**FAQS: California Blueprint for a Safer Economy**
Updated September 9, 2020

**Weekly Update for September 8, 2020**
- Counties that moved to a new tier:
  - Purple to Red: Amador, Orange, Placer, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz
- Counties that might move soon:
  - Credit for next tier:
    - Eligible to move on 9/15: Inyo, Tehama
  - Supportive Engagement: Calaveras, Del Norte, Modoc, San Diego
- Data included in the California Blueprint Data Chart
  - Data displayed is for the weeks ending August 22 and August 29

**What is the California Blueprint for a Safer Economy?**
- California's blueprint is a plan for loosening or tightening restrictions on activities and businesses based on specific public health criteria.
- Every county in California is color-coded based on its rate of test positivity and adjusted case rate.

**What are the goals of the Blueprint for a Safer Economy?**
- To aggressively reduce transmission of COVID-19, especially in light of winter, increased indoor activity, and the traditional impact of flu season on the health care system capacity.
- A phased-in reopening of the economy, that allows various changes and sector reopenings to be reviewed for their contribution to disease transmission.
- A simplified framework with clear disease transmission goals for counties.

**What is the Tier Framework?**
- The Tier Framework lays out the metrics and thresholds that each county must meet in order to open more and more parts of the economy.
- As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and new evidence and understanding emerges, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), in collaboration with other State officials, will continue to reassess its metrics and thresholds.
- This framework replaced the state's previous County Data Monitoring metrics.

The following chart shows tiers based on risk of community disease transmission.

| | **Higher Risk → Lower Risk of Community Disease Transmission*** ** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Widespread Tier 1** | **Substantial Tier 2** | **Moderate Tier 3** | **Minimal Tier 4** |
| **Measure** | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Adjusted Case Rate for Tier Assignment (Rate per 100,000 population excluding prison cases, 7 day average with 7 day lag)** | **>7** | **4-7** | **1-3.9** | **<1** |
| **Testing Positivity (Excluding prison cases, 7 day average with 7 day lag)** | **>8%** | **5-8%** | **2.4.9%** | **<2%** |

**How do counties move through the tiers?**

- On August 31, 2020 each county in California was assigned to a tier based on an adjusted case rate and test positivity from the weeks of August 11th and August 18th.
- CDPH assesses indicators weekly and releases new tier status on Tuesdays of each week.
- A county must remain in a tier for a minimum of three weeks before being able to advance to a less restrictive tier.
- A county can only move forward one tier at a time, even if metrics qualify for a more advanced tier.
- If a county's adjusted case rate for tier assignment and test positivity measure fall into two different tiers, the county will be assigned to the more restrictive tier.
- During the weekly assessment, if a county's adjusted case rate and/or test positivity has been within a more restrictive tier for two consecutive weekly periods, the county must revert to the more restrictive tier.
- A Local Health Jurisdiction may continue to implement or maintain more restrictive public health measures if the local health officer determines that health conditions in that jurisdiction warrant such measures.

**What criteria is used to determine whether a sector is low, medium or high risk?**

- Ability to accommodate face covering wearing at all times (e.g. eating and drinking would require removal of face covering)
- Ability to physically distance between individuals from different households
- Ability to limit the number of people per square foot
- Ability to limit duration of exposure
- Ability to limit amount of mixing of people from differing households and communities
- Ability to limit amount of physical interactions of visitors/patrons
- Ability to optimize ventilation (e.g. indoor vs outdoor, air exchange and filtration)

- Ability to limit activities that are known to cause increased spread (e.g. singing, shouting, heavy breathing; loud environs will cause people to raise voice)

**How does the Blueprint for a Safer Economy affect schools?**

- After a county has been in the red tier for at least 2 weeks, schools in the red tier may reopen for in-person instruction if they follow the guidance of the July 17th School Re-opening Framework.
- Schools in jurisdictions in the purple tier are not permitted to reopen for in-person instruction, unless they have been granted a waiver for TK-6 grades by a local health department.
- Schools that are not authorized to reopen, including TK-6 schools that have not received a waiver, may provide structured, in-person supervision and services to a small number of students under the Guidance for Small Cohorts/Groups of Children and Youth.
- As stated in the July 17th School Re-opening Framework, schools are not required to close if a county moves back to Purple Tier 1, but should consider surveillance testing of staff.

**What is the County Data Adjudication Process?**

- If a county finds that there is discrepancy between the county's and state's calculated data for the above defined measures, the county shall notify the CDPH Local Coordinator. The county may request a meeting to discuss with local and state epidemiology leads to compare data. In addition, CDPH will work with California Conference of Local Health Officers and County Health Executives Association of California to develop other methodologies to assess qualitative and contextual information impacting these metrics and the most appropriate interventions.
- Once a discrepancy is adjudicated by CDPH, any updated tier status will be determined by CDPH and the tier status will be reflected on the public website within 48 hours, as appropriate.

## How does CDPH calculate its metrics?

| Metric | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Case Rate (rate per 100,000 excluding prison cases,7-day average with 7-day lag)** | Calculated as the average (mean) daily number of COVID-19+ cases, excluding cases among persons incarcerated at state or federal prisons (identified as cases with an ordering facility name or address associated with prison locations), over 7 days (based on episode date), divided by the number of people living in the county/region/state. This number is then multiplied by 100,000. Due to reporting delays, there is a 7 day lag built into this calculation. For example, for data updated through 8/22/20, the case rate will be dated as 8/15/20 and will include the average case rate from 8/9/20 - 8/15/20. |
| **Adjusted Case Rate for Tier Assignment (rate per 100,000 excluding prison cases,7-day average with 7-day lag)** | Calculated as the Case Rate per 100,000 multiplied by the Case Rate Adjustment Factor that is based on the county's testing rate per 100,000. |
| **Testing Positivity (excluding prison cases, 7-day average with 7-day lag)** | Calculated as the total number of positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests for COVID-19 over a 7-day period (based on specimen collected date) divided by the total number of PCR tests conducted (excludes tests for persons out of state or with unknown county of residence), excluding tests for persons incarcerated at state or federal prisons (identified as cases with an ordering facility name or address associated with prison locations). This number is then multiplied by 100 to get a percentage. Due to reporting delay (which may be different between positive and negative tests), there is a 7-day lag. Example: For cumulative lab data received on 8/22/20, reported test positivity is dated as 8/15/20 and is calculated based on tests with specimen collection dates from 8/9/20 - 8/15/20. |
| **Test Rate (tests per 100,000 excluding prison cases, 7-day average with 7-day lag)** | Calculated as average (mean) number of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests per day over a 7-day period (based on specimen collection date), excluding tests for persons incarcerated at state or federal prisons (identified as cases with an ordering facility name or address associated with prison locations), and divided by the number of people living in the county/region/state. This number is then multiplied by 100,000. Due to reporting delay, there is a 7-day lag included in the calculation. Example: For cumulative lab data received through 8/22/20, the reported 7-day average number of tests will be dated as 8/15/20 and will include PCR tests with specimen collection dates from 8/9/20 - 8/15/20. |

## Helpful Links

### Additional information about the Blueprint for a Safer Economy

- Find the status of activities in your county
- Understand which activities and businesses are open in the four tiers
- Explore the complete data by county- California Blueprint Data Chart

### Additional links and resources

- School Re-opening Framework
- Guidance for Small Cohorts/Groups of Children and Youth
- www.covid19.ca.gov