



PRESS RELEASE

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Local Anaheim Businesses Devastated by Governor Newsom's Announcement to Delay Reopening Major Theme Parks until Summer 2021 or Later

Since March, small businesses near the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, California have held out hope that this powerful engine of the regional economy would be allowed to reopen by the State of California with responsible, attainable guidelines to protect residents, workers, and guests.

Today, those hopes were dashed by theme park guidelines developed and released by California Governor Gavin Newsom, and his administration, which will prevent The Disneyland Resort from reopening until Orange County achieves Tier 4 (Yellow). The Governor's guidelines as outlined by Dr. Mark Ghaly during the state's press conference this afternoon, further limits reopening and economic recovery of major theme parks to 25 percent capacity and prevents any guests from visiting who do not live within 120 miles of the theme park.

City of Anaheim and Orange County leaders spoke out quickly on the devastation caused by the State's theme park guidelines today:

"These guidelines fail working families and small businesses," stated **Anaheim Mayor Harry Sidhu**. "Too many Anaheim hotels, stores, and restaurants will not survive another year of this. Many are family businesses. The jobs they provide support even more families. The labor unions of the Disneyland Resort understand these impacts and support the reopening of theme parks in Tier 3 – not Tier 4, which would wipe out jobs and destroy lives."

"I think for a large county like Orange County ... it will be very hard to achieve the yellow tier [as defined by the State]," stated **Dr. Clayton Chau, Director, Orange County Health Care Agency** at this morning's Board of Supervisors meeting. "It depends on when the vaccine will come as well as how many doses [are] available for our populations as well as how many of our residents will readily accept the vaccine – those are the three factors that will determine how soon we can get to the yellow tier ... personally, I think that we can look forward to a yellow tier by next summer, hopefully. Hopefully."

"Governor Newsom's action today is devastating news for the people of Anaheim," stated **Todd Ament, President and CEO, Anaheim Chamber of Commerce**. "The Newsom administration is delaying by a year or longer reopening of the Disneyland Resort and major theme parks in California, decimating the state's tourism industry. Tens of thousands of workers have already been laid off by state mandates to remain closed since March. Now, seven months later, small business owners in our resort areas who've held on by the thinnest of margins have no further hope or recourse to remain in business."

Small businesses in the Anaheim Resort area shared first-hand the impacts to their families, workers, and the financial hardship caused by State actions to remain closed for an additional

year or longer:

“At this point if the resort doesn’t open back up, we’ll be lucky if we make it through the end of the year,” says **Karmel Shuttle Service owner Mike Afram**, “It stills weighs on me every day because I don’t know what the next day brings.”

“I’m a first generation Latina in the United States and I know the struggles that my parents went through to get here and it’s just really sad to think we might not be here,” says **Jocelyn Campos** from **family-owned Big Bertha’s Pizza** in the Anaheim Resort, “I can’t imagine not being able to wake up in the morning and have something to call mine...ours.”

“At one time we had over 50 employees, but we have had to let almost 85% of our employees go, some of whom have been with us over 20 years,” says **Bharat Patel**, whose family built and has run the **Castle Inn since 1974**, “The day we had to lay them off was one of the hardest days of my life. I still think about them (our employees) every day.”

“I opened the business in 1987 and we were number one in Orange County and we continued to stay number one in Orange County until COVID hit,” says **Rick Cerney, franchise owner of an Anaheim Resort Subway** restaurant location. “We’re now at an 86% loss in business and we’re the lowest in sales. Out of 230 stores, we were the highest last March and now seven months later, we’re the lowest.”

The **Disneyland Resort President, Ken Potrock**, also weighed in on the state’s theme park guidelines, “We have proven that we can responsibly reopen, with science-based health and safety protocols strictly enforced at our theme park properties around the world. Nevertheless, the State of California continues to ignore this fact, instead mandating arbitrary guidelines that it knows are unworkable and that hold us to a standard vastly different from other reopened businesses and state-operated facilities. Together with our labor unions we want to get people back to work, but these State guidelines will keep us shuttered for the foreseeable future, forcing thousands more people out of work, leading to the inevitable closure of small family-owned businesses, and irreparably devastating the Anaheim/Southern California community.”

While the State announced that San Francisco has achieved Tier 4 (Yellow) as of today, they are the only consolidated city and county in the State of California and have a population of 880,000, a quarter of the size of Orange County with 34 cities and a population of more than 3.3 million.

The Anaheim Chamber of Commerce hosted a press conference today at 2pm via zoom following the state’s announcement on theme park guidelines. The speakers included:

City Leaders

Speaker: Harry Sidhu, Anaheim Mayor

Speaker: Todd Ament, CEO, Anaheim Chamber of Commerce

Small Businesses

Speaker: Jocelyn Campos, Big Bertha’s Pizza Speaker: Mike Afram, Karmel Shuttle Service

Speaker: Bharat Patel, Castle Inn

Speaker: Dara Maleki, Pizza Press

Speaker: Rick Cerney, Subway

For more information and to watch video testimonials from each of the speakers, please visit:

[ReOpenOCNow.com](https://www.ReOpenOCNow.com)