



COVID-19 Update

November 20, 2020

Shortly after last week's update, we learned that California is the second state to reach the milestone of over 1 million residents diagnosed with COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic. As community spread rises, 41 counties statewide, representing 94% of the population, are now in the Purple range (widespread transmission), and the test positivity rate is over 5%. And as of tomorrow, a new statewide nighttime curfew for non-essential activities will take effect.

We don't want to be alarmist, but these are the facts. It is for this reason that we continue to **strongly urge everyone** – residents and staff – not to gather with people outside of your household for Thanksgiving this year. As Mary Linde shared in her recent memo to St. Paul's Towers, "A Zoom Thanksgiving is better than an ICU Christmas" - or Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa, or New Year.

We do hope that you will enjoy the holiday with people who live in your household and we encourage you to find creative and remote ways to celebrate with other people you care about. Although it's disappointing not to gather for the holidays, staying home will help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If you are feeling tempted or pressured to participate in a family gathering, here are some ways to explain to the people you care about why you are choosing not to participate in your typical holiday traditions this year:

- I wish this virus would take holidays off, but since it won't, I won't be able to join our extended family for our celebration this year.
- As much as I will miss being part of our family celebration, it is important both for me and for my community/the people I work with to stay home this year.
- Although it's been a long time since we've seen each other, it's important for all of us to continue to do what we can to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Let's figure out a way to do something special together, even if we can't be together in person.

If you're feeling family pressure, please know that you are not alone. Ron Schaefer, our Chief Operating Officer, and Karim Sultan, our VP of Affordable Housing, who are both members of the COVID-19 Task Force, also had to explain to their families why they couldn't come home this year.

In positive news, a second potential COVID-19 vaccine was announced this week. Although the coming winter months are going to be hard, we do see a glimmer of light at the end of this tunnel. Stay the course! We can and will get through this together.