



## County of Del Norte – 1% Sales Tax Ballot Measure

Election Day: November 3, 2020

# Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Measure R?

Measure R is a ballot measure on the November 3rd General Election ballot for County of Del Norte unincorporated voters. Measure R seeks voter approval to authorize a 1% sales tax to maintain vital county services. A “YES vote” approves the County’s proposal; a “NO vote” rejects the proposal.

### Why is Measure R needed?

Measure R is needed to support vital local services including: providing support for law enforcement for emergency response; repairing potholes and maintaining streets; preparing for and responding to natural disasters and health emergencies; maintaining emergency dispatch services for fire, ambulance, and law enforcement; maintaining jail and criminal justice services; addressing blight and public nuisances; and other general services and infrastructure.

### What is the actual question that voters will be asked to decide in November?

“To support vital local services including: providing support for law enforcement for emergency response; repairing potholes and maintaining streets; preparing for and responding to natural disasters and health emergencies; maintaining emergency dispatch services for fire, ambulance, and law enforcement; maintaining jail and criminal justice services; addressing blight and public nuisances; and other general services and infrastructure; shall the measure be adopted imposing a one percent sales tax in the unincorporated area of the county, until ended by voters, providing approximately \$1.2 million dollars annually, with citizen oversight and independent audits?”

### How will Measure R funds be used?

- **Provide** support for law enforcement emergency response
- **Maintain** emergency dispatch services for fire, ambulance, and law enforcement
- **Repair** potholes and maintaining streets
- **Prepare** for and respond to natural disasters and health emergencies
- **Maintain** jail and criminal justice programs and services
- **Address** blight and public nuisances
- **Continue** to deliver general services and maintain local infrastructure.

### Why now?

The County of Del Norte has worked hard in recent years to be fiscally responsible while maintaining essential county services. However, cuts in State funding and rising operating costs are continuing to take their toll. Since 1990, the State has taken millions of dollars from Del Norte County to deal with its own budget. Measure R provides a way to close the budget gap, protect vital county services, and help with COVID-19 economic impacts. Measure R won’t address all funding needs, but it will help make a significant difference in maintaining services and assisting with addressing some infrastructure needs.

**What if Measure R doesn't pass?**

The County Board of Supervisors and public safety Departments will continue to struggle annually to provide even a basic level of services to the community.

**Can't the State take this money and use it for other purposes NOT in the County of Del Norte?**

No. ALL funds generated by Measure R would be locally controlled and would stay in the County of Del Norte to provide essential county services and infrastructure needs. By law, the State could not take this funding away.

**What would a sales tax apply to? What's taxed and what isn't?**

**Basic necessities like groceries and prescription medications won't be taxed.** A local sales tax would apply to the same goods and services and be subject to the existing State sales tax on tangible personal property. For example: furniture, cars, giftware, toys, antiques and clothing would be subject to the tax. Items that are exempt from sales tax include sales of certain food products for human consumption (groceries), sales to the U.S. government, sales of prescription medicine and certain medical devices, and sales of items paid for with food stamps.

**Will there be taxpayer oversight on the use of the funds received?**

Yes. If Measure R is approved by voters, the County will be required to appoint a seven-person oversight committee to meet annually to review and publically report on the expenditure of revenues generated by the tax imposed. The committee will include the County Administrative Officer and Auditor, or their designees, as non-voting members, and five residents of the unincorporated area of the County. Resident members of the committee will be appointed to two-year terms by the Board of Supervisors.

**Who decides how Measure R funds are spent and spent responsibly?**

The Del Norte County Board of Supervisors will annually allocate the requests for Measure R funding.

**Will there be public reports on the use of Measure R funds?**

Yes. Mandatory financial audits and annual public reports are required to ensure funds are spent properly.

**Doesn't the County already have funding in their budget to cover these costs?**

The County struggles every year to provide the most basic of services for public safety. Additionally, the County has major deferred maintenance on facilities because funding is not available. Unlike many Counties in the state, Del Norte County has zero reserves for budget shortfalls.

**How do County of Del Norte wages compare with others in our area?**

County wages for our Public Safety Responders, who put their lives on the line to keep our community safe everyday, are the lowest in our area and nearly the lowest in the state. It is difficult for us to keep trained experienced staff because other agencies offer better wages. The County becomes a training ground for other jurisdictions. Additionally, staffing levels have remained the same for several years, many times filling of positions that become vacant are delayed due to funding.

**How much revenue will Measure R generate for our County?**

Measure R would generate approximately \$1.2 million per year. This revenue is dependent on the amount of goods sold in the County of Del Norte.

**Does the County benefit from other local assessments or taxes on the Statewide General Election?**

No. The County will only receive benefit if Measure R passes for unincorporated Del Norte County.

**Will this tax cover all of the needs the County has?**

NO. The revenue generated from this tax will support vital services and provide for a safer community.

**When will we vote on Measure R?**

Measure R is on the November 3, 2020 ballot. Absentee ballots for this election will arrive the week of October 5th. All voters living within the unincorporated jurisdiction of the County of Del Norte who are registered by October 19th will be eligible to vote on Measure R.

**How much will it cost me?**

The cost to an individual depends on the amount of qualified goods or services purchased. If passed, a taxable purchase of \$20 in unincorporated Del Norte County would cost an additional \$0.20. It will be paid by everyone in the community, as well as visitors making qualified purchases in the unincorporated area of the County Del Norte.

<b>CURRENT SALES TAX</b>	<b>SALES TAX WITH MEASURE – R</b>
\$100.00 Taxable Purchase	\$100.00 Taxable Purchase
7.5% Sales Tax	8.5% Sales Tax
\$107.50 Total Cost	\$108.50 Total Cost

**Does the Fair Tax Sunset soon?**

Yes, the fair tax sunsets in December 2022, reducing the sales tax .25%.

**Are others exploring adopting similar measures?**

Yes. The City of Crescent City have placed a similar ballot measure of a 1% local sales tax increase before their respective voters; and Crescent Fire Protection District is requesting an additional fire assessment before their voters.

**If the City's 1% tax measure passes and the County's 1% tax measure passes, will local sales tax increase by 2%?**

No. The City tax only applies to businesses within the City boundaries and the County tax only applies to businesses in the unincorporated areas outside the City boundaries. If both measures pass, the County-wide sales tax would be 8.5%.

**Will this impact after school and youth programs provided by the County?**

Yes. Without the funding provided by Measure R, the County's ability to continue providing safe alternative activities for our youth ages pre-school through sixth grade could be reduced or eliminated. Below are examples of two County run after school/youth programs:

<b>Youth Basketball -</b> 708 program participants & employs 240 part time temporary staff during the 8 week program	<b>Teen Basketball -</b> 100 program participants & employs approximately 72 part time staff for 18 nights of program
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**How does Del Norte County rank compared with Counties or Cities nearby on its sales tax rate?**

Del Norte County's current sales tax rate is 7.5%. If Measure R, a 1% sales tax measure is approved by voters, the County of Del Norte will join City of Eureka, City of Arcata and City of Fortuna with an 8.5% sales tax rate. Humboldt County's current sales tax is higher at 8.75%. Del Norte County's maximum sales tax is lower than 88% of California Counties.

**Who makes the final decision on a local sales tax measure?**

The County of Del Norte REGISTERED VOTERS will have the final say when they vote for or against the measure.

**Where can I get more information?**

For more information: Visit our website at: [www.co.del-norte.ca.us](http://www.co.del-norte.ca.us) OR contact Jay Sarina, County Administrative Officer, via email: [jsarina@dnco.org](mailto:jsarina@dnco.org) or by phone: (707) 464-7214.