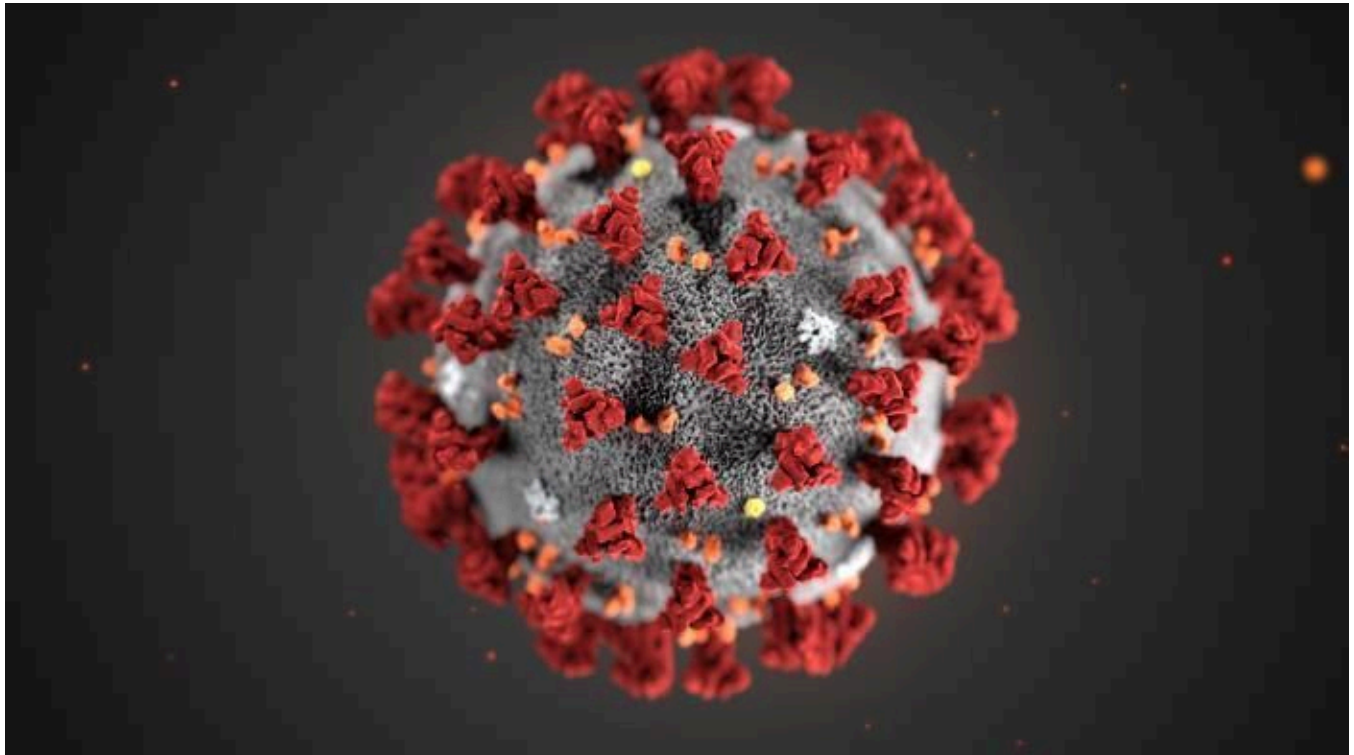


Restrictions grow as COVID cases surge

December 6, 2020



As COVID-19 cases continue to grow in Del Norte County, the impact of moving to the Purple Tier, the most restrictive in California, is growing.

Along with rules that now ban indoor dining at restaurants in the county, both city hall in Crescent City and the Del Norte County offices are closed to the public. In addition, state rules now call for a 10 p.m. curfew every night. After 10 p.m., gathering with people outside of your home is banned.

The influx of COVID cases has kept staff in the county health department so busy no public COVID updates have been made available for more than a week. On Wednesday, officials said there were 70 active cases in the county, evidence of a continued surge.

One of the hot spots appears to be Pelican Bay State Prison, where the state is reporting 14 new cases among staff in the last two weeks. According to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, there are 18 active cases among Pelican Bay employees with a total of 72 cases confirmed among staff since the pandemic began.

According to information available from the state, there have been 36 COVID cases among inmates, with 29 new cases reported in the last two weeks. There have been no COVID-19 deaths among inmates at the prison.

According to the latest information released by Del Norte County, one person has died due to COVID since the pandemic began in March, with total confirmed cases moving to 357 as of Tuesday. Over the last week, there has been an average of six new cases reported every day.

The cases in the county were split pretty evenly among men and women with the vast majority between the ages of 18 and 49. Only six percent of the cases were in the most vulnerable age group, those over age 65.

In Humboldt County, the picture is growing worse. On Wednesday, the county reported 30 new COVID cases, the highest single-day count since the pandemic began. There have been 909 positive cases in Humboldt County with nine deaths reported. There are currently 48 COVID patients in hospitals.

Dr. Warren Rehwaldt, the Del Norte County public health officer, said contract tracing has shown two major reasons for the increase in cases. The one he has spoken about the most is gathering with other people outside of your immediate home. Rehwaldt said to keep your family and others safe, do not gather with others. Those gatherings, whether with five people or 50, are still the greatest risk, he said.

Rehwaldt said the second risk is people going to work when sick.

“We have had a lot of reports of people going to work sick with cold and flu symptoms, and many have turned positive for COVID, but sometimes days after they were first having symptoms,” he said. “We cannot stress this enough; do not go to work or school if you are sick! It is the most fundamental rule.”