

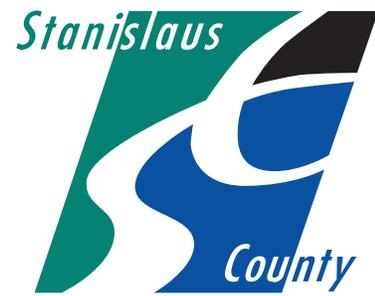
STANISLAUS COUNTY

# COVID-19 REPORT

YEAR IN REVIEW







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# MESSAGE FROM UNIFIED COMMAND



**DR. JULIE VAISHAMPAYAN**  
Stanislaus County  
Public Health Officer



**MARY ANN LILLY**  
Stanislaus County  
Health Service Agency Director



**JODY HAYES**  
Stanislaus County  
Chief Executive Officer



**JEFF DIRKSE**  
Stanislaus County  
Sheriff-Coroner



**RICHARD MURDOCK**  
Stanislaus County  
Fire Warden/Office of  
Emergency Services

This past year has been extraordinarily difficult. There were, and as of April 2021 still are, unending challenges in a very rapidly changing environment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy direction from both the federal and state governments changed frequently with little or no notice during the past year, creating additional challenges in implementing and communicating these changes. Ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic required all hands on deck for an extended period of time.

This public health crisis impacted all County departments in ways great and small. Every department faced the immediate need to modify their approach to serving the public, but continued to serve. Every department had to reconfigure their work spaces, waiting rooms and common areas in order to keep people safe. Every department faced staffing shortages and remote work challenges. Every department adapted, discovered new efficiencies and streamlined processes and day by tireless day, continued to get the work done.

While no organization faces an unforeseen emergency feeling fully prepared and equipped to handle all that arises, the County organization has done well. Much of our success we owe to partnerships and community collaborations that came together for such a time as this. We are so fortunate to live and work in a supportive, engaged, and caring community. We are in awe of all the people who stepped up to help, working together, giving of their time and resources to support those in need. We continue to be amazed and grateful for this community we are honored to live and work in. We will always treasure the relationships forged and strengthened over this past year. Our heartfelt thanks to all.

*Dr Julie Vaishampayan*

*Mary Ann Lilly*

*Jody Hayes*

*Jeff Dirkse*

*Richard Murdock*



# ABOUT THIS REPORT

First detected in the United States in January 2020, the COVID-19 virus quickly spread across the nation and was declared a global health emergency by the World Health Organization on January 30, 2020. Shortly after this declaration, the first case in the State of California was confirmed. In early March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a national emergency and Stanislaus County would begin to feel the impacts of the virus on our community.

The early months of 2020 included rapidly changing information from both federal and state government agencies. Stanislaus County Leadership worked diligently to understand this virus, broadly believed to pose a grave threat to human lives around the world. However, not much else was known other than its origin and the potential devastation it could cause. By early March, the Stanislaus County Office of Emergency Services had activated the Emergency Operations Center and established an Incident Command structure. Shortly thereafter, Stanislaus County saw its first two COVID-19 cases on March 11, 2020 and the County Public Health Officer declared a local health emergency on the same day in order to protect our residents.

As cases continued to mount, the Governor of California proclaimed a State of Emergency on March 19, 2020 and issued a statewide Stay at Home Order. This action supported the County of Stanislaus and other jurisdictions to take extreme mitigation measures toward preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Many businesses closed or modified their operations to maintain the safety of the public and employees. Students were sent home to continue their education via distance learning. Across the community and the nation, people struggled to prepare for what was to come and guard against the negative impacts of COVID-19.

Despite the County's initial measures to prepare for and prevent the spread of the virus, COVID-19 cases continued

to increase across the state and in Stanislaus County throughout the duration of the incident period. While the pandemic response efforts are ongoing, the County's strategy and the lessons learned offer an opportunity to enhance future preparedness efforts which will serve as a local standard, and act as a best-practice response model going forward.

The COVID-19 pandemic in Stanislaus County has been exceptional in its scale, and the County's response has been all consuming. The unprecedented nature of the pandemic meant the County was challenged to design and implement new approaches to thwart the spread of the disease and protect our community without the benefit of prior experience or use of traditional pandemic response plans. The County's response focused our best resources and our most concentrated efforts on protecting residents through a multifaceted approach which included a reliance on local partnerships, active engagement with the community through public information channels and innovative mitigation strategies tested for the first time.

Stanislaus County recorded its first death on April 10, 2020. Since that day over 1,000 Stanislaus County residents have perished as a result of COVID-19 and over 53,000 residents have tested positive.

Stanislaus County's emergency operations team has worked diligently to balance the health and safety of the community with the need for people to work and for local businesses to remain viable. Throughout the past year, the County has worked tirelessly adapting to changes in incident priorities, state public health restrictions, local response needs and mitigation strategies to detect and control the spread of the virus in the community.

This report details the most significant impacts of COVID-19 and the County's response to the public health pandemic.

# HEALTH

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

- **1st week of February 2020**  
Health Services Agency Department Operations Center activated. Department learns of first Patients Under Investigation
- **Last week February 2020**  
Emergency Operations Center activated
- **March 11, 2020**  
County Public Health Officer declared Local Health Emergency
- **March 19, 2020**  
Governor declares Stay at Home Order
- **June 2020**  
Equipped an alternate care site with 110 bed capacity, prepared for activation, and continually coordinated with local hospitals and skilled nursing facilities to monitor the need for surge capacity.
- **3rd week of July 2020**  
First Surge – highest # of hospitalized to date
- **3rd week of December 2020**  
Receipt of first shipment of vaccine
- **4th week of December 2020**  
Second Surge – highest # of hospitalized to date
- **5th week of December 2020**  
Healthcare workers begin getting vaccinated
- **January 2021**  
County begins vaccinations for 65+

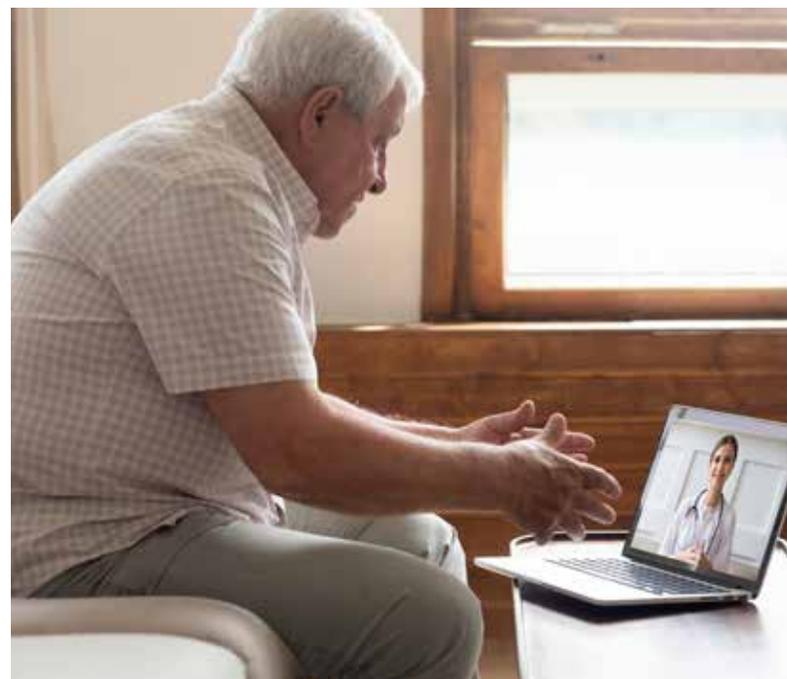
## ADAPTING TO THE NEEDS OF PATIENTS

### The Team Adapted:

The outpatient clinics adapted by implementing Telehealth to encourage patients not to forego necessary medical care during the pandemic and by collaborating with the Office of Emergency Services and establishing an expedited drive-thru testing service for first responders.

### Accomplishments to be Proud of:

- Through phone calls, electronic messaging and on-site visits, provided critical guidance to thousands of individuals, businesses and other organizations
- Developed an innovative approach using text technology to conduct outreach to COVID-19 positive individuals
- Established a testing service for surveillance and mitigation
- Established a large scale vaccination service
- Implemented Telehealth visit technology in the primary care offices - provided 24% of patient visits virtually



# COVID-19 DATA

March 11, 2020 through March 11, 2021



**543,789**  
TOTAL NUMBER OF TESTS  
REPORTED IN STANISLAUS  
COUNTY



**473,792**  
TOTAL NUMBER OF  
NEGATIVE TESTS



**51,430**  
TOTAL NUMBER OF  
CONFIRMED CASES



**2,384**  
TOTAL NUMBER OF  
HOSPITALIZATIONS  
*(confirmed cases)*



**5,909**  
TOTAL NUMBER OF  
PROBABLE CASES



**49,476**  
TOTAL NUMBER  
RECOVERED



**973**  
TOTAL NUMBER  
OF DEATHS



**132,390**  
TOTAL NUMBER OF  
DOSES OF VACCINE  
ALLOCATED TO  
STANISLAUS COUNTY



**MODESTO: 39**

- 10 clinics at Scenic Clinic
- 20 clinics at Modesto Centre Plaza
- 2 mobile clinics at King-Kennedy Memorial Center
- 1 clinic at Modesto Junior College
- 3 clinics for Education
- 1 clinic for the Criminal Justice/Courts
- 2 clinics for Homeless served at the Modesto Hotel

**TURLOCK: 19**

- 15 clinics at California State University, Stanislaus
- 4 clinics for Education

**OAKDALE: 8**

- 8 clinics at Gladys L. Lemmons Senior Community Center

**PATTERSON: 4**

- 4 clinics at Hammond Senior Center

**GRAYSON: 1**

- 1 mobile clinic at United Community Center and Park

**COMMUNITY BASED PROVIDERS**

- 66,417 vaccines allocated to providers by March 11, 2021

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS AND TREATMENT SERVICES

**March 16:** First All Staff email as a follow-up to CEO All-County email regarding the first confirmed COVID-19 positive test in Stanislaus County. The Department convened a COVID-19 Response Team (CRT) to ensure a strategic and rapid response to the COVID-19 crisis and fully implement the department's emergency plans. The next day, the COVID-19 Response Team released the first guidance memo outlining several public health safety measures county and contract partners were to implement immediately.

