



## Office of Emergency Services County of Tuolumne

Ryan Campbell, Director  
Tracie M. Riggs, Assistant Director  
Dore A. Bietz, Coordinator

**Tuolumne County Administration Center**  
2 South Green Street  
Sonora, CA 95370  
Phone (209) 533-5511  
Fax (209) 533-5510

### PRESS RELEASE

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#### UK Variant in Tuolumne County Found

Yesterday evening Tuolumne Public Health was notified by the California Department of Public Health that one of our residents who had previously tested positive for the COVID virus was further sequenced to see if the virus was a 'variant of concern' (VOC).

The results of this test showed that the virus was the B.1.1.7 or 'UK' variant. Although we have been submitting specimens for sequencing, this is the first time that B.1.1.7 has been identified in Tuolumne County.

The B.1.1.7 VOC is both more easily transmitted from person to person and has the potential to cause a more severe course of disease.

The B.1.1.7 VOC has been previously identified in adjacent counties as well as in the wastewater from Yosemite National Park.

The case was symptomatic and tested in late April. The case was unvaccinated.

All the currently available vaccines reduce the likelihood of becoming infected with the B.1.1.7 variant. They have also been demonstrated to reduce the impact of disease should it develop in a vaccinated person.

According to Dr. Sergienko, Interim Tuolumne County Public Health Officer, in addition to a vaccination, other measures to reduce the spread of COVID are still effective against the B.1.1.7 variant. These include maintaining social distance, wearing a facial covering, and staying home when you are sick.

Should you have additional questions, please reach out to Tuolumne County Public Health at 209-533-7440 or email: [PHPIO@co.tuolumne.ca.us](mailto:PHPIO@co.tuolumne.ca.us)