



**For Immediate Release – May 21, 2020**

**THE CITY OF WILLITS IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT BUSINESS OWNERS WILL BE ABLE TO OPEN  
MANY RETAIL BUSINESSES AND RESTAURANTS THIS WEEKEND IN WILLITS**

We have learned that the State has approved the County's attestation, which means that a new Shelter In Place Order will be coming, hopefully today, that will allow the re-opening of eligible businesses, including restaurants, contingent on those businesses complying with certain safety protocols and self-certifying with the County that these protocols are being met. The self-certification process is an on-line process that is easy and stream-lined that should be able to be completed in just a few minutes. The West Company has developed a website to facilitate this process and can assist. Our local Chamber of Commerce also stands ready to assist businesses in Willits in their re-opening efforts. Their number is 459-7910. [info@willits.org](mailto:info@willits.org)

**Today's County Press Release:**

**Mendocino County Launches Website for Business Reopening Plans**  
**County of Mendocino launches MendocinoCountyBusiness.org**

Post Date: 05/21/2020 9:24 AM

As the State of California moved into Stage 2 of business reopening effective May 15, 2020, the County of Mendocino, in collaboration with West Business Development Center, has developed a tool to assist businesses in achieving compliance with reopening protocols.

The newly launched [MendocinoCountyBusiness.org](http://MendocinoCountyBusiness.org) website contains the information and resources for businesses eligible to open in Stage 2 to develop their own Business Reopening Plan, which is a County of Mendocino requirement for reopening. Business owners will use the Safe Operations Business Protocol checklist to guide the development and implementation of their health and safety protocols and procedures for their workplace. They will also refer to the Business Reopening Plan worksheets that are specific to different business sectors, such as manufacturing, retail, childcare, construction, and more. Currently, only those businesses that can open in Stage 2 have Business Reopening Plan worksheets available. As more sectors are permitted to open, the site will be updated with additional industry-specific plans.

Once business owners have created their Business Reopening Plan, they must self-certify compliance directly on the website. The County requires each business to submit their business license number, business information, and complete a compliance questionnaire. Upon completion, businesses will

download a Safe Mendocino certificate for posting in the business workplace. Businesses are also required to post their health and safety protocols in their place of business. Supervisor Dan Gjerde emphasized the importance of building consumer confidence as the county reopens for business, “Participating in this self-certification process will also have the added benefit of making consumers feel confident that businesses are safe otherwise they won’t engage in commerce.”

The website is a result of the ongoing work of the County’s Covid-19 Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Supervisors Gjerde and Williams and West Business Development Center CEO Mary Anne Petrillo, further cementing the continuation of a successful public sector/private business roundtables. In addition to reaching out to industry leaders, the Ad Hoc Committee sought input from the County’s Chambers of Commerce and city officials. The site is designed for both English and Spanish speakers.

Supervisor Ted Williams emphasized the importance of compliance and acknowledged the challenges, “The reopening situation is a moving target with new directives coming daily from the state. This site will streamline the process both for businesses and the county as we navigate how to reopen safely. We need to continue the work of the Public Health Officer as we gradually reopen the county.”

The County also requests that business owners complete the business impact survey, which will provide information on the total dollar amount of economic impact of the pandemic crisis. The survey can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/MendoBizImpact>.

The County of Mendocino encourages all small businesses in the County to visit their website at <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/business/business-resource-for-covid-19>.

For business-related support with loans, employee relations and digital commerce, contact West Business Development Center at [www.westcenter.org](http://www.westcenter.org).