**March 18:** The COVID-19 Response Team transitioned into a Department Operations Center to manage mental health services aligned with the Emergency Operations Center Command Structure. The department developed and implemented a plan for Telehealth and remote-based services based on guidance from the Department of Health Care Services.

**March 20:** Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Department Operations Center released guidance on limiting public access to program sites and in-person treatment services protocols, while rapidly expanding Telehealth services and the technology for remote work capabilities.

**March 25:** The Department Operations Center released guidance on implementing the Continuity of Operations Plan, which included the consolidation of essential critical services into several sites. Clinical staffing rotations and remote work were established to reduce the risk of exposure and limit the impact on staffing levels and client health. The most significant threat to Behavioral Health and Recovery Services service capabilities was COVID-19 exposure that would reduce the number of staff available to provide services.

Behavioral Health and Recovery Services staff and contract partners sustained essential behavioral health crisis and treatment services through the height of the pandemic for 8,255 clients from March 2020 through February 2021, a 14% decrease in the total number of people served compared to the same time period in 2019-2020. However, current caseloads and the number of individuals served is now trending towards pre-pandemic averages.



**Behavioral Health and Recovery Service's community collaborative mental health partners supported the department and the overall County outreach efforts to diverse communities through Covid-19.”**

**- RUBEN IMPERIAL,**

*Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Director*

The partnerships that Behavioral Health and Recovery Services developed over the years were essential in sustaining services through the pandemic. The Children's Mental Health Partnership was established with School Districts to monitor and support children's emerging mental health needs. The Stanislaus Behavioral Health Partnership convened the managed care plans, private health plans, and mental health providers to coordinate the local behavioral health response. This partnership was essential given that school referrals to Behavioral Health and Recovery Services decreased during the pandemic, and a contributing factor in a reduction of in the total number of children served.

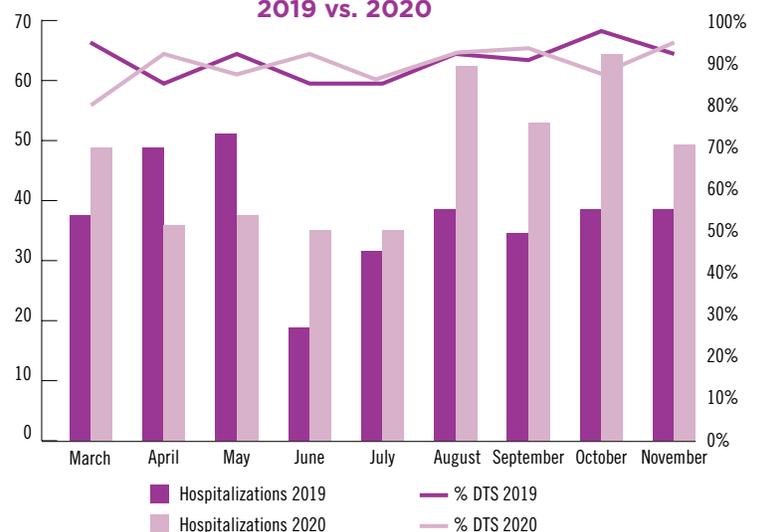
Behavioral Health and Recovery Services developed partnerships with Public Health, Sherrif's Office, and the County's City Police Departments to provide timely data on critical behavioral health issues such as death by suicide.

Through the pandemic surge, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services' leadership developed a Strategic Plan to prioritize mandated treatment services and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Out of crisis brings innovation. Behavioral Health and Recovery Services expanded Telehealth and remote-based services rapidly and has begun to learn which populations will benefit from this type of service delivery model. Telehealth will continue as one of the treatment tools the department will utilize post-pandemic.

Behavioral Health and Recovery Services prioritized critical services to youth in new ways, knowing that the isolation they were experiencing and lack of access to mandated reporters could mean there was higher risk for children and youth. The diagram below shows an increase in children's hospitalizations of 32.8% when compared to the same prior year period.

**# Children Hospitalizations and % Danger to Self  
March-November  
2019 vs. 2020**



## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Between August–December 2020, General Services Agency Central Services in cooperation with Community Hospice ran a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) store that purchased and sold PPE to local medical, dental offices, school districts, restaurant industries, personal services and assisted living facilities.

PPE Storefront online sales began on August 28, 2020 and closed in December 2020.

### Summary of Sales

During the approximate four months that the PPE Storefront was active, the following quantities of PPE were sold:



COMMUNITY HEALTH IS OUR PRIORITY!

In a world of COVID-19 and the high demand for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), supplies have increased pricing of critical items making it difficult to secure a consistent quantity. Stanislaus PPE is committed to offering essential PPE to qualifying businesses in Stanislaus County, at scale to ensure the health and safety of our communities.

We will no longer acceptably taking orders. Please look for more information on Facebook for being under the spot.

YOUR ESSENTIAL PPE IN ONE PLACE:



All supplies remaining in inventory were redirected to Public Health Services.

## HELPING SENIORS AND VETERANS ACCESS RESOURCES

### VETERANS SERVICES

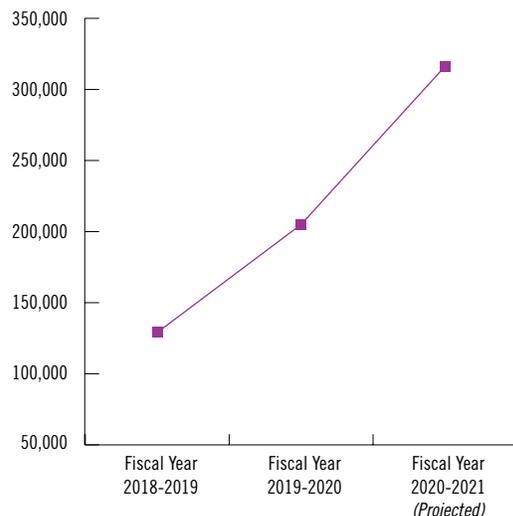
- Staff developed processes to conduct interviews, collect documentation, obtain signatures and submit Veteran Affairs claims remotely.
- There was a reduction in the number of benefit claims filed during the same period prior to COVID-19. Assistance was offered to a relatively higher number of veterans compared to peer counties and are seeing a dramatic increase in the number of veterans that were being assisted who reside out of county.

### AGING SERVICES

- With the closure of so many congregate lunch sites in late March 2020, the biggest challenge the Aging Services/Senior Meals programs faced was how to handle the anticipated increase in home delivered meals during the crisis.
- Senior Meals created a new weekly box meal pick up program to replace the daily congregate hot meal dining program and had an incredible response from seniors.
- The typical senior meal service was 350 seniors weekly at congregate lunch sites. The program grew exponentially to a height of 1,534 seniors served.
- Staff saw a 26% increase in demand for the home delivered meals for home bound seniors.

### Aging & Veterans Services Total Meals Provided - Congregate and Home Delivered

Fiscal Year 2017-2018 through  
Projected Fiscal Year 2020-2021



FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019  
**148,842**

FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020  
**205,013**

PROJECTED FISCAL  
YEAR 2020-2021  
**316,215**

- The main phone line concurrently had a 2.5 times increase in the normal call volume, on the Senior Information Help Line (209 558-8698). In 2019, the Help Line received 2,759 calls and in 2020, 7,162 calls were received.
- YouTube videos were created and posted to replace information that would have been offered at multiple presentations in the community (at Senior Centers) during the open enrollment period.



**We are now using technology that allows us to assist home-bound veterans and seniors through phone appointments. Prior to COVID-19, we were doing only home visits which were much more time-consuming.”**

**- MARGIE PALOMINO,**

*Area Agency on Aging and Veterans Services Director*



## TAIWANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS 10,000 MASKS TO PUBLIC HEALTH

On October 15th 2020 at 10th Street Place, Stanislaus County accepted a donation of 10,000 surgical masks from the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce San Francisco Bay Area at the request from the Stanislaus Chinese Association.

These face coverings were distributed by Stanislaus County Public Health Outreach teams and concentrated in areas of the community where the need was great and risk of COVID-19 transmission was high.”



