

California reopens economy as COVID wanes

June 21, 2021



Thanks to increasing number of people vaccinated across California, Gov. Gavin Newsom lifted most COVID restrictions Tuesday, basically fully-reopening the economy.

The news was welcome across the state, but especially in Del Norte County, which has remained in the higher tier of lockdowns for months. On the same day the restrictions were lifted, Del Norte County moved into what was previously the orange, or moderate, tier.

For the last week, Del Norte County had 4.7 new cases per 100,000 residents and a 1.7 percent positivity rate. When the lockdowns were lifted, 29 counties were in the minimal tier, 28 in the moderate and only one in high.

On Tuesday, Newsom terminated the statewide stay-at-home order and removed the tier systems. The new rules eliminate the mandates on physical distancing and capacity limits on businesses.

“Today, we celebrate the incredible strength and resilience of Californians – from our heroic health care workers to essential workers across the board to everyday Californians from all walks of life – who have

supported each other through hardship and heartache over the past year, making sacrifices to save countless lives and enable us to turn the page on this pandemic,” said Newsom during a press conference. “As we look ahead to better days, we will continue to look out for one another, redoubling our support to those hit hardest by the pandemic and making unprecedented investments to address California’s most persistent challenges, so that the entire state comes roaring back together.”

California also updated statewide masking mandates to follow the recent CDC guidelines. The new rules say anyone who is fully vaccinated does not need to wear a mask indoors or out. The only exception is for public transit, hospitals, long-term care facilities, homeless shelters and indoors at K-12 schools and childcare facilities. Masks are still required for everyone at those locations.

California also lifted all travel advisories, with no mandate to be tested or to be quarantined after travel.

With the new rules in place, large crowds were expected at events throughout the state. Some estimates suggested 60,000 fans could be at a Los Angeles Dodgers game Tuesday. Under state rules, people who attend indoor events with more than 5,000 people must show proof of vaccination to enter. For outdoor events with more than 10,000 people, it is recommended that attendees be required to show proof of vaccination.

Under the state guidelines, unvaccinated people are still required to wear masks, especially in crowded, indoor environments. Private businesses can also require masks.

The key to safely reopening and controlling any future spread of the virus remains getting people vaccinated. In Del Norte County, vaccines remain slow compared to the rest of California. As of Tuesday, 35.68 of county residents had received at least one dose of the vaccine with 30.62 percent fully vaccinated.

Vaccine clinics continue to be held at the county fairgrounds in Crescent City, and vaccines are also available at most pharmacies in the county.