



Sierra County Health and Human Services

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Date: September 30, 2021

To: All Sierra County Boards and Commissions

From: Dr. Celia Sutton-Pado, Health Officer

Subject: Remote Public Meetings

In light of the ongoing public health emergency related to COVID-19 and the high level of community transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19, the Sierra County Public Health Officer recommends that public bodies continue to meet remotely, to the extent possible. Boards and Commissions can utilize the provisions of newly enacted AB 361 to maintain remote meetings under the Ralph M. Brown Act and similar laws.

Among other reasons, the grounds for the remote meeting recommendation include:

- The continued threat of COVID-19 to the community. As of September 30, 2021, the case rate remains high and unstable in Sierra County, as well as our neighboring counties that are regularly utilized for our services and goods. Case rate is one metric used under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (D) framework for assessing community COVID-19 transmission; and,
- The unique characteristics of public governmental meetings, including the increased mixing associated with bringing together people from across the community, the need to enable those who are immunocompromised or unvaccinated to be able to safely continue to fully participate in public governmental meetings, and the challenges of ensuring compliance with safety requirements and recommendations at such meetings.

Meetings that cannot feasibly be held virtually should be held outdoors whenever possible, or indoors only in small groups with face coverings, maximal physical distance between participants, use of portable HEPA filter (unless comparable filtration is provided through facility HVAC systems), and shortened meeting times. Indoor meeting mitigation measures should be posted.

This recommendation is based upon current conditions and available protective measures. The Public Health Officer will continue to evaluate this recommendation on an ongoing basis and will communicate when there is no longer such a recommendation with respect to meetings for public bodies.