**Elected officials and leadership from the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County received the donation in Tenth Street Plaza**

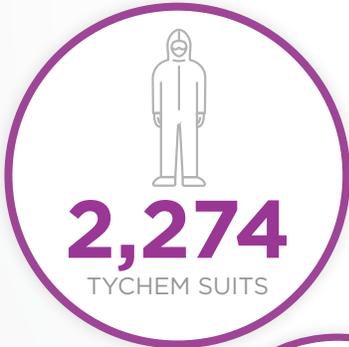


**We hope these masks will go towards protecting the most vulnerable citizens of our community, since ultimately we are all connected.”**

**- HUEY LEE,** *Stanislaus Chinese Association President*



Several local organizations stepped up with innovative solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Exceptional efforts of many dedicated individuals and agencies have made a positive impact to the community throughout the emergency.



Thousands of emergency related items and personal protective equipment were donated by community members, non-profit agencies, and elected officials throughout 2020.

## ADULT, CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

### Adult Protective Services

Due to this pandemic and Stay at Home Orders, Adult Protective Services (APS) was limited in conducting home and field visits, which are an essential duty. Home/field visits allow better engagement with clients to assess concerns of abuse/neglect.

APS staff identified some initial organizational barriers. Many offices closed to the public and their services became challenging to access. Examples include Social Security Administration, Department of Motor Vehicles, medical or behavioral health providers, and in-home caregivers/providers, just to name a few.

Department participation in Project Roomkey reinforced what was suspected about senior housing—there is a lack of affordable senior subsidized housing.

### Child Welfare Services

In March 2020, when the Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency, the courts began remote hearings in Stanislaus County.

On March 19, 2020, the visitation ceased in-person visits due to the State shut down orders and inability to meet the standards for COVID-19 screening. The Department teamed with the Children's Crisis Center to initiate video visits. By March 26th, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the State developed in-person contact requirements, the Visitation Center was able to have one in-person visit and one video-conference per month for each child, starting June 8, 2020. July 2, 2020 outdoor visits where social distancing could be guaranteed began. As that was successful, in-person visits increased to twice per month, per child with video conferences in between on August 10, 2020. December 22, 2020 in-home visits and overnight visits between children and parents began.

Emergency Response would continue to investigate all cases in-person as there are safety issues that can only be addressed in-person. While the number of reports declined by 50% in the Spring and Summer of 2020, the complexity of the cases increased quite a bit.

Many programs have been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. The community youth center has a reputation of being a safe place for youth to “drop in to” and the closure of this center in March 2020, limited this resource and took away the face-to-face engagement that many youth require to maintain housing, overall mental health, peer relationships, etc. There has been a significant decrease of 75% in regards to face-to-face contacts at the youth center.

Adoption finalizations have been delayed and there is now a backlog due to them not being a Court priority due to social distancing constraints in the courthouse. This has not been a positive impact as youth are staying in foster care longer and not reaching permanency goals.

Love Stanislaus County, Love our Kids continued their work. They had their Comfort Kit Drive in person and following all of the COVID-19 safety requirements. On December 5, 2020 they completed 1,059 Comfort Kits for foster youth for Stanislaus and surrounding counties.

Resource Parent Mentors created a Virtual Caregiver Support Meeting each week for Stanislaus County Resource Families (over 20 different caregivers have engaged).

Created Virtual Visitation Guide to help address resource families and biological families concerned over virtual visits. This was recognized by California Department of Social Services and borrowed by other counties.

There was most likely an under reporting of abuse and maltreatment during the pandemic and calendar year 2020. Yet, self-neglect referrals increased by 10% from calendar year 2019 to calendar year 2020.

### From March 2020 to February 2021

- There were 163 new cases with a total of 226 children entering the dependency court system.
- 157 families started the Resource Family Approval process with 63 families being approved.
- There were 61 adoptions finalized. The Department ordinarily processes roughly 100 adoptions in a non-COVID-19 year.



## HUMAN RELATIONS IMPACTS

### New and Updated Law

- Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- Emergency Paid Sick Leave (ESPL)
- Emergency Family Medical Leave Emergency Act (EFMLA)
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards

### Adjusted Personnel Policy and Practice

- Increased Vacation Max Accruals
- Self-Select Authorized Time Off (ATO)
- Vacation Used as Sick (VUS)
- Implementation of Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards

### Operational Adjustments

- Temporary Hiring Restrictions
- Implementation of Remote Work for Staff
- Virtual Interviews
- Virtual On-boarding
- Daily Health Checks

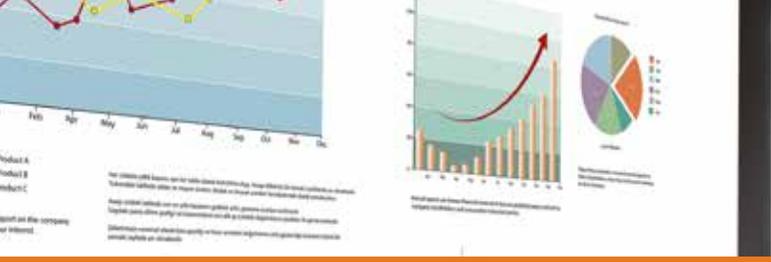
### Accomplishments to be Proud of:

- Implementation of Contact Tracing Tracking to effectively prevent exposures in the work place and to help ensure a safe working environment for all employees
- Re-vamped the new hire on-boarding process to ensure compliance with social distancing guidelines
- Implemented the first virtual Employee Wellness Connect event

Stanislaus County Human Relations reinvented policies quickly to support a remote workforce and adapted to new labor mandates weekly to support the health and safety of the workforce and the community.

Stanislaus County Chief Executive Office Human Relations Division mobilized the strength of the county workforce by redirecting employees to activities and functions in response to the COVID-19 Public Health emergency for one full year while maintaining core requirements for financial management, organization performance, human resources and compliance.





# ECONOMY

## CRITICAL TIME FOR WORKFORCE

On March 23, 2020 the Workforce Development Department created a website with COVID-19 information and resources available for grants or loans for businesses or job seekers. This included social media, press release, videos, town hall calls and marketing of programs and resources. There were over 132,000 social media impressions.

On March 31, 2020 a Business Resource Center was established to assist Emergency Operations Center with calls from businesses. Staff worked with businesses to answer questions, refer to other services and assist with grant applications.

On April 2, 2020 a call center was established to assist with lay off, unemployment insurance questions, or questions regarding Governor Newsom’s state orders.

In total, Workforce Development distributed grant funds of \$20.4 million to 1,166 small businesses and \$171,000 to 563 dislocated workers.



- **April 7, 2020**  
Launched first Small Business Relief Program with \$3.13 million, all funding dispersed by May 1, 2020. Received 551 applications, 344 businesses were awarded a grant.
- **May 21, 2020**  
Launched Snap Back Assistance program with \$171,000 in funding that assisted dislocated workers with rent, utilities or telework costs. Received 1,530 applications, 563 payments were awarded.
- **July 31, 2020**  
Launched 2nd Business Grant with \$15.4 million, all funding dispersed by November 2, 2020. Received 1,333 applications, 673 business were awarded a grant.
- **October 26, 2020**  
Launched WorkSafe Program with \$500,000 in funding that reimbursed payments to businesses for purchases of Personal Protective Equipment. Received 122 applications, 79 businesses were awarded a grant.
- **December 9, 2020**  
Helped launch the City of Modesto Grant that used the 2nd Business Grant applications. \$1.4 million was dispersed to 70 businesses by December 14, 2020.



**Staff rolled up their sleeves and put in the time to produce efficient, effective and timely programs.”**

- DORIS FOSTER, *Workforce Development Director*

# PROTECTING THE WELLBEING OF AGRICULTURE, BUSINESS AND THE COMMUNITY

More than 1,500 local growers usually visit the Agricultural Commissioner’s office to renew their pesticide permits and sit face to face with inspectors for an extended period of time. Since the space was not available to practice social distancing, the way permits are issued had to completely change. Operations were set up in Harvest Hall using electronic signing pads and dual screen computers behind plexiglass. Permits were issued online utilizing staff that were teleworking.

## Agricultural Commissioner Department PPE Distribution



**Surgical Masks**  
**405,895**



**N95 Respirators**  
**131,960**



**Cloth Face Covering**  
**103,986**



**Vinyl Gloves**  
**95,811**



**Hand Sanitizer**  
(16.9 oz)  
**2,372**



**Be patient, extend mercy, be adaptable and above all remember we are public servants.”**

- MILTON O’HAIRE, *Agricultural Commissioner*



# ECONOMIC RELIEF AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

## Accomplishments to be Proud of:

### Financial Management

- Developed materials/tools for County departments and provided training to leverage emergency funds, maximized Federal/State resources for local benefit, and ensured consistent application of accounting/budget processes to support the organization in responding to COVID-19
- Implemented budget adjustments in real-time to accommodate changing organization and community needs for COVID-19 resource support
- Partnered with the Auditor-Controller to ensure claiming compliance for County departments and community recipients of Federal/State relief funds, along with necessary audit trails to reduce risk of audit disallowance

### Organization Performance

- **City Partnerships** – Recognizing that all of Stanislaus County, including our nine cities, were facing fiscal challenges as a result of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, the County acted early and formed agreements with the cities to pass through \$15 million of CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds to the cities. This financial assistance was used to form small business grant programs, purchase necessary PPE, make facility modifications to install touchless doors, faucets and other infrastructure modifications to support recommended social distancing. Funds were also used to support first responders. The County/City partnership ensured that the response to fighting COVID-19 was comprehensive and collaborative, giving the region the best chance of prevailing in slowing the spread of COVID-19.
- **Community Support** – The Chief Executive Office appointed a Community Liaison to provide constant and clear communication with the unincorporated communities through the Municipal Advisory Councils, the Latino Emergency Council, the Latino COVID-19 Coalition and local partners to provide ongoing community outreach through the pandemic as well as resources to several local Community Based Organizations (Aspiranet, Center for Human Services, Parent Resource Center, Sierra Vista Child and Family Services, and the West Modesto King Kennedy

Collaborative). Contracts with these agencies provided wrap around services, outreach and education while supporting the County's Community Services Agency and Public Health. In total, \$2.9 million was allocated to these organizations.

