



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 Emeline Ave., SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962

TELEPHONE: (831) 454-4000 FAX: (831) 454-4488 TDD: Call 711

### Press Release

**For Release: Immediately**

**Contact:** Jason Hoppin  
Communications Officer

**Date: March 23, 2020**

**Phone:** (831) 454-3401

### Travelers Asked to Avoid Beach Gatherings

The County of Santa Cruz is urging travelers to stay home and avoid crowding Santa Cruz County beaches during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With shelter-in-place orders in place throughout California, non-essential workers are staying home, schools and universities are switching to online classes and some students are entering their customary spring breaks. While outdoor exercise is encouraged in keeping with safe distancing guidelines, large gatherings are a violation of local and state orders meant to protect the health and safety of all Californians.

“Santa Cruz County is a popular destination for college students during this time of year,” Sheriff Jim Hart said. “However, the County is asking everyone to adjust their routines in order to protect everyone's health including their own, as well as the operations of our critical health care infrastructure.”

Despite warnings, many college students have congregated on beaches throughout the U.S., including Florida. Five University of Tampa students are now recovering after testing positive for COVID-19.

Violations of health officer's order are a misdemeanor subject to citation and even arrest. However, the County is seeking voluntary compliance in order to protect public safety resources.

With more State Parks than any other county and 32 miles of beaches, Santa Cruz County offers plenty of outdoor opportunities to maintain health and well-being in compliance with social distancing guidelines.

With an economy heavily supported by tourism, many local services workers are being severely impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Community Foundation Santa Cruz County has established a community fund to support public health and vulnerable people. Donate at <https://www.cfsc.org/donate/COVID>.

For local information on COVID-19, go to [www.santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus](http://www.santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus), call 211 or text “COVID19” to 211211. Residents may also call (831) 454-4242 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday-Friday.