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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Kern County Remains in Orange Tier**

Today the State announced that Kern County remains in the Orange Tier (Tier 3) of the COVID-19 Blueprint for a Safer Economy. This marks the sixth week our county has been in the Orange Tier.

Every county is assigned to one of four tiers based on the adjusted case rate, testing positivity rate, and health equity metric. Below is a summary of Kern County’s current metrics and a comparison of Kern’s metrics last week:

	As of 5/18/21	As of 5/11/21	Yellow Tier Trigger
Countywide Adjusted Case Rate	3.2/100,000	3.4/100,000	<2/100,000
Countywide Testing Positivity	1.6%	1.7%	<2%
Health Equity Quartile Testing Positivity	1.9%	1.9%	<2.2%

Kern must meet the Yellow Tier metrics for at least two consecutive weeks to be able to progress forward, so the earliest Kern could be eligible to move into the Yellow Tier is June 2.

Vaccination remains the safest and quickest way to immunity and those 12 and older are encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Currently, the Pfizer vaccine has been approved for 12 and older, while Moderna and J&J vaccines are approved for 18 and older. The Public Health COVID-19 vaccine nurse hotline is available from 7AM to 7PM, seven days a week. Call or text 661-677-4177 to ask your vaccine related questions.

The Kern County Fairgrounds Mass Vaccination Clinic offers Pfizer vaccine from the comfort of your car. The clinic operates Wednesday thru Sunday, 9:30am to 4pm. Appointments can be made at [www.MyTurn.ca.gov](http://www.MyTurn.ca.gov) but are not required. Other vaccinating providers are available throughout the community and can be found on the Vaccinating Providers Map at <https://phweb.kerncounty.com/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=COVID19Vaccination#>.

On May 17, the California Department of Public Health announced that the current statewide masking [guidance](#) remains in place without any changes. On June 15, 2021, California will be moving “Beyond the Blueprint” and by then, the state will develop a new masking guidance that incorporates the new CDC masking guidance released last week. The CDC’s updated recommendations state that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance except where required by federal, state, or local laws, including local business and workplace guidance. Therefore, while Kern does not have a masking mandate, the state rules and the rules of local businesses and workplaces still apply.

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