- **RAD Card program** – The County allocated \$2 million toward a touchless gift card program in partnership with the Modesto Downtown Partnership supporting small businesses countywide and focused on dining, retail and personal care establishments. The innovative and popular program has been a win-win for consumers and participating businesses alike as the COVID-19 relief program doubles spending dollars through a county match for program participants.
- **Non-Profit Support Grant Program** – A total of \$2.4 million was allocated to support a non-profit grant program in partnership with the Stanislaus Community Foundation to offer relief to non-profit organizations providing services to youth or in the area of community centered arts and culture impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 61 organizations benefited from this program so they could continue to provide these services to the community.

**The Team Adapted:**

- Telework Policy established to support remote work
- Normally, closed County Offices to the public during shelter-in-place, providing alternate methods for delivery of critical public services, re-opening as soon as safely possible with new social distancing rules, tools, equipment and required personal protective equipment including face coverings in all common areas
- Shifted all meetings to electronic formats including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.
- Increased public information program and communications on websites, social media postings and live news feeds to inform, educate, respond to questions on COVID-19 prevention and response
- Enhanced internal organization communications to staff, including employee newsletters, all staff emails, 20 CEO video messages to provide information, education and updates on the County's response to COVID-19 and employee support

**Quick Stats:**

- CARES Act Corona Virus Relief Fund (Stanislaus County) - \$108.9 million
- State Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Funding (Health Services Agency) - \$29.2 million
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program (Stanislaus County) - \$21.9 million
- State Funding (Community Services Agency) - \$1.5 million
- State Funding (Clerk-Recorder – Elections) - \$980,733
- CARES Act Funding (Aging and Veterans Services) - \$928,310



# TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR

- **March 19, 2020**
  - Office closed to the public
  - All Treasurer-Tax Collector staff remain in the office to process property tax and other payments
- **April 6, 2020**
  - Based on the critical work completed by the Treasurer Tax Collector staff, the office reopened to the public
- **April 10, 2020**
  - Property Tax deadline for Fiscal Year 19-20 second installments;
  - At the request of the Treasurer-Tax Collector's association, Governor Newsom did not extend the tax deadline, allowing property tax payments collected by mortgage companies to be made on a timely basis

- **May 6, 2020**
  - Governor Newsom issues Executive Order N-61-20 permitting Treasurer-Tax Collectors to consider economic hardship when waiving property tax penalties
  - 500 penalty waivers received, only 51 are denied as having not met the criteria detailed in the Executive Order
  - 95.7% collection rate for Fiscal Year 19-20
- **December 10, 2020**
  - Property Tax deadline for Fiscal Year 20-21 first installments
  - 96.27% of first installments made on a timely basis

Due to the high percentage of property tax payments made by mortgage companies, on behalf of homeowners, Fiscal Year 19-20 had a collection rate of 95.7%.





# HOUSING

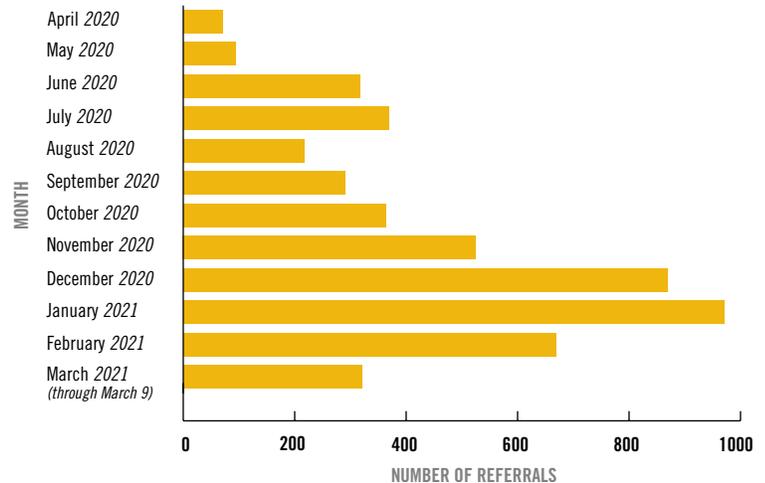
## CARE AND SHELTER FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY COVID-19

In times of disaster, the Community Services Agency (CSA) is responsible for the Care and Shelter Branch Operations in the Emergency Operations Center. This unit was assigned the responsibility to serve three specific populations:

- **COVID-19-POSITIVE:** Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 who do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine (including those exiting from hospitals) Isolation/Quarantine Shelters (motel rooms) for COVID-19 + and/or Exposed = 334;
- **COVID-19-EXPOSED:** Individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional who do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine Others self-isolating or quarantining at home who received wrap-support services = 4,819 households serving 11,685 people; and
- **AT-RISK POPULATION:** Individuals who are asymptomatic, but are at “high risk,” such as people over the age of 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions such as respiratory, compromised immunities, or chronic disease, and who require Emergency Non-Congregate Shelter as a social distancing measure. Emergency Protective Shelter: Those > age 65 and/or health compromised (At-risk population) = 194

### Support Provided

Beginning in March 2020, CSA provided support to individuals and families required to self-isolate/quarantine in their homes. Support included fresh and shelf-stable food and essential household supplies, such as hygiene products, cleaning supplies and medication. In September 2020, several community-based organizations provided this support. In December 2020, a hybrid-model was implemented – CSA responded to high priority requests (immediate food, medicine and infant needs; high needs persons with disabilities; and those over the age of 65) and the community-based organizations responded to medium (shelter or food insecurity, personal protective equipment needs and household cleaning supplies) and low priority



(distance learning needs, financial assistance for rent and/or utilities and education on access to other public assistance). As of March 9, 2021, the approximately 4,532 referrals had been received and 10,980 individuals had been served.

### Emergency Isolation/Quarantine Non-Congregate Shelter (COVID-19-Positive and COVID-19-Exposed)

Beginning April 6, 2020, the County utilized local motels to isolate or quarantine individuals referred by Stanislaus County Public Health and local hospitals, who meet the criteria for the COVID-19-Positive and COVID-19-Exposed Populations. In addition to coordinating shelter, the team also arranged for transportation, food, supplies, and medication. As of March 9, 2021, 302 individuals (including families) were sheltered for a period of up to 14 days. Cumulatively, this resulted in 2,872 shelter days.

### Emergency Protective Non-Congregate Shelter (At-Risk Population) – Modesto Hotel

On April 21, 2020, CSA relocated the first cohort of guests from existing homeless shelters to an Emergency Protective Non-Congregate Shelter established at the Modesto Hotel. The relocation of high-risk individuals from existing homeless shelters allowed for shelter decompression, which reduced the opportunity for shelter outbreaks, reduced the impact on emergency medical services and the hospital system and reduced the medical costs that could be incurred from an outbreak among individuals experiencing homelessness.

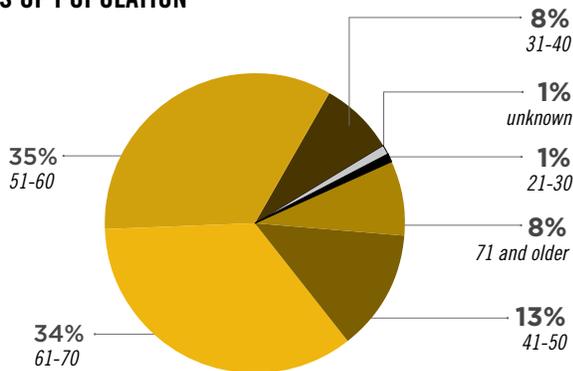
CSA employees provided oversight for the 24/7 operation. Wrap-around services were provided through a combination of County staff, contract staff, volunteers, vendors and community partners. Services provided included shelter management and administration oversight; medical assistance; medication pick up; social and mental health assistance; housekeeping, meals, transportation and security.

