



**For immediate release  
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## **County health officer reviewing State's order for faith services and haircuts**

Now that barber shops, hair salons and houses of faith have California's permission to resume operations using specific precautions, Yuba-Sutter Health Officer Dr. Phuong Luu said she is carefully examining how her May 4 Health Order aligns with today's announcement from the State.

Dr. Luu said the scientific approach she used to create the May 4 Health Order revealed a safe path for reopening barber shops and hair salons, as long as careful guidelines were followed. The same science, however, showed the risk for spreading COVID-19 in large groups such as faith gatherings remains high.

Today's direction from the State immediately moves up all of those activities from Stage 3 to the latter part of Stage 2. Only those California counties that received a variance from the State may reopen barber shops and hair salons. Yuba and Sutter counties plus 45 other counties currently have that variance. The variance is not required for modified faith gatherings, which are now allowed in all California counties.

"I know and appreciate that all faith based organizations in Yuba-Sutter will be eager to reopen immediately, and my job now is to make sure any process for reopening includes sufficient safeguards that balance out any risks that may come from reopening this early," Dr. Luu said.

The new State guidelines limit attendance at faith-based gatherings to 25 percent of building capacity or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower. Daycare and Sunday School programs are not allowed.

At barber shops and hair salons, hair stylists and their customers must wear facial coverings, while close-contact services such as waxing, facials, and shaving will not be allowed, since use of facial coverings is not possible. Shops will be required to post information about social distancing and infection prevention protocols. High touch items like magazines and coffee stations must be removed.

The current health order places a strong emphasis on protecting local healthcare capabilities in Yuba and Sutter counties. A severe surge in COVID-19 cases could quickly overwhelm the ability to care for patients.

"We have been fortunate thus far to see a continued stability of COVID-19 cases in the Yuba-Sutter region. However, as more and more sectors are reopening, it is critical that each community

member adhere to important precautions to prevent transmission of the virus including social distancing, staying home when ill, good hand hygiene, and wearing facial coverings when out in public,” Dr. Luu said. “We are all in this together and can only return to 'normalcy' with due diligence and placing safety and health at the primacy.”

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