

County of Santa Clara

Public Health Department

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Recommendation Regarding Continued Remote Public Meetings of Governmental Entities

Issued: September 21, 2021

In light of the continued state of emergency related to COVID-19, the County Public Health Officer continues to recommend that public bodies meet remotely to the extent possible, specifically including use of newly enacted AB 361 to maintain remote meetings under the Ralph M. Brown Act and similar laws.

Among other reasons, this recommendation is made due to the continued threat of COVID-19 to the community, the unique characteristics of public governmental meetings (such as 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 with fully ascertaining and ensuring compliance with vaccination and other safety recommendations at such meetings), and the continued increased safety protection that social distancing provides as one means by which to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This recommendation does not apply to those meetings of a quasi-judicial nature that have been already meeting in person prior to September 21, 2021, for example to allow for credibility determinations of witnesses.

The 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.