Community partners included the Stanislaus Affordable Housing Development Corporation, the Modesto Gospel Mission, the Salvation Army Red Shield Center and Howard Prep. The Emergency Protective Non-Congregate Shelter operated from April 21, 2020 - February 19, 2021. All guests were transitioned to permanent housing, transitional housing or back to their original shelter. A total of 192 individuals were sheltered at the Emergency Protective Non-Congregate Shelter. Following is statistical information for the individuals:

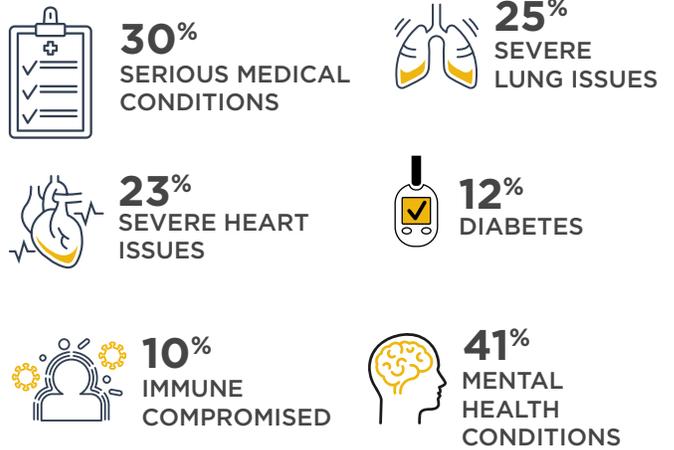
**GENDER**



**AGES OF POPULATION**



**TOP HEALTH CONDITIONS**



**At-Risk Population Housing Strategy**

Stanislaus County was one of four communities selected to participate in the Governor's 100-Day Challenge. The challenge ran from May 27, 2020 through September 3, 2020. The community's goal - *In 100 days, 100 individuals experiencing homelessness that are 65 and older and/or individuals experiencing homelessness with underlying medical conditions, will exit Project Roomkey into safe and stable housing which may include Permanent Supportive Housing or landlord engaged units with a focus on veterans, individuals with severe mental illness and/or substance use disorder, and individuals with disabilities.*

As of November 13, 2020, 38 individuals previously sheltered at the Emergency Protective Non-Congregate Shelter have secured housing through a variety of opportunities.

**Housing for the Harvest Program**

On July 24, 2020, the Housing for the Harvest Program was launched by the Governor's Office. This program was designed to provide temporary hotel housing options for essential farm and food processing employees who were either COVID-19 positive or exposed, and who did not require hospitalization, but needed a safe and suitable place to isolate. As of March 9, 2021, approximately 59 households and over 217 individuals had been served.

## EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

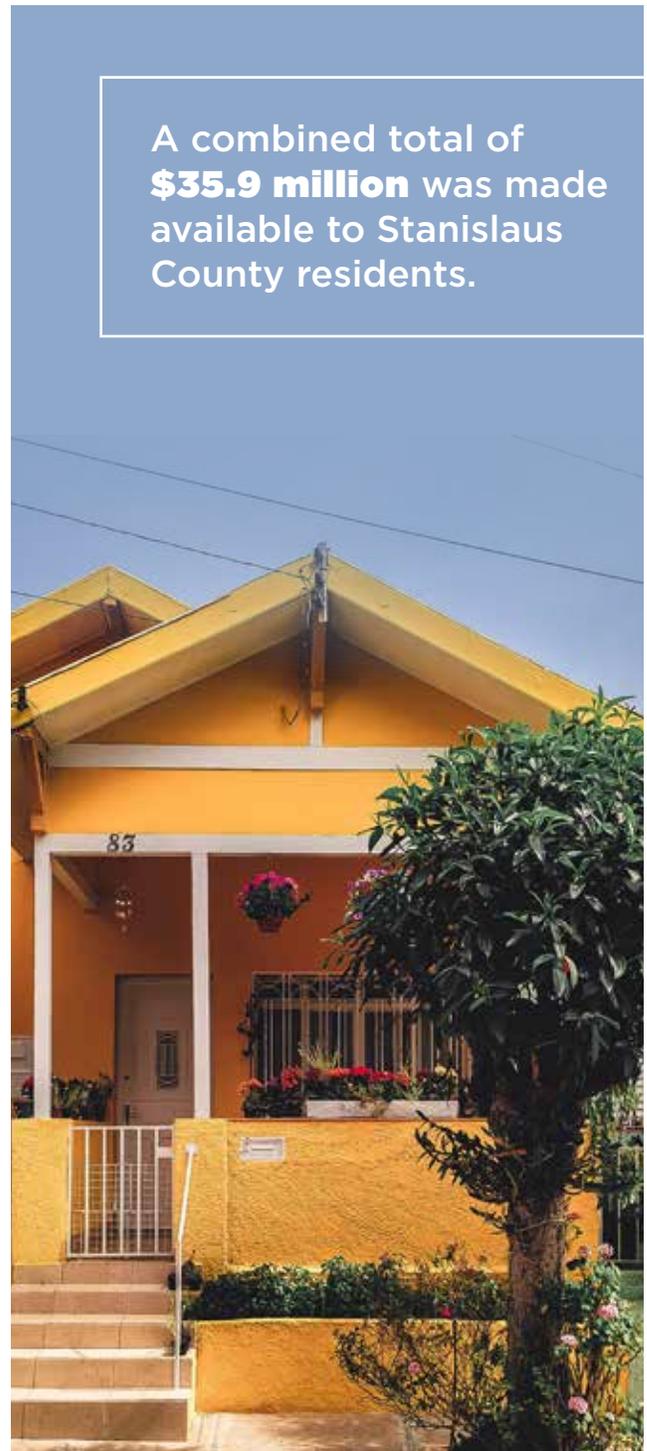
In February of 2021, Stanislaus County, the City of Modesto and the Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority partnered to launch a local Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to assist eligible households unable to pay rental and utility arrears accrued due to the COVID-19 pandemic between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. A combined total of \$35.9 million was made available to Stanislaus County residents.

The program is facilitated locally through a collaborative effort among Stanislaus County, the City of Modesto, the Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority, United Way of Stanislaus County and four local credit unions: Self-Help Credit Union, Modesto First Federal Credit Union, Organized Labor Credit Union and Rolling F Credit Union. United Way's 2-1-1 call center assists the public in answering questions about the program and how to apply. Credit Unions and mobile outreach teams serve as community intake locations and offer additional assistance to households with entry of information into the online portal at [www.stanrentassist.com](http://www.stanrentassist.com)

### THE EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SERVES RESIDENTS IMPACTED BY COVID-19:

- With a household income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income, the unadjusted median income levels derived from the Department of Housing and Urban Development on an annual basis for each jurisdiction adjusted solely for household size.
- Targeting households at or below 50% of the Area Median Income for the first 60 days of the program.
- Those who qualify for unemployment or experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- Those who demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

A combined total of **\$35.9 million** was made available to Stanislaus County residents.





# EDUCATION & PUBLIC OUTREACH

## PARTNERSHIPS ARE EVERYTHING FOR FIRST 5 STANISLAUS

First 5 Stanislaus partnered with First 5 California to distribute diapers, wipes, personal protective equipment, books, thermometers, and more to essential workers serving the 0-5 community, including childcare workers and Family Resource Centers. The agency teamed up with the Stanislaus County Office of Education for this local supply distribution.

First 5 Stanislaus also partnered with Sunlight Giving Foundation to distribute more than \$200,000 in unrestricted emergency funding to Family Resource Centers to use for families most in need in Stanislaus County.

First 5 Stanislaus provided \$70,000 in technology funding to support Family Resource Centers in transitioning to virtual programming as a result of COVID-19.



**Keeping Family Resource Centers and other partners funded and operating during the crisis was critical.”**

- DAVID JONES, *First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director*



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Outreach efforts were inclusive of the Latino community.

Information disseminated to the Latino Emergency Council, regarding flu vaccinations, COVID-19 testing sites, Community-Based-Organization (CBOs) support and COVID-19 data throughout the duration of the pandemic

- Negotiated agreements with 5 CBOs covering 14 different sites throughout the County.
- Stanislaus County to provide wrap around services, outreach and education from August of 2020 on.
- Coordinated the receipt of 40,000 COVID-19 Kits including: face coverings, hand sanitizers and distribution materials. Through partnership with Love our Neighbors, leveraged volunteers to put the kits together. They were distributed to underserved communities.
- Coordinated access to 18,000 face coverings from the Ag Commission for the COVID-19 Latino Coalition. The face coverings were distributed by the Coalition to areas in Ceres, Keyes, Turlock, Airport Neighborhood South to Empire and Modesto.
- Worked with the Stanislaus Community Foundation to develop a survey that would capture information from CBOs that could help the County address the needs of the Community.
- Coordinated, in partnership with Sheriff's Office, the pickup of PPE materials by CBOs and other organizations to distribute in the communities – 60,000 of each: hand sanitizer, face coverings, and disinfectant
- Shared resources in English and Spanish via: CBOs, Latino Emergency Council, Municipal Advisory Councils, Airport Neighborhood Collaborative, El Concilio, Univision, 211 Stanislaus, Radio Stations such as La Favorita.
- Housing for the Harvest Program – worked with EOC staff and CEO senior leadership in implementing this program in the County and incorporating into the current CBO partnership structure.



## CALL CENTER

The COVID-19 Call Center first began at the Office of Emergency Services in a conference room during the Spring of 2020, but as needs in the community grew, the Call Center did as well, coordinating with the United Way to connect with 211. The Center eventually moved to 4701 Stoddard Rd., where the team could expand and safely socially distance while taking calls.

The Call Center has received more than 35,320 incoming calls since March 31, 2020 and has replied to over 6,483 emails related to community concerns.



