



## **PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER MCPH2020-04**

### **PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORS**

**September 17, 2020 (Updated October 15, 2020)**

---

#### **PURPOSE**

This Public Health Order is being issued to continue to limit the health impacts of COVID-19. This Order implements measures to continue limited reopening of industries and businesses in Mesa County while maintaining sustainable levels of social distancing. This Order continues social distancing requirements for all residents. This Order is effective within the entirety of Mesa County, including all cities and towns within the County.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Governor of Colorado issued several Executive Orders to address the current COVID-19 pandemic since March 11, 2020, including an Executive Order declaring a disaster emergency due to the presence of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Colorado.

On March 25, 2020, the Governor of Colorado issued Executive Order D 2020 017, which ordered Coloradans to Stay at Home due to the presence of COVID-19 in the state. This order was issued in response to the existence of hundreds of confirmed and presumptive cases of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and related deaths across the State of Colorado. Further, there is substantial evidence of community spread of COVID-19 throughout the State.

On March 25, 2020, the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment issued Public Health Order 20-24 based on the Governor's Executive Order D 2020 017. On April 9th, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment updated Public Health Order 20-24 adding clarification to the essential services and social distancing definitions of the Stay-at-Home requirements.

On June 30, 2020 the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment issued an updated version of the Safer at Home Public Health Order 20-28 based on the Governor's Executive Order D 2020 044 allowing many Coloradans to return to work while maintaining a sustainable level of social distancing.

On May 22, 2020 the Colorado Department of Public Health approved a Mesa County variance to portions of Executive Order D 2020 044 and Public Health Order 20-28 (See Attachment A). Mesa County demonstrated proof of two conditions, very low case counts of COVID 19 and 14 consecutive days of decline of infection of COVID-19 in the county. The Safer-at-Home Mesa County - Phase 2 plan is approved by Mesa County Board of Public Health, Mesa County Board of County Commissioners, and is fully supported by all four hospitals.

On September 8, 2020 the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment certified Mesa County to move to the Protect our Neighbor phase indicating low disease transmission

level locally, robust public health capacity for testing, case investigation, contact tracing, and outbreak response, and hospital ability to handle a surge in demand should one occur.

### **LEGAL AUTHORITY**

This Order is adopted pursuant to the legal authority set forth in sections 25-1-506 and 25-1-508, 25-1-509, Colorado Revised Statutes as well as all other applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders and declarations. Under this authority, the Mesa County Public Health Director has the duty to investigate and control the causes of an epidemic or communicable diseases and conditions affecting public health; to establish, maintain, and enforce isolation and quarantine; to exercise physical control over the property and over the persons of the people within the territorial limits of Mesa County; and to prohibit the gatherings of people to protect the public health; all as the Public Health Director may find necessary for the protection of the public health. Immediate issuance of this Order is deemed reasonable and necessary under the existing circumstances and necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare.

### **PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORS**

The Protect Our Neighbors phase allows Mesa County to continue to open gradually. All businesses, establishments, and activities can allow occupancy at 50% of normal capacity. Indoor occupancy is capped at 500 people in cases where 50% of normal capacity is more than 500 people. Capacity restrictions are allowed to increase beyond the 50 percent base by 5 percent for every four-weeks that Mesa County is in compliance with Protect Our Neighbors metrics.

Mesa County must be in compliance with eight specific metrics in order to increase capacity. If Mesa County falls out of compliance with any one of the metrics, a local containment plan will be implemented and compliance for the particular metric must be re-established within three-weeks. If Mesa County does not re-establish compliance by the end of the three-week period, Mesa County Public Health must meet with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to determine if additional state and/or local action is needed. CDPHE may revoke Mesa County's Protect Our Neighbors certification if compliance cannot be re-established.

Mesa County Public Health will closely monitor the specific measures and notify the community when it is appropriate to increase capacity. Capacity should not be increased automatically every four-weeks.

Mesa County residents, businesses, establishments, and activities are subject to the requirements of this Order. Previous variances and Public Health orders are obsolete.

## **I. GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR MESA COUNTY RESIDENTS**

- Maintain at least 6 feet of social distance.
- Adults 65 years and older and high-risk populations should limit public interactions and stay at home as much as possible.
- Use cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth for interactions where physical distancing is not possible or when entering and moving throughout indoor public places.
- Stay home if experiencing symptoms.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Frequently clean and disinfect all non-porous, high-touch surfaces.
- Avoid potlucks and sharing of food and/or tools and utensils. All tools, utensils, or other shared equipment used before, during, or after the gathering should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
- Gathering with people from different households and/or with people from outside the community pose a greater risk.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact (including hugs, handshakes, or fist bumps).
- Anyone with coronavirus symptoms, or who interact regularly with the public, or who were recently in a crowd where social distancing was not possible should get tested.
- Follow [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#) guidelines after getting tested or if required to stay home due to illness.

## **II. REQUIREMENTS FOR RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS, RESTAURANTS, BARS, OFFICES, PERSONAL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS, PLACES OF WORSHIP, GYMS/FITNESS FACILITIES, ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS, ORGANIZED SPORTS/RECREATION EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES, INDOOR SPECIAL EVENTS, AND SPONSORED/HOSTED GATHERINGS**

### **Capacity Limits**

- Limit private gatherings to 300 people.
- Limit the number of occupants to 50% of the facility's normal capacity or 300 people, whichever is less.
- Groups must be limited to 10 or fewer people in the same party. Organized seating must not allow for more than 10 people from a single party. Groups must be at least 6 feet apart from each other. Two separate parties are not allowed to be seated together.
- Organize spaces-so there is at least six feet of distance between individuals and/or groups. This can be accomplished by spacing tabletops at least 9 feet apart.

