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NEWS RELEASE

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Public Health Announces Call to Action to Improve Overall Health

Kern County has some of the highest rates of obesity and mortality due to chronic health conditions in the state. In fact, 78% of Kern County adults are either overweight or obese and more Kern County residents die from diabetes than anywhere else in California. Out of all California counties, Kern ranks fourth for the highest rates of deaths due to heart disease and has heart disease death rates 43% higher than the state average. More than 50% of Kern County's deaths due to COVID-19 had obesity, diabetes, hypertension and/or heart disease as comorbidities.

Together we can change these startling statistics, create a healthier community and improve our overall quality of life. Physical activity and eating a balanced diet can help you to reach and maintain a healthy weight. Obesity is a significant risk factor for the development of diabetes and heart disease. Obesity and these chronic health conditions are significant risk factors for the development of severe illness from COVID-19.

"As we continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever to invest in your overall health. Public Health is here to help, providing tools and resources to assist you and your family," says Brynn Carrigan, Director of Kern County Public Health. "Whether it is selecting healthier menu options at local restaurants or incorporating exercise into your daily routine, join us on the road to better health today. Let's get healthy Kern!"

Kern County Public Health offers community initiatives geared at improving the overall health of our community and we encourage our residents to take advantage of these life changing programs.

- **#KnowYourNumbers** – This traveling program offers two free health screenings, informing participants of their body mass index, blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol levels both before and after program interventions. Program interventions include nutrition coaching with our Public Health Nutritionist and fitness classes through our partnership with In-Shape Health Clubs. Visit our website to find a location near you.
- **Certified Healthy** – This program empowers residents to choose local restaurants that offers healthier more nutritious meal options that have been "certified healthy" by meeting our ten nutrition criteria. Download our free Safe Diner App on your smart phone to search for Certified Healthy restaurants near you when eating out.
- **Waste Hunger Not Food** – This program rescues wholesome food from schools, restaurants and markets that would have otherwise been wasted and distributes it to those in need. Through our partnership with CityServe, we deliver this rescued fresh food directly into neighborhoods through an infrastructure of churches as well as other community partnerships. If you are looking to make healthier food choices for your family, but are having difficulty accessing or affording these choices, visit our website to find a food distribution site near you.

Get started on your road to better health today! Visit www.kernpublichealth.com to learn more about these healthy initiatives.