**We have worked together to maintain clear and consistent messaging in line with the state guidelines.”**

- COVID-19 CALL CENTER REPRESENTATIVE



## STAN EMERGENCY KEPT RESIDENTS INFORMED

### FACEBOOK:

- Stan Emergency
- Stan Emergency–Español
- Latino Emergency Council–Community Partner
- Español Informes de CoronaVirus Stanislaus/ Merced/San Joaquin – Community Partner

**YOUTUBE:** Stanislaus County Office of Emergency Services

**RADIO:** Public Service Announcements broadcast on La Favorita

**WEB:** StanCounty.com/coronavirus, StanEmergency.com

**CALL CENTER:** 209.558.7535

**DASHBOARD:** Public Health created a statistics dashboard accessible from the public health webpage:

- Business Support Branch (bilingual services): 558.4473
- COVID-19 Email: COVID-19info@schsa.org
- 211 – support in many different languages
- Medi-Nurse Line: 1.877.409.9052
- Support materials to businesses and CBOs, including cloth face coverings and fliers – Public Health Educators
- Outreach at events, such as the Rematito – Golden Valley Health Centers and other partners
- Three COVID-19 testing sites: Neighborhood Center at Marshall Park in Modesto; Rube Boesch Center on North Orange Street in Turlock; and Salida Library
- Texts with cases report: Text STANCOVID19 to 888.777
- Traffic Signs as a reminder in West and South Modesto to wear face coverings when in public (Spanish/English) – most impacted areas of the County
- Mobile Testing for Farmworkers
- Participation with the Latino COVID-19 Emergency Taskforce with Congressman- U.S. Representative Josh Harder.



Approximately 11,000 users in the County's Text Notification system received over 4 million text alerts regarding COVID-19 information in the first year of the Pandemic.

# STAN EMERGENCY OUTREACH



## FACEBOOK

Please note numbers reported are only related to COVID-19.

### PAGE LIKES



**10,349** | **29,978**  
Page Likes as of 3/5/20 | Page Likes as of 12/18/20

### FOLLOWERS



**10,743** | **37,653**  
as of 3/7/20 | as of 12/20/20

### AUDIENCE

**MALE 22%** | **FEMALE 78%**  
(ages 35-44 @ 25%) | (ages 35-44 @ 7%)

### TOP LOCATION



MODESTO, TURLOCK, OAKDALE, CERES, AND PATTERSON

### PEAK REACH



**221,092**  
AUGUST 2020

Post reach hits anywhere from 3K to 220K per post.



## YOUTUBE

The Office of Emergency Services YouTube channel Stan OES was established on 3/17/2020

**109**  
VIDEOS

**841**  
SUBSCRIBERS  
12/28/20

**54,110**  
TOTAL CHANNEL  
VIEWS

The majority of views come from mobile devices

**84%**  
OF VIEWS COME FROM NON-SUBSCRIBERS

### AUDIENCE

**37.3%** | **MALE 26.6%** | **FEMALE 73.7%**  
ages 35-44



**8%** of subscribers turned on bell notifications, meaning the subscriber would get a notification every time a new video hit YouTube from the OES channel.

### FIRST COVID-RELATED POST 2/27/20

**1.6K** | **91**  
REACH | ENGAGEMENT

### MESSAGE FROM HSA 2/28/20

**3.8K** | **466**  
REACH | ENGAGEMENT

### FIRST COVID CASE IN STANISLAUS COUNTY ANNOUNCEMENT VIDEO 3/11/20

**11K** | **1.3K**  
REACH | ENGAGEMENT

### OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING FIRST COVID CASE 3/11/20

**73K** | **19.3K**  
REACH | ENGAGEMENT



## 16 LIVE SHOWS WITH PANELISTS

The County adopted new and innovative outreach strategies to educate the community. Using Facebook Live streaming, regular Community Briefings were broadcast throughout the public health crisis. These Facebook Live broadcasts were moderated by county staff and featured expert panelists sharing critical information and answering questions from concerned residents in real time.



  
**2,135.3 hrs**  
 TOTAL WATCH TIME

  
**158.7K**  
 IMPRESSIONS



**INSTAGRAM** Established 3/21/2020

  
**6,906**  
 FOLLOWERS  
 as of 12/28/20

**341**  
 COVID-19  
 RELATED POSTS  
 as of 12/28/20

**AUDIENCE** 31.2% ages 35-44

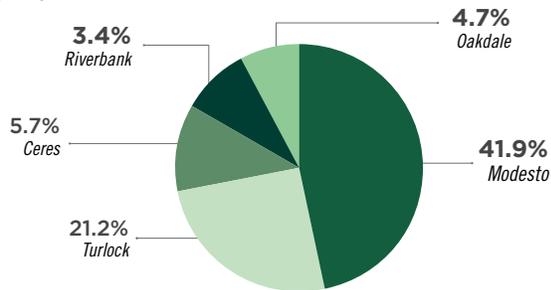
**MALE 21%** 

**FEMALE 79%** 

  
**8,212**  
 HIGHEST  
 IMPRESSIONS

  
**6,338**  
 HIGHEST REACH

**LOCATION**



  
**100-400**  
 POST LIKES  
 PER POST

  
**600-1700**  
 VIEWS PER VIDEO

  
**100-300**  
 RESHARES

  
**1.5K**  
 AVERAGE  
 IGTV VIEWS

## STANISLAUS LIBRARIES ADAPTED SUCCESSFULLY

Since March of 2020, State guidelines essentially required closing facilities to the public, which had a major impact on service delivery. Many Library staff were reallocated to COVID-19 relief support roles. The COVID-19 related shutdown resulted in reductions to sales tax revenue, passport service fees collected, facility rental, and other revenue sources.

- **March 20, 2020**  
Closed Libraries to the public
- **March 23, 2020**  
Implemented modified services, including reduced hours
- **April 6, 2020**  
Implemented virtual programming
- **May 26, 2020**  
Wi-Fi available in Modesto Library parking lot
- **October 5, 2020**  
Opened most locations for computer appointments
- **March 22, 2021**  
Most branch locations reopened for browsing and checkout

Modified services have included: modified services hours; no-contact holds pickup; digital services library cards; expanded delivery for homebound adults; and book distribution to schools, housing authority, and other partner sites.

Staff implemented a number of alternative programs, including on-line, take-home, and combination programs. Programs included:

- Virtual story time and bilingual story time
- Virtual visits from outside performers
- Grab & go STEM kits
- Read to Me! kits (for an at-home story time experience)
- Online trivia events
- Online book groups
- Art programs combining grab & go supplies
- Online instruction
- Parent instruction and student/educator orientations via virtual presentations

Acknowledging the lack of browsing in curbside environment, staff enhanced the catalog for online discovery of new materials, developed themed book bundles for kids and teens, and have created small accessible displays.

Early in the emergency, a number of people began using the Library Wi-Fi from the portico. To allow for additional access, Library staff installed equipment to extend the signal throughout the parking lot and plan on extending the signal at other locations as well. The Library offered computer appointments while facilities remained closed to the public.

Staff were eager to learn new skills, taking advantage of online learning opportunities. As a result, several staff members applied for and received grants for enhanced services, including funds for:

- E-books and e-audiobooks
- Wi-Fi hotspots to check out
- Read-to-Me early literacy kits
- Uke Got This! ukuleles for lending and classes taught by staff
- Virtual programming grants
- Weekly 30-minute technology training to expand staff knowledge of commonly used programs, and ultimately improve efficiency in daily work



**A parent thanked us for virtual story time, calling it a little bit of “normal” for her young child during this abnormal time.”**

- SARAH DENTAN, Stanislaus County Librarian



**Changes that are here to stay:**

- Construction projects in Turlock, Empire and Modesto continued to move forward as planned.
- The online library card application can be completed remotely or even at a library catalog computer.
- Virtual class visits proved an effective alternative for orientation to Library resources, particularly online resources; once in-person visits are possible. We will continue to offer virtual visits as an option.
- Friday Night Trivia proved popular with members of the public who do not ordinarily frequent library programs.

Circulation of e-materials increased significantly during the Emergency. Overall, e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, and streaming audio and video increased 41%. Circulation on Cloud Library, main e-book and e-audiobook platform, increased 74.6%.



# NEIGHBORHOODS

## SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

The primary focus for the Sheriff's Office has been to maintain public safety throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

In November 2020 there was a COVID-19 outbreak among inmates at Minimum Housing but quick and concise action by Adult Detention personnel limited the outbreak to a manageable group of inmates and prevented the spread to other inmates and facilities. There was a second outbreak in the Sheriff's Detention Center-East in January that was also quickly and efficiently contained by staff. No inmates in either outbreak experienced major issues and none were hospitalized or died.

The Sheriff's office reconfigured staffing strategies to meet the needs of the public.

- The Stanislaus County Emergency Operations Center experienced the longest emergency activation in County history
- Implemented the County Emergency Operations Plan and adhered to principles of the Incident Command System throughout the event
- Responded and prepared for Civil Unrest and used a Tabletop Exercise to discuss roles and responsibilities for involved response agencies

- County Fusion Center established during this time to serve as the Sheriff's Intel center, providing a location for focused crime intel analysis and prevention
- Four County operated mass vaccination sites were established within two weeks

### STATISTICS:

- The Stanislaus County Emergency Operations activated 4 times in 2020; February 2020 – COVID-19, June 2020 – Civil Unrest, August 2020 – Santa Clara Unit Fire (SCU), November 2020 – Election Response. This is nearly equivalent to the number of times the Emergency Operations Center has been officially activated in the last 10 years.
- The County had the largest wildfire in history in 2020 and had 2 simultaneous Emergency Operations Center activations at the same time (COVID-19 & Santa Clara Unit Fire) while also managing an Extreme Heat Event. Over 170,000 acres in Del Puerto Canyon burned and nearly 1,000 residents in Diablo Grande and Del Puerto Canyon were evacuated.
- The Governor issued more than 50 Executive Orders during the COVID-19 response in 2020.
- The Joint Information Center produced 34 press releases in 2020 regarding COVID-19. An additional 9 press releases have been issued for COVID-19 in 2021.

