



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Solvang, California Responds to Santa Barbara County Issuance of “Public Health Emergency” Surrounding COVID-19 (“Coronavirus”)

Solvang, CA – The City of Solvang, California (www.CityofSolvang.com) has officially announced their full adherence to, and cooperation with, the County of Santa Barbara’s Thursday, March 12, 2020 issuance of a County-wide Public Health Emergency, which will hold through the end of March 2020. The Santa Barbara County-issued Public Health Order mandating social distancing policy, follows the California Department of Public Health’s findings regarding COVID-19 (“Coronavirus”), as pertain to events and social gatherings.

As of today, March 12, 2020, Santa Barbara County and in turn, the City of Solvang, are requiring that all events of 250 or more persons be postponed or cancelled. All smaller, non-essential gatherings held in venues which do not allow for adequate social distancing – of at least six (6) feet between individuals – should also be postponed or cancelled. The newly-issued Public Health Emergency is not applicable to exemptions: essential public transportation; airports; shopping at stores or malls; congregate living; activities such as school attendance, work or essential services. Additionally, Dr. Henning Ansorg, the County Health Officer for the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, has informed the City of Solvang that the restriction on public gatherings of more than 250 people does not apply to the Farmers Market. The City will be seeking further guidance concerning other outdoor events.

As part of this new development, the City of Solvang will revoke the event permit for the [2020 Solvang Century cycling event](#), which was scheduled to be held in the Santa Ynez Valley the weekend of March 14, 2020. Although none of the cycling event’s mass gatherings were planned to occur within the City of Solvang, the City of Solvang did issue an event permit to the organizers of the race, in November of 2019. The race’s start and finish were scheduled to occur in the City of Buellton.

The City of Solvang does not have any currently-permitted events scheduled within the City through April 24, 2020, when the two-day Solvang Datsun Roadster Classic event will begin.

Regardless of the event parameters as pertain to COVID-19, the City of Solvang does encourage healthy locals and visitors to support the local economy by continuing to patronize Santa Ynez Valley merchants, organizations and businesses. The County of Santa Barbara maintains that the issuance of this Public Health Emergency was driven by the increase of people who require testing for COVID-19. The County also maintained that radical implementation has been proven effective for this epidemic, and that socioeconomic impact is minimized over the long-run.

Solvang Mayor Ryan Toussaint will be involved in a follow-up Mayors group meeting with Federal and State representatives to address the potential financial impacts to the community, and in particular to the tourism industry, from COVID-19.

At the writing of this release, there are no reported cases of COVID-19 within Santa Barbara County. However, any person who suspects that they have contracted COVID-19, is urged to self-quarantine at home. Our local businesses are working on ways to service the community, so that the public may remain in their homes.

The City of Solvang urges residents and businesses to continue to monitor the County of Santa Barbara Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Public Information Portal, which is updated on a daily basis: publichealthsb.org.

The most important public action which doctors are stressing at this point, is that frequent and thorough handwashing with warm water and soap, is one of the best ways to help protect against transmission and contraction of COVID-19.

If any individual suspects that they have contracted the virus, they are asked to please call ahead to their healthcare provider before visiting the providers' offices or hospital(s).

Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure, and are most frequently fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, namely cough and shortness of breath. Persons most at risk for contracting the virus, are those who have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, or those who live in or have recently traveled to an area with ongoing spread. It is requested that patients alert their healthcare provider as to recent travel or contact. Healthcare professionals will work with each patient's local public health department to determine if they need to be tested for COVID-19.

Any person unsure of whether or not they should self-quarantine, or keep their children home from schools, may use these general symptoms as guidelines for staying at home: cough, temperature, severe runny nose, difficulty breathing, body aches. Persons who are experiencing painful breathing, shortness of breath, or a long fever over multiple days, should contact their healthcare provider.

Should the County start to see diagnosed cases of COVID-19, Santa Barbara County currently has 62 airborne infectious isolation rooms throughout our five County hospitals. Cottage Hospital has 47 beds in "negative pressure isolation rooms," meaning the air is treated and removed, with the capacity to add more if needed.

Please contact Anna Ferguson-Sparks at media@cityofsolvang.com with any questions about the information contained within this press release. All health-related questions should be directed to your healthcare provider, or the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (publichealthsb.org).

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