



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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Public Health Division

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To:	Santa Cruz County Skilled Nursing, Long Term Care, Assisted Living, Memory Care and other Residential Care Facilities; Continuing Care Retirement Communities; Independent Living Communities and other Congregate Residential Settings
From:	Gail Newel, MD, MPH, County Health Officer
Subject:	Local Guidance Regarding Communal Activities
Date:	January 26, 2021

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) have released guidance allowing communal dining and some group activities under very specific conditions. **I do not recommend these due to current widespread community disease transmission.** COVID-19 is a new virus that is still being studied and is not yet well understood. New variants are circulating which make this virus more easily transmissible. We know it can survive both on surfaces, as well as in the air, therefore any activities that increase virus in the air or on surfaces by bringing groups of people together will increase the risk of transmission.

In addition, my [Order](#) regarding visitation at skilled nursing and residential healthcare facilities is still in effect.

Currently the County is in the Widespread/Purple Tier of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy. My recommendations will remain in place until we reach the Red Tier at which point facilities may consider using the CDSS and CDPH guidance.

State guidance references are below:

- [DSS PIN 20-23 ASC](#) Updated Guidance on COVID-19 Related to the Critical Role of Testing, Modification of Visitation Guidelines, Need for Infection Prevention and Control, and Use of Face Coverings in Adult and Senior Care Facilities
- [DSS PIN 20-38 ASC](#) Updated Guidance on COVID-19 and Statewide Waiver Related to Visitation
- [DSS PIN 20-47 ASC](#) Preventing Social Isolation While Practicing Physical Distancing
- [CDPH AFL 20-22.5](#) Guidance for Limiting the Transmission of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities



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Santa Cruz County

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

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