Media (including social media) had a strong influence on public policy and public information needs this last year. The amount of misinformation that was shared on public forums and social platforms caused the Emergency Operations Center and Joint Information Center to continuously correct and provide clarification to the public regarding State orders or other COVID-19 guidance in the past year. It was difficult to stay on top of information coming from the State, as the Governor announced changes to strategy, policy or guidance regularly on live television. Local governments often found out about these changes at the same time as the general public, causing confusion as local governments were expected to answer questions about directives that sometimes were not clear.



## SUPPORTING LOCAL CHILDREN

On March 13, 2020, Department of Child Support Services (DCSS), Justice Partners and the Superior Court met to discuss the issues and impacts of COVID-19 on conducting business within the Courthouse. The number of child support hearings had to be immediately limited, from an average of 35 hearings down to 15. From March - May 2020, the Court was shut down which resulted in continuing all previously set child support cases and the complete closure of Child Support's Department 15. The inability to hold hearings prevented any progress on cases needing a court hearing, causing customers to wait longer to obtain the relief they were seeking from the Court. During this time period, DCSS processed 500 minute orders continuing those cases until after the court reopened.

Upon the reopening of the Court to the public and for hearings on May 18, 2020, DCSS had a backlog of over 300 cases. The Department had to rapidly pivot in the way DCSS needed to reduce hearings including reducing the number of attorney staff appearing each day in court to maintain social distancing protocols.

DCSS ended the Federal Fiscal Year in September 2020 with the highest collections of child support to date:



Due to the way many Court matters had to be quickly continued during the Pandemic, DCSS had 460 child support case hearings set in just the first 3 weeks of July, with 156 held the first week. By the end of July, all backlogged hearings were completed.

**Despite the challenges and obstacles faced as a result of the pandemic, DCSS collected a record amount of \$63,633,597 in child support, held an impressive 3,000 court hearings in the 2020 calendar year, and was ranked by the California Department of Child Support Services as 19th out of 47 Local Child Support Agencies for performance on Federal Performance Measures.**

## DEFENDING THE PUBLIC

When COVID-19 numbers started to spike in Stanislaus County, the Public Defender identified a critical need to limit the number of courthouse visitors to those who were essential to court business. They needed a safe space for clients to wait for their cases to be called while maintaining safe social distancing. The Public Defender's office created an "Al Fresco" reception and counseling center on the courthouse lawn. This included an elaborate daily effort of attorneys and paraprofessionals, who worked to deter court attendees from entering the courthouse and urged them to wait outdoors on the courthouse lawn. Staff set up counseling tables and used personal hot spots to access client case information and discuss cases with clients while they waited outdoors. These measures limited the risk of viral spread.



## EARLY RELEASES DUE TO OUTBREAK

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Probation was inundated with releases from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). Many were early releases due to CDCR institutions having large outbreaks in their facilities, which translated to the Probation Department having to find services to adequately quarantine the offenders. At times, the Department was given very short notification of these releases, with limited time to process. Officers had to prepare Global Positioning System (GPS) monitors to place on the offender, coordinate transportation, housing, and food for the offenders in a very short timeframe.

### Youth Detention

- In-person visitations were eliminated and virtual visitations were held in units as well as virtual schooling for the minors.

- All sworn staff were fit-tested for N95 respirators and they were provided the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment to safely conduct their jobs.
- In the Juvenile Hall, staff conducted 143 COVID-19 tests were conducted on youth and only one test was positive for COVID-19. The spread of COVID-19 was limited to zero transmissions among the youth.

**STATISTICS:**

- 143 COVID-19 tests conducted on youth in the Juvenile Hall.
- 512 bookings since March 2020 and 0 COVID-19 transmissions in Juvenile Hall.
- 182 early releases from CDCR since April 2020.
- 74 early releases from CDCR in the month of July 2020, an average of 3 per day.



**DISTRICT ATTORNEY ADAPTED TO THE TIMES**

The pandemic brought a sudden halt to virtually all court hearings, with matters being postponed “en masse” by the Court without hearings or prior notice to parties. This lasted several months until all courtrooms slowly reopened. However, the Court continued to postpone matters without hearings or prior notice. In addition, the Emergency Orders put an outright stop to all jury trials for a few months and drastically curtailed the number of trials on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Currently, the Court will only allow 2 jury trials to be heard at one time in the courthouse. As of February 26th, there are 451 cases scheduled or ready to be scheduled for trial in 2021.

The Emergency Bail Schedule prevented large numbers of arrested individuals from being booked into the jail; they were released on “zero bail.” While this reduced the caseload in the arraignment departments, it only postponed those matters.

In spite of the Court closures and reductions in hearings, police agencies continued to do their part to keep the community safe so the District Attorney’s Office has continued to receive and review approximately 18,000 criminal investigations a year and file charges in approximately 12,000 cases.

During the pandemic, crime continued and every suspect who was arrested and not released on zero bail was still entitled to their speedy hearing rights. At the beginning of the lock down, that meant in-person Court appearances attended by prosecution, defense and Court staff. Despite different missions, the District Attorney, the Court and the Public Defender were able to implement widespread video arraignments and electronic records processes that helped to reduce the need to have staff appear in the courthouse. With the agreement of the parties, the court implemented an emergency order which allowed the Public Defender to be appointed once the District Attorney filed a criminal case so that we could immediately share discovery electronically. The department provided discovery and an offer (plea bargain) the same day the case was filed encouraging cases to be resolved at the first court appearance.

To make this happen, internal processes by clerical and attorney staff had to be updated in real time. Computer systems had to be altered as the processes evolved. Small groups of employees took on problem solving tasks in each area and the teamwork ultimately led to innovations.

## VOTE BY MAIL ELECTION

The Clerk Recorder-Elections Department was able to successfully conduct the 2020 Presidential General Election during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The mandated all-mail election was a first for Stanislaus County and required several connected satellite offices throughout the County with 3-5 Election Officers at each location. This resulted in hiring and training approximately 150 additional extra help personnel to operate several early, in-person voting satellite locations throughout the County. The timeline for recruiting, hiring, on-boarding, training, and placing this number of staff was a huge undertaking.



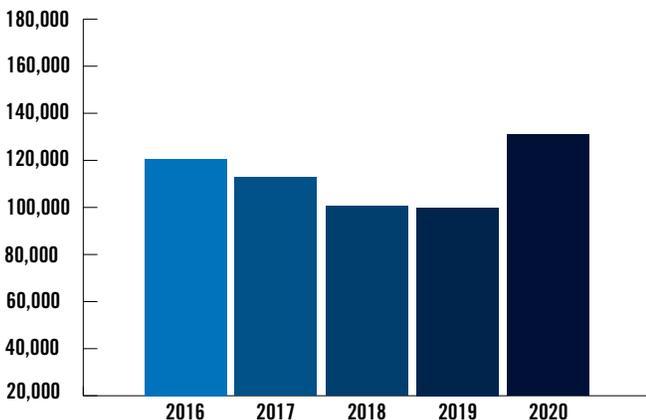
**It is never too early to plan for success.”**

- **DONNA LINDER**, Clerk Recorder/Registrar of Voters

The Clerk Recorder-Elections Department has provided the same level of service to citizens as provided prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Allowing for appointments in the Clerk Unit keeps the number of citizens to a minimum in the lobby and allows for schedule adjustments as needed. Staff supported the Election Division when the November Election was at its peak and could adjust for that need. Many couples were married in an outdoor environment through a partnership with the Gallo Center for the Arts using their grounds for weddings, allowing for some guests while maintaining social distancing.

Over 217,517 Vote by Mail (VBM) ballots were individually processed for the 2020 Presidential Election. By way of comparison, less than 200,000 VBM's were processed for the 2012 and 2016 Presidential Elections. The Clerk Recorder-Elections Department has also seen an upswing in the number of recorded documents pursuant to the low interest rates.

**Clerk Recorder Number of Documents Recorded**



## STANISLAUS REGIONAL 9-1-1

Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 (SR911) is a Joint Powers Authority with a Joint Exercise of Power Agreement between the City of Modesto and the County of Stanislaus for Emergency Dispatch Services. Communication is key, especially during a pandemic. Ensuring that employees know County leadership is empathetic to how this might affect them and their families while still working on the front-lines is important to keeping staff happy during shutdowns of businesses, schools, etc.

