



SONIA Y. ANGELL, MD, MPH
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor

Talking Points on Mass Gatherings

March 12, 2020

Governor Newsom issued a directive that, in order to protect public health and slow the rate of transmission of COVID-19, large gatherings should be postponed or canceled across the state of California for at least the remainder of the month.

Local Health Officers should use the following parameters:

- Postponing or canceling Large gatherings that include 250 people or more. This includes gatherings such as concerts, conferences, and professional, college, and school sporting events.
- Postponing or canceling smaller gatherings held in venues that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person. And this includes gatherings in crowded auditoriums, rooms or other venues.
- In addition, gatherings of individuals who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people. This includes gatherings such as those at retirement facilities, assisted living facilities, developmental homes, and support groups for people with health conditions.

Why is the state recommending this action now?

Based on where we are in the progression of this epidemic, it is essential that we implement social distancing as it is the most effective to slow the spread of disease.

Can you provide examples of what gatherings should be canceled?

Non-essential large gatherings of 250 people which cannot guarantee social distancing of six feet or smaller gathering that involve those at-risk for severe disease. CDPH recommends that event organizers work with local health departments to determine whether an event should be postponed or canceled; or if modifications are possible to meet the intent of the guidance.

What about outdoor events or theme parks?

If gatherings are less than 250 people and allow for social distancing of 6 feet, outdoor events could continue. In his morning press conference, Governor Newsom that while this does not apply to theme parks, there will be a related announcement forthcoming.



SONIA Y. ANGELL, MD, MPH
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor

What do we mean by a gathering?

A gathering is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

How should this guidance be applied?

This guidance applies to non-essential professional, social, and community gatherings regardless of their sponsor. Gatherings that do not meet the aforementioned criteria should only be conducted when they are essential—that is, if the activity is essential and could not be postponed or achieved without gathering, meaning that some other means of communication could not be used to conduct the essential function.

How does this guidance relate to schools?

This guidance also applies to gathering within schools but not classroom activities.

What are essential services?

Examples of essential services include congregate living, homeless camps, childcare and adult day centers.

How long will this guidance be in effect?

This guidance will remain in place at least through the month of March. As with all guidance that relates to COVID-19 response, authorities will revisit this guidance on a regular basis to evaluate the continued public health need for it and to evaluate if any elements need to be changed.