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Ventura County Public Health Press Release

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**Public Health Officer Issues New Stay Well At Home Order
*Protecting Seniors in Long-Term Care Facilities, Placing Further Limitations on Gatherings,
Adding to the List of Essential Businesses and Enacting Social Distancing Protocols***

Ventura, CA – Ventura County Public Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin has enhanced the Stay Well At Home order to save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19 in the County of Ventura. The Order supplements the Health Officer's Orders dated March 17, 20 and 31, 2020. All prior Orders issued by the Health Officer remain in effect except where modified by the provisions of the latest Order.

"We are saddened to note that the virus continues to devastate families across the County of Ventura, and we extend our deepest condolences to all who are mourning the loss of a loved one," said Doctor Robert Levin, Public Health Officer. "We must protect the most vulnerable, especially seniors confined together in Long-Term Care Facilities. We cannot underestimate COVID-19, a virus that knows no boundaries, infects people of all ages, and can cause significant illness and death, particularly among people who are elderly or who have underlying serious health conditions. The Stay Well At Home Order has been updated to further help save lives and protect our community."

The intent of the Order is to ensure that the maximum number of people stay in their place of residence to the maximum extent feasible to slow the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of critical healthcare services to those in need.

The Order supplements and amends existing orders by, among other things: prohibiting all gatherings, no matter the size, outside of places of residences with limited exceptions, adding certain businesses to the list of essential businesses, requiring essential businesses to adopt and implement social distancing protocols, providing guidance for hospital holding units and long-term care facilities and declaring that violations of Health Officer Orders constitute a threat to public health.

Hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities

- Ventura County Public Health Department seeks to protect vulnerable populations from COVID-19. The most vulnerable population is the elderly. Seniors confined together in a Long-Term Care Facility are at particular risk. An outbreak there might result in numerous deaths. The Order advises Long-Term Care Facilities to relocate COVID-19 positive patients to COVID-19 Holding Units within hospitals.

All Gatherings Prohibited:

- All public and private gatherings of two or more persons occurring outside a single household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited purposes of operating an essential business or to perform essential governmental functions or services.
- Members of single household or living unit are permitted to engage in essential travel or essential activities together.
- Gatherings of 10 or fewer persons are permitted at graveside funeral services.
- Staff of organizations or associations may gather for the sole purpose of preparing and facilitating live-stream or other virtual communications with their members and are limited to as few as possible and no more than 7 people.

Additions to the List of Essential Businesses:

- Bicycle repair and supply shops may engage in the sale of bicycles on-line only and provided that all bicycles are delivered to a place of residence or Essential Business.
- Service providers that enable residential real estate transactions (including rentals, leases and home sales), including, but not limited to, real estate agents, escrow agents, notaries, and title companies, provided that appointments and other residential viewings must only occur virtually or, if virtual viewing is not feasible, by appointment with no more than two visitors at a time, both whom must reside within the same household or living unit, and one individual showing the unit (except in-person visits are not allowed when the occupant is present in the residence).
- Automotive dealerships may engage in the purchase or sale of automobiles (including cars, trucks, motorcycles and motorized scooters) on-line only and provided that all vehicles are delivered to a place of residence or Essential Business.

All Essential Businesses must have Social Distancing Protocol

- All essential businesses must prepare and post by no later than April 12, 2020, a “Social Distancing Protocol” for each of their facilities in the County frequented by the public or employees. The Social Distancing Protocol must be posted at or near the entrance of the relevant facility and shall be easily viewable by the public and employees. A copy of the Social Distancing Protocol must also be provided to each employee performing work at the facility. All essential businesses shall implement the Social Distancing Protocol and provide evidence of its implementation to any authority enforcing the Order upon demand.

“I am asking that everyone avoid leaving their homes for anything except the most urgent matters. And when you do leave, please make sure to cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering if you will be around others, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from everyone else, and frequently wash your hands,” said Doctor Levin. “If you are ill, please self-isolate and if you are a close contact of someone who is positive for COVID-19, please self-quarantine for 14 days. These are our most powerful tools to slow the spread and reduce the likelihood of overwhelming our health care system. We must work together to save lives during this critical time.”
