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Butte County Public Health Starts Planning Effort for a Roadmap to Reopening Butte County

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – Butte County Public Health started a planning effort this week to develop a roadmap to reopen Butte County. The County remains subject to the State’s Stay-at-Home Order, and does not currently have authority to modify or lift the State order to be less restrictive in regards to staying home, social distancing, and essential operations.

“It has been made very clear to Public Health jurisdictions that we can decide to be more restrictive than the State order, but we cannot decide to be less restrictive,” said Danette York, Butte County Public Health Director. “What we want to do is make sure we are ready with a local plan for phased reopening in case the State modifies the Stay-at-Home Order and looks to counties to implement local plans.”

Butte County Public Health established a six member panel of local health experts to develop specific, data-driven guidelines for reopening that both limit and monitor the spread of COVID-19. The panel will consider the Federal Government’s “Guidelines: Opening Up American Again,” the State of California’s “Roadmap to Modify the Stay-At-Home Order,” and reopening plans developed by other California Counties as it develops guidelines for Butte County.

Butte County Public Health Officer, Dr. Andy Miller, said, “We are fortunate to have representatives from each of our local hospitals on the local health expert panel. It is critical to have both Public Health and our healthcare industry working together as we determine the metrics to consider for reopening guidelines.”

The County’s Emergency Operation Center (EOC) is supporting Public Health with the planning process for reopening Butte County. The EOC will coordinate with public and private sector representatives to make sure impacted sectors can provide input on how reopening guidelines may impact operations within the industry. The Butte County EOC will work with a team of representatives from each of the cities and the Town to determine the industry sectors and then reach out to industry representatives directly.

“Any plan for reopening has to consider the public and private sectors that have been impacted by the State’s Stay-at-Home Order,” said Shari McCracken, Butte County Chief Administrative Officer and EOC Incident Commander. “Businesses and organizations need to be able to tell us how these planning decisions can really work for them. We can’t work with every business directly, but we can work with representatives from the impacted sectors.”

“We know this is a just planning activity right now, but it gives us hope that we can work toward safely reopening Butte County if we limit and monitor the spread of COVID-19,” said Danette York.

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