



COUNTY OF DEL NORTE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH BRANCH

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DATE: May 28, 2020

SUBJECT: Lodging Directives

TO: Del Norte County Hospitality Owners/ Operators:

It has come to our attention that a number of hotels, motels, and temporary lodging venues have been taking liberties with booking of leisure guests, as we described in the recent public bulletin posted on our website. Please be aware that is not an option to do this under the current directive. The Governor's Executive Order N-33-20, as well as the Order of the Del Norte Public Health Officer of March 27, 2020, prohibits the use of short-term rentals for non-essential business.

Hotels and rentals are not allowed to be open for leisure guests, only for those considered to be "essential" travelers. Please review the State's publication on the Essential Workforce if you need further clarification on what this includes: <https://covid19.ca.gov/img/EssentialCriticalInfrastructureWorkers.pdf>. Lodging venues are responsible for taking the steps necessary to make sure that your guests have a legitimate need to stay on your rental property. We plan to monitor this situation closely until such time as is no longer necessary.

Please be aware that there are potential penalties for detected cases of non-compliance. Below is a description of the pertinent Health and Safety codes and applicable fines and terms of imprisonment:

Health and Safety Code 120275 states: *"any person who, after notice, violates, or who, upon the demand of any health officer, refuses or neglects to conform to, any rule, order, or regulation prescribed by the department respecting a quarantine or disinfection of persons, animals, things, or places, is guilty of a misdemeanor."*

Health and Safety Code 120295 states: *"any person who violates Section 120130 or any section in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 120175, but excluding Section 120195), is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than fifty dollars (\$50) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or by imprisonment for a term of not more than 90 days, or by both. He or she is guilty of a separate offense for each day that the violation continued."*

Additionally, Government Code Section 8665 provides that any person who refuses or willfully neglects to obey any lawful local emergency order or regulation shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punishable by a fine of not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by

imprisonment for not to exceed six months or by both such fine and imprisonment. Your violation also constitutes a public nuisance as it endangers the health and safety of the public. If the County is forced to pursue civil enforcement, the County will also seek attorneys' fees as enforcement proceedings are an unnecessary burden on taxpayers.

The last few months have been very difficult for the hotel/motel and temporary rental industry. We know that many of you have done the best that you could to abide by the Governor's orders and our own local directives to limit persons staying in hotels to essential services workers. For those that have maintained those orders we thank you for your dedication to helping preserve the health of the community. As you also probably know, there have been major changes to the California reopening plan, which have moved some businesses forward to reopen now, in advance of the previous schedule. This has created a new level of risk in our community for coronavirus.

Please abide by the local health order until such time as it can be lifted. Your understanding and cooperation are appreciated and assist in lowering our community's level of risk for coronavirus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'WR', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Warren Rehwaldt MD
Health Officer Del Norte County