

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance for Graduation/Recognition of Graduates Santa Clara County Public Health Department & Santa Clara County Office of Education May 8, 2020

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for spring 2020 school graduation recognition in light of the current Santa Clara County Shelter in Place Order. To slow and decrease the spread of COVID-19, Santa Clara County joined Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo Counties and the City of Berkeley in directing their respective residents to shelter at home. The order limits activity, travel, and business functions to only the most essential needs. The current Shelter in Place Order in Santa Clara County is in place until May 31, 2020.

We recognize the need for people to connect and celebrate, during this time of graduation; however, gatherings are a major contributor to the spread of COVID-19. We strongly encourage organizers to consider “virtual” graduations that can be held online. The Alameda County Office of Education has published Guidelines for Virtual Graduations [here](#) that may be helpful.

Additionally, the following are guidelines for offering an opportunity for graduates to pick up their diplomas in a manner that is allowed under the County’s Shelter in Place Order:

Social Distancing Graduate Recognition/Diploma Pickup:

To provide an opportunity for students, accompanied by their household members, to receive a diploma/certificate at the school campus, we ask that schools adhere to following guidelines as they plan these activities:

- For most schools, based on the number of students graduating and the space in which diplomas will be handed out, diploma pickup timing should be staggered to ensure social distancing can be maintained and no persons congregate.
- Limit the number of people who can accompany the student to the site, allowing only parents/caregivers and siblings (just those currently living in the student’s household) to attend.
- Ensure that only one family at a time approaches a graduation table/station where the student will receive a diploma.
- Ensure that each family maintains social distance from all others, spaced at least 6 feet apart. The more space the better.
- Ensure that all diploma pick-up occurs outside, if at all possible.
- Be sure that school staff are also practicing social distancing, and are spaced 6 feet apart at minimum.

- **Planning for the diploma pickup must be done in such a way to ensure that there is no congregation of spectators/observers on streets, in parking lots, or in areas surrounding the event location**
- Ensure that families and staff are advised to wear cloth face coverings.
- Ensure that there are ample handwashing stations on site and/or hand sanitizing stations accessible so students and staff are able to wash their hands upon entering and exiting.
- Inform families and students that they should leave the school campus immediately after receiving their diploma.
- If families drive their cars to the graduation site, ask that families park and wait to be called forward. Ensure they do not leave their car until called.
- Students and staff should be reminded to NOT participate in the ceremony if they are sick (if they have a new cough, complaints of sore throat, or shortness of breath, or have a fever).
- **Consult with local law enforcement, particularly if a group of cars may be heading to one destination at one time; following any guidance provided by local law enforcement**
- If families walk or bike to the walk-up graduation site, be sure to have a safe staging area where groups are able to social distance while they wait to be called. Use chalk, chairs, and/or tape to designate spaces for families to wait.
- Time the event appropriately to ensure families aren't waiting in their cars or in the staging area for long periods of time, which might encourage congregating.