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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHASTA COUNTY GETS GREEN LIGHT TO STAY IN RED TIER

Shasta County health officials have convinced the state health department to keep the county in the red ("substantial") tier of the state COVID-19 tier system, allowing restaurants, places of worship, movie theaters, fitness centers and museums to remain open indoors with modifications.

Last weekend, Shasta County health officials prepared an adjudication report that asked the state to allow the county to stay in the red tier, despite a case rate that measured in the most restrictive purple ("widespread") tier. Most of Shasta County's recent uptick in cases was due in large part to two specific outbreaks, which are now on the decline. That request was declined. However, on Wednesday night, HHSA Director Donnell Ewert, Health Officer Karen Ramstrom and HHSA Public Health Branch Director Robin Schurig joined CEO Matt Pontes and Supervisors Leonard Moty and Joe Chimenti to plead the county's case to California Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly. Late Friday evening, Dr. Ghaly personally called Pontes to report that the state Department of Public Health was placing Shasta County back into the red tier after recalculating the average daily case rate using more recent data.

"This is a huge relief for our local businesses, and we are grateful that Dr. Ghaly agreed with our justification to stay in the red tier," said Public Health Branch Director Robin Schurig. "We know that most of our cases have not been tied to the businesses that were most heavily impacted by a move to the purple, and he heard us. We have assured him that we will continue to work diligently to promote mask use, distancing, and the avoidance of gatherings in order to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community."

More information about what can be open in the red tier is available at www.ShastaReady.org; click on "Roadmap to Recovery."