Mendocino County Public Health

Summary of Changes:
Updated Health Officer Order Shelter-In-Place Widespread (Purple) Tier Order
Effective September 22, 2020

The most recent Health Officer Shelter in Place (SIP) Order effective upon release on September 22, 2020, continues the requirements for the new State tiered system, including the Widespread risk category (purple), Tier for Mendocino County, is significantly streamlined to avoid duplication with State orders, and modifies some local restrictions specific to transient lodging, campgrounds, service of alcohol at restaurants and tasting rooms, and “Stable Groups” (formerly “Stable Bubbles”).

On August 28, 2020, the State California Department of Public Health, issued a new Statewide Public Health Officer Order, which became effective on Monday, August 31, 2020, creating a new framework for reopening, known as California’s Plan for Reducing COVID-19 and Adjusting Permitted Sector Activities to Keep Californians Health and Safe, (aka Blueprint for a Safer Economy), which relies on a set of risk-based Tiers associated with case rates per capita per day and a percent of positive covid-19 tests. Pursuant to this framework, all Counties may reopen specified sectors according to their county’s Tier. Mendocino County has completed three weeks in the Widespread risk (purple) Tier, and continues this week in that category.

SIP Changes Effective September 22, 2020
Effective September 22, 2020, the Health Officer has streamlined the Shelter in Place Order, removing duplication with the State, clarifying the wide range of permissible activities for individuals and businesses, and ensuring State orders and guidances are easily referenced within the local order, which changes resulted in the Order reducing from 29 to 13 total pages (including appendices). For example, rather than separately identify each business sector, the Order (SIP at ¶ 8), clarifies that a business activity is allowed to open and operate in the County (1) if the activity is in a sector that is open in the Tier of the State Blueprint for a Safer Economy (https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/) which applies to the County and (2) the business activity conforms to the applicable State COVID-19 Industry Guidances (See https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance). Only business activities which are in a sector that is closed in the applicable Tier of the State Blueprint for a Safer Economy, are prohibited in the County.

Substantively, the Health Officer removed nearly all local restrictions specific to the local tourism industry, except for the requirement that all operators of transient lodging and campgrounds in Mendocino County have an individual caretaker/manager available on-call 24 hours per day (and be onsite within one hour) to monitor and adhere to COVID-19 Industry Guidances and for COVID-19 related issues. (SIP at ¶ 8.i.)

The Health Officer also modified the Stable Groups (formerly Stable Bubbles) (SIP at ¶ 7.g.), to increase the Household Support Group from 6 to 12 individuals, who may participate in a Household Support Group for permissible support and activities (e.g., carpooling, childcare, religious services etc.). The Health
Officer also urges people participating in permissible Stable Group activities to have a person responsible within the group for maintaining a list (including name and contact information) for at least 14 days which it should share with public health officials (only upon request) for the limited purpose of COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing connected to any such Stable Group interactions.

Finally, the Health Officer removed the restriction requiring restaurants, wineries, and tasting rooms to discontinue serving alcohol at 8:00 p.m. However, as with all other industries, these sectors must continue to follow all State restrictions. For example, the State still requires restaurants, wineries, and tasting rooms for counties in the Widespread (purple) Tier to operate outdoors only and requiring alcohol may only be sold when purchased in the same transaction as a meal.