks and meet the criteria to advance as described below.)

To advance:

1. A county must have been in the current tier for a minimum of three weeks, except as described in the "Initial step applied on August 28, 2020" section above.
2. A county must meet criteria for the next tier for both measures for the prior two consecutive weeks in order to progress to the next tier.
3. In addition, the state will establish health equity measures on activities such as data collection, testing access, contact tracing, supportive isolation, and outreach that demonstrate a county's ability to address the most impacted communities within a county. Additional measures addressing health outcomes such as case rates, hospitalizations and deaths, will also be developed and tracked for improvement.

To move back:

1. If a county's adjusted case rate and/or test positivity has been within a more restrictive tier for two consecutive weekly periods, the county must revert to the more restrictive tier.
2. At any time, state and county public health officials may determine interventions or modifications necessary to address impacted hospital capacity and drivers of disease transmission, as needed.
3. Counties will have three days to implement any sector changes or closures unless extreme circumstances merit immediate action.

Risk Criteria

Activities and sectors will begin to open at a specific tier based on risk-based criteria, as outlined below. Lower risk activities or sectors are permitted sooner and higher risk activities or sectors are not permitted until later phases. Many activities or sectors may increase the level of operations and capacity as a county reduces its level of transmission.

Criteria used to determine low/medium/high risk sectors

- Ability to accommodate face covering wearing at all times
- Ability to physically distance between individuals from different households
- Ability to limit the number of people per square foot
- Ability to limit duration of exposure
- Ability to limit amount of mixing of people from differing households and communities
- Ability to limit amount of physical interactions of visitors/patrons
- Ability to optimize ventilation (e.g. indoor vs outdoor, air exchange and filtration)
- Ability to limit activities known to cause increased spread (e.g. singing, shouting, heavy breathing; loud environs will cause people to raise voice)

County Data Adjudication Process

- If a county finds that there is discrepancy between the county's and state's calculated data, the county may request a meeting to discuss with local and state epidemiology leads to compare data. In addition, CDPH will work with California Conference of Local Health Officers and County Health Executives Association of California to develop other methodologies to assess qualitative and contextual information impacting these metrics and the most appropriate interventions.
- Once a discrepancy is adjudicated by CDPH, any updated tier status will be determined by CDPH and the tier status will be reflected on the public website within 48 hours, as appropriate.

Schools

- Schools may reopen for in-person instruction based on equivalent criteria to the July 17th School Re-opening Framework previously announced. Schools in counties within Tier 1 are not permitted to reopen for in-person instruction, with an exception for waivers granted by local health departments for TK-6 grades. Schools that are not authorized to reopen, may provide structured, in-person supervision and services to students under the Guidance for Small Cohorts/Groups of Children and Youth.
- Schools are eligible for reopening fully for in-person instruction following California School Sector Specific Guidelines once the county is off Tier 1 for 14 days, which is similar to being off the County Data Monitoring List for at least 14 days.
- Potential re-closure should follow the July 17th School Re-opening Framework.

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

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

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

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Cardrooms, Satellite Wagering	Outdoor Only with modifications	Outdoor Only with modifications	Open indoors with modifications • Max 25% capacity	Open indoors with modifications • Max 50% capacity
Offices	Remote	Remote	Open indoors with modifications • Encourage telework	Open indoors with modifications • Encourage telework
Professional sports	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications	Open • Without live audiences • With modifications