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The Modesto Bee



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The picnic pavilion is pictured Dec. 13 at Graceada Park in Modesto. The city shortened the park hours in 2022 from dawn to dusk.

Home businesses in Stanislaus County: Laws, permits

BY DOMINIQUE WILLIAMS
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An exemption to a California law that let nail technicians work as independent contractors is ending at the start of the new year. Signed into law in September 2019, AB 5 distinguishes whether workers are independent contractors or employees. In the personal-care sector, professions including hairstylists, barbers and estheticians received exemptions, but nail technicians received only a provisional exemption — set to expire Dec. 31.

What's that mean for the nail techs working in Modesto and Stanislaus County?

Shelby Juri works at Re.treat Salon in Turlock and has been in the nail industry for nearly a decade. She said the law will do one of two things: force nail techs to start their own businesses, or allow employees to get the benefits that most nail technicians don't currently receive, such as sick and overtime pay.

"Every nail tech will look at this differently," Juri said. "It can be positive or negative, mostly just unfortunate for the people that are happy and content with how things are and now they have to change."

The law also will require employers to pay nail techs only minimum wage, which could mean a significant pay cut for the workers who once were able to set their own prices for the service they provided.

"What it means for me is that I'll probably no longer be able to rent a station at Re.treat," Juri said. "So during this month, I'll have to figure out if I can get everything I need legally to get into a space of my own, or I'll have to become an employee again, which is incredibly annoying and not exactly what I'd hoped for moving forward."

Aside from starting their own businesses or becoming employees, there may be a third option for nail technicians.

Here are Stanislaus County codes regarding running a business, including a nail salon, out of your home:

WHAT BUSINESSES CAN YOU RUN FROM YOUR STANISLAUS COUNTY HOME?

Within Modesto city limits, there are only two businesses expressly not permitted as home operations: on-site vehicle repair

SEE BUSINESSES, 6A

Homelessness charges spiked in Modesto before court ruling

BY TREVOR MORGAN AND KATHLEEN QUINN
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Charges related to homelessness have dramatically increased in Modesto during the past two years.

There were over 600 charges for camping or remaining in a park after hours in the fiscal year of 2024 which ended in June — an increase of 57% from the prior fiscal year.

Charges for remaining in a park after hours were four and a half times greater than in the 2020-21 fiscal year. The same went for obstructing a sidewalk or business, which went from zero charges to 122 this past fiscal year.

As to why there was such a spike in charges, the explanations varied.

In a statement to The Modesto Bee, Police Chief Brandon Gillespie said, "The rise in citations is not a shift in philosophy but rather an outcome of increased engagement, outreach, and enforcement where necessary."

WHAT CAUSED THE UPTICK?

Gillespie explained the hike by saying that over the years, the Police Department added staffing for "alternative response models," which includes its Community Health and Assistance Team (CHAT).

He said that because MPD now has more interactions with unhoused people, the number of citations also has grown. CHAT was designed to avoid criminalization by offering

services and resources. But when CHAT teams are sent out, there are some who "repeatedly refuse available services," said Gillespie.

But the numbers don't show that refusal of services is a widespread issue. In July 2023 through December 2023, the CHAT program had 1,402 instances where people approached by the team accepted services — with only 48 refusals, according to a county report.

Expansion of enforcement in Modesto parks is due to its Park Ranger Program, according to city officials.

The program, which started in 2022, has a mission to keep Modesto parks "safe, welcoming, and enjoyable spaces for all residents and visitors," Police Department spokes-

person Sharon Bear said.

Rangers are tasked with enforcing park codes and addressing illegal camping, public consumption of alcohol, and vandalism.

The Police Department issues citations, which act as notices or tickets, but only some become charges, which are criminal accusations. The City Attorney's Office reviews whether there is enough evidence to file a criminal complaint.

MPD's June 2024 report cites CHAT and greater park ranger staffing as contributing to its response to "quality of life issues." That same year, MPD cited over 5,800 homelessness-related crimes. Out of all these citations, 887 mun-

SEE HOMELESSNESS, 5A

Latter-day Saints witness crowning moment of new temple

BY MARIA LUISA FIGUEROA
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Thursday morning was foggy and crisp as several members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gathered to watch the tower go up on the new Modesto Temple.

Located at 4300 Dale Road, the temple will be the 10th in California and is expected to open in early 2026. "We've had the tower in two sections for quite a while," said Modesto North Stake President Dave Neilson. "We were waiting for the time when we could have everybody come and witness the large crane."

The crane placed the tower frame, section upon section, atop the building as members of the community looked on. In attendance were Kathy and



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A crew installs the final section of the tower at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' new temple on Dale Road in Modesto on Thursday.

Tracy Walker of Modesto, who said they were overwhelmed with gratitude and amazement.

"I never dreamed I would see a temple built here in my

lifetime," Kathy Walker said as she teared up. "We believe that this is the house of the Lord, that he is there in our midst and it gives us strength. To see

this being built is just amazing."

Her husband, Tracy, added that they were both happy to have a temple in town so they would no longer have to journey to the temple in Oakland. "It's a beacon, drawing people in from Lodi, Merced, Tracy, and even the mountains," he said of the temple under construction, "It's a beacon of hope."

The completed temple will be a single story and around 30,000 square feet in size. According to Neilson, temples are different from churches in that they are considered the house of the Lord and are used for sacred ceremonies like marriage and other religious customs.

"There are sealing rooms where ordinances are performed, where families are eternally sealed and tied to God and covenant. And there are baptisms that are done by proxy for those that have passed on beyond the veil," Neilson said.

SEE TEMPLE, 5A



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