

Dear Chair Haschak, Vice-Chair Gjerde, Supervisors Brown, McCowen & Williams,

I'm writing as a resident of Point Arena and the 5th District. The following comments are my own and do not reflect the position of any local agency.

Everyone in Mendocino County looks forward to the day when life is somewhat "normal" again. Everyone wants our local businesses to thrive. In one way or another, we all miss the life of just six months ago, when concerns about visiting the beach and our local parks, or going to the grocery store or restaurant or bar or theater were the furthest things from our minds.

The failure of the Federal government and the State of California to provide a robust supply of tests has resulted in an adequate report of the prevalence of COVID-19 in our county. Due to that, testing has only been reactive rather than proactive. This needs to change before I believe we can seriously look at loosening many restrictions.

The South Coast is likely the most visited region of our county from the Bay Area. It's understandable that people want to visit our region during these difficult times. Yet, there has been no significant testing for COVID19 on the South Coast.

Please test and receive the results of all grocery store employees, medical staff, public employees, AND a random set of the population on the South Coast before loosening safety restrictions in this part of the County.

Hastily opening visitor serving facilities like hotels, motels, bed-and-breakfasts, and vacation rentals will increase the likelihood of transmission.

Expanding curbside or delivery pickup for small businesses should be prioritized. Some businesses, such as restaurants, will be better suited than others. But any retail store should have the opportunity for the same. Outdoor retail sales with appropriate social distancing and facial coverings could be an option.

Businesses and services that require physical contact or are nearer than the six-foot social distancing standard-- such as hair salons, nail salons, massage therapists, estheticians, gyms, et al., -- should be required to utilize the health and safety standards proscribed by the State, and employees should be regularly tested due to the proximity to customers and the potential for community spread.

Anecdotal reports from businesses in Point Arena have indicated continued visitor foot and vehicle traffic in town. Many visitors do not appear to be practicing social distancing or facial covering standards. This has been much more prevalent in Gualala due to its markets and close proximity to Sea Ranch. The travel-related exposure in Covelo should give us all pause.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my personal thoughts.

Paul Andersen
Point Arena, CA