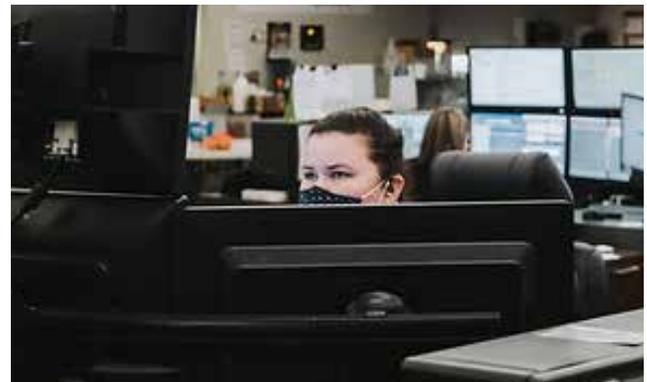
Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Dispatch completed the following critical public safety projects during the height of the pandemic:

- Going live on Text to 9-1-1
- Radio tower build out in the City of Patterson

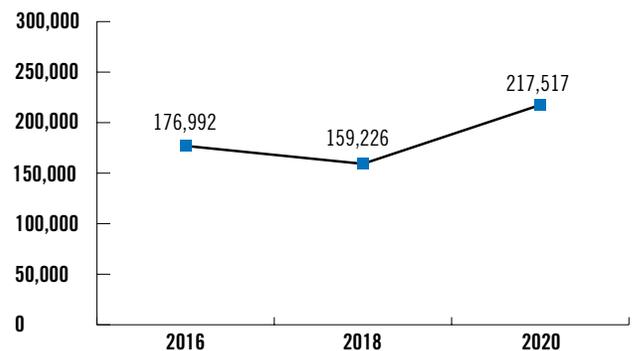


**We are proud of our ability to continue to provide quality service to our community and public safety partners.”**

- **WENDY SILVA**, Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Director

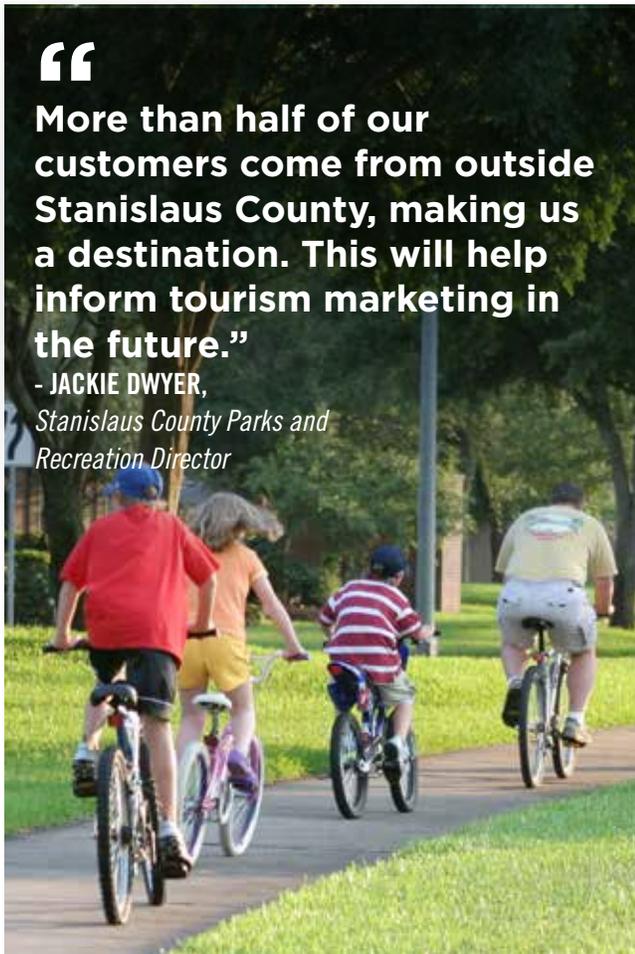


**VBM Ballots Counted**



## PARKS AND RECREATION

- **March 2020**  
Closed reservoirs to day use and all camping
- **March 2020**  
Playgrounds were closed at community parks
- **May 2020**  
Playgrounds were opened at community parks with safety guidance
- **May 2020**  
Canceled the 4th of July annual firework display
- **June 2020**  
Opened reservable camping to residents of Stanislaus County (limited water vessels)
- **September 2020**  
Opened reservoirs to all customers
- **March 2021**  
Opened reservable camping at reservoirs to all



“

**More than half of our customers come from outside Stanislaus County, making us a destination. This will help inform tourism marketing in the future.”**

- JACKIE DWYER,  
*Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation Director*

## PUBLIC WORKS

- Gas Tax revenues went down since they are dependent on user fees, such as vehicle fuel taxes. Declines in travel by the public had a direct impact. The last two months of Fiscal Year 2019-2020 the County saw a 35.54% reduction from the same year prior. This Fiscal Year 2020-2021 overall revenues are 5.97% lower than this time the prior year.
- Public utilization of Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT) went down by 70% at the beginning of the pandemic. Current ridership is down 40% from this same time last year.
- Public Works faced several staffing challenges as there were times the Department was forced to shut down complete crews due to COVID-19 infection. The Department still achieved the following accomplishments:
  - Completed the Schell Road Bridge. Construction began July 2020. The bridge crossing was temporarily closed beginning January 2021 and reopened mid-February (total of 44 calendar days closed) with the new bridge in place.
  - Roads Division chipped over 120 miles of roads on the north-east side of the County, an increase from previous years. However, it was unable to complete typical overlays for some of the worst roads in the County due to unexpected delays related to COVID-19 as well as shortfalls in revenue.



## MEETING THE BASIC NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

The COVID-19 pandemic required the closure of the Community Services Public Lobbies on March 20, 2020. As a result, the Community Services Agency StanWORKs Division expanded access to services through our Public Assistance Call Center and our on-line, web based benefit portal. On May 18, 2020, limited socially distanced public access was resumed most Community Services Agency locations throughout the County.

Customers continued to access our Public Assistance Call Center and our on-line web based benefit portal. The Community Services Agency StanWORKs Division experienced a dramatic increase in the call volume to our Public Assistance Call Center because of the pandemic and the redirection of customer access from in person to online or by phone. The StanWORKs Public Assistance Call Center assists individuals and families applying for and/or receiving CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, General Assistance, Welfare to Work and Child Care benefits and services.

- During the period of 03/2020 to 12/2020 CSA Family Services Specialists responded to over 119,000 calls.
- During the first quarter of 2021, 01/2021 to 03/2021 Family Services Specialists responded to over 39,400 calls, with an overall customer wait time of less than 8 minutes.
- Over 158,400 calls were received during this period.

In response to the COVID- 19 pandemic, CSA experienced an increase in Medi-Cal and CalFresh applications processed. The graph to follow indicates the number of applications processed monthly during the period of March 2020 through March 2021.

- A total of 36,377 applications for Medi-Cal were received and processed
- A total of 61,257 applications for CalFresh were received and processed.
- Between March 2020 and March 2021, Family Services Specialists issued on average, a total of \$12,800,000 CalFresh benefits monthly to over 72,000 residents of Stanislaus County.
- Between March 2020 and March 2021, over 214,000 Stanislaus County residents received eligibility to the Medi-Cal Program.

## APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND PROCESSED

	MEDI-CAL	CALFRESH
March 2020	3,787	4,533
April 2020	2,762	4,417
May 2020	2,570	5,339
June 2020	2,516	4,443
July 2020	2,704	4,482
August 2020	3,080	4,276
September 2020	2,842	4,536
October 2020	2,677	4,615
November 2020	2,129	4,012
December 2020	2,517	4,388
January 2021	2,921	5,397
February 2021	2,952	5,297
March 2021	2,920	5,522
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36,377</b>	<b>61,257</b>



## PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### The Team Adapted:

- Established customer drop-off options and provided limited direct to customer deliveries, while also expanding online permitting opportunities
- Established an appointment only model that has proven to be more effective for both staff and the public; allowing staff to prepare in advance and speed up the permitting intake and issuance process. Appointments can generally be scheduled for next day
- Inspections of occupied structures are handled virtually using real time video sent by contractors/home owners to inspectors
- Zero Planning Commission meetings cancelled because of COVID-19
- Building permit applications moved online; with an average of 67% of permits being received online and 70% of permits being issued on-line
- Maintained an 84% one-stop-shop 3-week turnaround
- Developed an Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance which will provide increased housing inventory in the County
- Pre-development meetings moved online allowing all County One-Stop-Shop departments and the property owner/developer team to participate with easy sharing of maps and site plans



Plexiglass installed at front counter.



Plan Check engineer reviewing plans electronically.

## ANIMAL SERVICES CLEARED THE SHELTER

- The Emergency Foster Program was initiated in March 2020. Staff was able to clear the shelter in three days, no easy task with an average of 400 animals onsite.
- Over 80% of the pets were adopted by their foster families.
- The agency goal has been to continue to use foster families as part of the life-saving goal. This has increased our life saving rate for all pets to be over 90%.
- Animal Shelter staff implemented a Drive Thru Vaccination Clinic for pets. Pet owners stay in their car and pay for services using Square. They spend less time in line and do not enter the Shelter.
- Generous community members donated pet food which was delivered to senior citizens through a partnership with the Stanislaus County Department of Aging and Veterans Services.
- The agency was honored for the life-saving pet foster program by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and earned a 2020 CSAC Challenge Award.

*Stanislaus Animal Services Agency (SASA) is a joint powers authority comprised of Stanislaus County and the cities of Modesto, Waterford, Patterson, Ceres, and Hughson.*



## THANKS TO STANISLAUS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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## THANKS TO OUR PRIOR SUPERVISORS, SERVING THROUGH 2020



**TOM BERRYHILL**



**JIM DEMARTINI**



**KRISTIN OLSEN**





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