

[The SAVE Lives Santa Cruz County](#) Economic Recovery Council (ERC) was formed in early May to serve as an advisory body to our Public Health Officer, Dr. Gail Newel, and other County staff as we gradually begin to reopen our economy in line with [California Governor Newsom's "Resilience Roadmap"](#). The group is made up of 14 business and nonprofit leaders who represent our community's most impacted industries, such as retail and hospitality, as well as those specifically deemed by the Governor as being essential, such as childcare and financial services. The ERC is being facilitated by the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, and is also served by representation from the Santa Cruz County Business Council, and the various regional Chambers of Commerce.

In addition to advising our Public Health Officer on the very real impacts being felt by our local businesses, the ERC is also charged with relaying information on the recovery process to the business community at large. In line that mission, we will be providing weekly updates on the progress of the Council in the form of a "key takeaways" brief that will be shared with the ERC Membership and other staff; as well as other pertinent information developed through the Council's work. Some examples include guidance documents, answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), and curated links to other resources.

As of May 27th, the ERC has now met three times, and has already developed a positive working relationship with our County Healthy Officer. The key takeaways from the meetings thus far are as follows:

- 1) The Members of the ERC were adamant that the County work to quickly compile the documentation needed to apply for a regional variance, which would allow for greater business activity, so long as our community continued to meet the public health standards outlined by the Governor. This resulted in an emergency meeting of the Board of Supervisors being called on Friday May 29th to expedite this process.
- 2) The County has also updated the language within their new health orders to provide for an ending date to shelter in place. This was done in response to the concerns brought forth by multiple ERC members who represent the hospitality industry, who were experiencing cancellations from larger group events through 2021, due to a standard clause found in most hotel contracts.
- 3) ERC members were given ample time during each meeting to ask questions directly to the County Health Officer, both as individuals and on behalf of other businesses within the County. We have compiled the answers to the most frequently asked questions into a document that is attached to this briefing, and have linked to multiple longer form documents that go into even greater and specific detail.
- 4) In the interest of providing additional guidance to local businesses, their employees, and customers, the County has also set up a call center for COVID-19 related questions, which can be reached 24/7 at (831) 454 - 4242. The Public Health Officer has also provided more detailed guidelines for specific types of businesses and nonprofits in [Appendix A of her most recent health order, which can be accessed here in english](#), and [here in Spanish](#).

- 5) Beaches will continue to be closed to members of the public between the hours of 11am - 5pm as a means of discouraging out of County travel. This order is to remain in effect until the statewide shelter in place orders are lifted in Stage 4, unless otherwise altered by the Governor.

The next meeting of the ERC will take place on Wednesday June 3rd, and another "key takeaways" briefing will follow. Thank you for continuing to keep our community healthy and safe in these trying and unprecedented times.

Sincerely,
The ERC Team