



ALAMEDA COUNTY COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY PRESS RELEASE

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA ★ CALIFORNIA

Office of Emergency Services
4985 Broder Blvd, Dublin, CA 94568

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 28, 2020

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Alameda County Public Health Department

Alameda County Announces Timeline for Opening Middle and High Schools

ALAMEDA COUNTY, CA – On October 1, Alameda County announced that elementary schools (transitional kindergarten-6th grade) that completed a [COVID-19 health and safety reopening plan](#) would be permitted to open for in-person instruction on or after October 13. At that time, we noted that Alameda County health officials would consider permitting middle and high school students to return to in-person learning in four to twelve-week phases as local disease conditions allow. As of today, 58 schools, including one public school and one charter school have opened or submitted a planned opening date.

On October 13, the State announced that Alameda County entered the Orange Tier of the [color-coded four-tier Blueprint for a Safer Economy, where we remain](#). COVID-19 continues to circulate in the County, particularly among disproportionately impacted communities of color, but our progress through the tiers reflects improved case rates and decreased test positivity. Hospitalizations are also stable and at the lowest rate since before the summer surge. To continue moving forward while preventing the spread of COVID-19, wear face coverings when you leave home, limit mixing with people outside of your household and stay six feet away from each other when you do, wash hands frequently, and stay home when sick.

Although cases are rising elsewhere in the United States, the sustained stability of local COVID-19 metrics in Alameda County and the surrounding Bay Area counties allows us to move to the next phase of school opening for in-person learning.

Starting the week of November 9, middle and high schools (7-12 grades) that complete a [COVID-19 health and safety reopening plan](#) will be permitted to open if ready. The decision and timing of when to open rests with each school and school district, and schools are not required to open. Adults responsible for children should contact their schools directly regarding their plans.

Middle and high schools must post their reopening plans to their school or school district website and submit their plan to the Alameda County Office of Education, which shares this information directly with the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency.

“The Public Health Department and the Health Care Services Agency are responsible for determining when it is safe to permit students and staff to return to in-person education in Alameda County,” said Dr. Nicholas Moss, Alameda County Interim Health Officer. “That does not mean all schools have the resources to be ready as soon as opening is permitted. Some schools will need more time and should open classrooms only when they and their school communities are prepared to do so.”

The Health Care Services Agency continues to support schools and school districts with COVID-19 safety guidance and technical assistance and will help schools respond to clusters and outbreaks.

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“We continue to closely monitor COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. If we begin to see sustained increases in case rates, we will act to protect public health including restricting currently allowed activities as needed,” said Dr. Moss.

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