As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic unfolds and the number of cases in San Mateo County rises, it is critical that residents and health services providers stay up to date on local, state, and federal responses to the crisis. Below you will find a list of resources designed to keep you, your loved ones, and everyone in the community safe and healthy:

**Governor’s Executive Order Protecting Safety Net Services and COVID-19 Resource Portal**

- On March 18, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an executive order waiving eligibility redeterminations for 90 days for Californians who participate in:
  - Medi-Cal health coverage;
  - CalFresh food assistance;
  - CalWORKS;
  - Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI); and
  - In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).
- The full text of the executive order is available [here](#).
- The Governor’s office has also created a useful general-resource website with information on how COVID-19 is impacting education, employment, taxes, health care, and public services throughout California.

**Coronavirus Testing**

- The COVID-19 test is free for anyone covered by Medicare, Medi-Cal, or private health insurance.
- The federal government is considering legislation to expand free testing to the uninsured and to eliminate costs for coronavirus-related doctor visits.
- However, it remains unclear whether the government will step in to ensure that some or all of the costs of Coronavirus treatment are also waived.
- **Note:** U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has announced that it will not carry out enforcement operations at or near health facilities during the COVID-19 crisis. Individuals should therefore seek out testing, treatment, and preventive services without fear of immigration enforcement.
San Mateo County Updates and Resources

- Along with five other Bay Area counties, San Mateo County has ordered residents to shelter at home until 11:59PM on April 7, 2020.
- San Mateo County Health has created a dedicated webpage with information on COVID-19, including updates from County officials and detailed FAQs on the disease.
- The San Mateo County Human Services Agency (HSA) remains open, but is no longer providing in-person services.
  - Staff at the HSA locations in South San Francisco, Redwood City, Belmont, and East Palo Alto are instructing visitors to call or go online for assistance. HSA has published a handout listing its key contact numbers and webpages.
  - HSA has also suspended all non-essential work until further notice.
    ▪ The Economic Self Sufficiency (ESS) branch will focus on granting and maintaining access to benefits.
    ▪ HSA has suspended processing Medi-Cal renewals, overpayments, negative actions, and all tasks that do not affect benefit levels, but is doing what it can to prevent people enrolled in CalFresh and CalWORKS from incurring overpayments.
- The Health Plan of San Mateo (HPSM) has also cut back service levels in response to the shelter in place order.
  - HPSM’s South San Francisco office is now closed to visitors and members.
  - HPSM’s Member Services and CareAdvantage call centers continue to operate, but with limited staffing, so they are only processing urgent calls. Members with non-urgent issues will receive a return call at a later date.
  - HPSM’s Grievance and Appeals staff is also limited, and will similarly be prioritizing urgent issues.
  - However, the Care Coordination, Utilization Management, and Pharmacy Unit teams are functioning at normal capacity from offsite locations.

California Updates and Resources

- Both the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) have created webpages detailing their responses to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The DPH webpage includes an up-to-date news feed, extensive FAQs about the disease, and guidance for residents, health providers, and county officials.
- The DHCS webpage contains further guidance for health providers and partners.
• DHCS has issued revised guidance regarding the ways a Medi-Cal applicant or beneficiary can appoint an individual or organization as their Authorized Representative (AR). Counties may receive any of the three following AR appointment methods through the Internet, by phone, in person, by mail, or through other commonly available electronic means where available:
  o The “Appointment of Authorized Representative” form (MC 382);
  o Online/paper Single-Streamlined Application; or
  o Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) 2 PLUS/online SAWS application portal.
• DHCS has also submitted an 1135 waiver request to the federal government that would allow California to more efficiently respond to the pandemic.

Federal Updates and Resources

• The Social Security Administration (SSA) has announced that it will not start or complete any current medical continuing disability reviews. Where possible, SSA will also suspend the processing and collection of overpayments.
• The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has set up a COVID-19 website that provides essential information on how people can protect themselves from the virus; the pandemic’s impact on travel, employment, schools, and childcare; and the latest updates on the outbreak’s progression.
• Other useful federal government webpages include:
  o USA.gov – Government Response to Coronavirus, COVID-19
  o Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) – Current Emergencies: Coronavirus
    ▪ CMS – Guidance to Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Organizations
    ▪ CMS – Expansion of Telehealth Benefits for Medicare Beneficiaries
    ▪ CMS – New Measures to Protect Nursing Home Residents
    ▪ CMS – Coverage and Benefits Related to COVID-19 Under Medicaid and CHIP
  o Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) – What You Should Know About the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and COVID-19