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Contra Costa Issues Mass Isolation and Quarantine Orders for People with COVID-19 and Their Close Contacts

Health Officer Dr. Chris Farnitano announced today that the County is issuing a mass order for residents with COVID-19 and their close contacts to isolate and quarantine themselves.

The mass order is being issued to help slow COVID-19's spread, protect vulnerable individuals, and prevent the healthcare system in the County from being overwhelmed. The county's public health staff no longer have the capacity to individually notify and track everyone with COVID-19 and their close contacts who may have been exposed to the virus.

As of Friday, 307 county residents have tested positive for COVID-19 and five people have died from the virus. Contra Costa County had no local cases at the beginning of March.

"We've reached a critical point in the COVID-19 crisis here in Contra Costa," Dr. Farnitano said. "Our resources are stretched extremely thin and business as usual is not an option. We believe this mass order is a creative and effective way of getting the job done to keep the sick isolated from others."

Residents must isolate themselves in their home or another residence if they test positive for COVID-19. They may not leave their home except to receive necessary medical care or during an emergency that requires evacuation.

(COVID-positive individuals without symptoms must isolate for 7 days from the date of a positive test. Those with symptoms must isolate at least 7 days have passed since their symptoms started. Initially symptomatic people must also wait at least 72 hours have passed since after symptoms go away. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, coughing and shortness of breath.

County residents who test positive for COVID-19 will now be required to tell their close contacts that they need to quarantine themselves if they may have been exposed. Close contacts must then remain at home or another residence for 14 days from the last date that they were in contact with the person infected or with COVID-19.

People considered "close contacts" are persons who, during the sick individual's infectious period, live in, or have stayed overnight, at the individual's residence; are intimate sexual partners of the individual; or provided care to the individual without wearing a mask, gown, and gloves.

People can access instructions on how to isolate and quarantine themselves at cchealth.org/coronavirus.

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