### **Face Coverings (adopted from Executive Order D 2020 219)**

Public Indoor Space means any enclosed indoor area that is publicly or privately owned, managed, or operated to which individuals have access by right or by invitation, expressed or implied, and that is accessible to the public, serves as a place of employment, or is an entity providing services. Public Indoor Space does not mean a person's residence, including a room in a motel or hotel or a residential room for students at an educational facility.

- Individuals 11 years and older must wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when entering or moving within any Public Indoor Space, or while using or waiting to use the services of any taxi, bus, light rail, train, car service, ride-sharing or similar service, or Mass Transportation Operations.
- Children ages 2 and under should NOT wear a face covering.

- The following individuals are exempt from the requirements of this Executive Order:
  - Individuals ten (10) years old and younger; or
  - Individuals who cannot medically tolerate a face covering.

Individuals performing the following activities are exempt from the requirements of this Executive Order while the activity is being performed:

- Individuals who are hearing impaired or otherwise disabled or who are communicating with someone who is hearing impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication;
- Individuals who are seated at a food service establishment;
- Individuals who are exercising alone or with others from the individual's household and a face covering would interfere with the activity;
- Individuals who are receiving a personal service where the temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service;
- Individuals who enter a business or receive services and are asked to temporarily remove a face covering for identification purposes;
- Individuals who are actively engaged in a public safety role such as law enforcement, firefighters, or emergency medical personnel;
- Individuals who are officiating at a life rite or religious service; or
- Individuals who are giving a speech for broadcast or an audience.

### **Signage**

- Post signs at entrances requiring visitors to wear cloth face coverings to enter/exit, and to exclude themselves if they are experiencing symptoms of any illness.
- Post signs in key places providing directions to hand washing/sanitizing locations.

### **Cleaning and Hygiene**

- Provide sufficient handwashing facilities and hand sanitizer stations (There should be one handwashing facility or hand sanitizer station for every 25 people in a facility at any given time).
- High-touch surfaces and shared equipment should be cleaned often.

### **Symptoms and Illness**

- Everyone should monitor themselves for illness, and stay home if experiencing any of the following: dry cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever, or a recent loss of taste or smell.
- Anyone with COVID-like symptoms is encouraged to get tested by their healthcare provider or at a free [community testing site](#).

## **III. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Prevent groups or lines of individuals from forming by staggering visitors with reservation or appointment systems. Manage unexpected groups and/or lines by marking floors or using barrier tape to help people maintain six feet of distance between each other.
- Use physical barriers like plexiglass in close-contact settings such as cashier stations, serving stations, or dining booths (barriers separating booths must be at least 66 inches tall).
- Utilize touchless payment methods, such as smartphone apps, when possible.
- Ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made for people 65 years and older and those with underlying medical conditions (e.g. seating assistance, special hours, online orders).

- Outdoor spaces such as patios or other expanded areas may be included for restaurants and on-premises retail liquor establishments (as granted by any municipality). Limit use to 50% of capacity.
- To prevent sharing of equipment, self-service options are not allowed.
- Last call for alcohol sales in restaurants and in on-premises retail liquor establishments can be no later than midnight. Alcohol consumption must end at 12:30 AM.
- Bars, nightclubs, and concerts must provide a seat for each and every guest. No standing room space and no dancing allowed. It is recommended that you use the dance floor as part of the overall seating space while staying at 50% of normal capacity or 300 people indoors, whichever is less.
- Performers at indoor and outdoor venues must remain at least 25 feet from attendees. Instrumental performances in which there is no forced exhalation must be a minimum of 6 feet from patrons, but 25 feet is preferred.
- Visitation for skilled nursing facilities, assisted living residences and intermediate care facilities must be in accordance with [Public Health Order 20-20](#).

#### **IV. RECREATION**

- To the extent possible, spectators at recreation and sports activities are discouraged. If spectators are present, separate individuals and parties of 10 people or less by at least six feet.
- Organized youth and adult recreational sports teams should practice in small groups of the same players as much as possible. Consider scheduling competitions 2 weeks apart in case a team needs to quarantine because of potential COVID exposure.
- Golf carts, go-karts, paddle boards, etc. must contain no more than one person, unless both riders are members of the same party.
- Maintain physical distances in outdoor settings (6 feet while hiking, 15 feet while running or biking).
- Avoid traveling outside of your county or local community.

#### **V. OUTDOOR EVENTS**

Mesa County Public Health developed specific guidance for three types of events: community races, events with limited participant movement, and events with high participant movement. Event organizers or coordinators must review the guidance, develop a plan and submit it to Mesa County Public Health at least two weeks prior to the day of the event. Event organizers must submit the plan to [healthinfo@mesacounty.us](mailto:healthinfo@mesacounty.us).

**DURATION**

Mesa County Public Health Order 2020-04 can be replaced or supplemented by other orders at any time.

The decision to continue to lift restrictions, stay with the current plan, or go back to Stay at Home will be made by Mesa County Board of Public Health based on the rate of positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Mesa County.

BY ORDER OF



Jeffrey G. Kuhr, PhD  
Director of Public Health  
Mesa County, Colorado

Approved by the Mesa County Public Board of Public Health on September 16, 2020, at 1 p.m.  
MDT