PRESS RELEASES

N.M. hits ‘reset,’ re-enacting most heightened level of statewide public health restrictions

Nov 13, 2020 | Press Releases

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and state health officials on Friday announced the state of New Mexico will temporarily re-enact a statewide order closing in-person services for all non-essential activities in order to blunt the unprecedented spike of COVID-19 illnesses and to attempt to relieve dramatically escalating strain on hospitals and health care providers across the state.

The heightened restrictions statewide, enacted through an amended emergency public health order issued by the state Department of Health, will be in effect for two weeks.

The restrictions are effective Monday, Nov. 16, through Monday, Nov. 30. The amended emergency public health order can be found **here**.

New Mexicans are instructed to stay at home except for only those trips that are essential to health, safety and welfare – such as for food and water, emergency medical care, to obtain a flu shot or to obtain a test for COVID-19.

Essential businesses – such as grocery stores, pharmacies, shelters, child care facilities, gas stations, infrastructure operations and others – must minimize

operations and in-person staffing to the greatest extent possible but may remain open for limited essential in-person activities. A complete list of categories of businesses defined as essential is included in the public health order and at the bottom of this news release.

Food and drink establishments may provide curbside pickup and delivery services; on-site dining is prohibited.

A retail space identified as an essential business in the public health order – such as a grocery store, a hardware store, an automobile or bike repair facility, laundromats, liquor stores and large "big box" retailers – may not exceed either 25 percent of maximum occupancy or 75 customers at any one time, whichever is smaller. These essential retail spaces must close by 10 p.m. nightly and may reopen at 4 a.m.

The worsening state of emergency throughout New Mexico necessitates severe public health restrictions as the state records unsustainable rates of new infections of COVID-19 and hospitals throughout the state approach or exceed capacity for bed availability and staffing resources. New Mexico's rolling 7-day average of new COVID-19 cases is 1,012, nearly 10 times greater than the state's target for a safe "reopening" process. The total COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state have risen at least 214 percent over the most recent four weeks. The state has recorded 182 COVID-19 deaths over the past two weeks, a record over the course of the pandemic, and a 143 percent increase over the prior two-week period.

According to the state Department of Health, 17 percent of New Mexicans who have been hospitalized for COVID-19 have died, or almost one in five. There are at least 471 individuals hospitalized for COVID-19 in the state as of Thursday, Nov. 12; the number may be higher pending patient test results and state reporting.

"The rate of spread and the emergency within our state hospitals are clear indicators that we cannot sustain the current situation without significant interventions to modify individual behavior," said Gov. Lujan Grisham. "We had hoped targeted crackdowns, limited hours of operation and amplified messaging and enforcement would make the difference and slow the spread and relieve our hospitals. The public health data make clear, however, that more aggressive restrictions are not only warranted but essential if we are to prevent mass casualties. Without the compliance and cooperation of New Mexicans statewide, we do not need to imagine the bleak public health calamity we will face — the images from El Paso the last few weeks, from New York City earlier this year, and from Europe at the outset of the pandemic will be our fate in New Mexico. But we can prevent this. These warnings are intended to inform, not alarm. There are simple steps each of us can and must take. Stay at home. Wear your mask if you must go out. Do not gather with non-household members. Wash or sanitize your

hands frequently. Make plans for a different kind of Thanksgiving — one without non-household members. Please, take every necessary precaution to protect yourself, your family, your community and your state. If we do that, we will be able to resume more day-to-day activities soon, and more importantly we will save the lives of hundreds of New Mexicans."

The state has developed a tiered county-by-county system that will be used to establish "re-opening" benchmarks for each county upon the Nov. 30 expiration of the amended emergency public health order. State health officials and modeling advisors are readying this system for implementation, which would permit counties the flexibility to engage in more in-person and business activities with Department of Health approval when they are able to drive down infection rates and prevent community outbreaks.

Businesses face a civil administrative penalty of up to $5,000 a day for each violation of the Public Health Emergency Response Act, the state law authorizing the secretary of health to issue emergency public health orders.

STATE RESOURCES

- For information about COVID-19 testing and other public health information, call the Department of Health coronavirus hotline at **1-855-600-3453**. You may also visit **cv.nmhealth.org** for general COVID-19 information and **togethernm.org** for COVID-19 testing information.

- For mental health and behavioral health assistance, call **1-855-NMCRISIS (1-855-662-7474)** or visit **nmcrisisline.com**.

- For assistance with COVID-19 health insurance questions and issues, to obtain health insurance, to obtain help if you have been denied coverage or inappropriately charged for COVID-19 testing or treatment, call the New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance COVID-19 health insurance call center at **1-833-415-0566** from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

- For information about unemployment, visit **jobs.state.nm.us** and **youtube.com/nmdws**.

- To apply online for medical assistance (Medicaid), food assistance (SNAP), cash assistance (TANF) and energy assistance (LIHEAP) visit: **www.yes.state.nm.us**.

- To report a violation of the state's emergency public health order, visit **the reporting portal on newmexico.gov** or email covid.enforcement@state.nm.us.

- For emergency medical assistance, do not call the Department of Health information hotline – call 9-1-1.

IMPORTANT PUBLIC HEALTH REMINDERS

The state Department of Health reminds New Mexicans of the following:

- If you feel sick, do not leave your home. If you feel any symptoms of COVID-19, seek out a COVID-19 test. Testing sites and hours are available at cv.nmhealth.org and togethernm.org.

- Please be patient after receiving your COVID-19 test. As cases rise, so does demand for testing. After you receive your COVID-19 test, monitor yourself for symptoms. If you are having symptoms or tested because of an exposure, you should assume that you are infectious and self-isolate even if your symptoms resolve. You can spread the virus without knowing you are positive and without having symptoms.

- If you test positive for COVID-19, **do not leave your home to do errands or to see friends**. If you are infected with COVID-19, you must not leave your home unless you are seeking out emergency medical care.

- If you need emergency medical care, call 9-1-1, not the Department of Health information hotline.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES:

Essential businesses may operate during the next two weeks if they reduce their operations and in-person workforce to the greatest extent possible. Essential businesses, as defined in the state of New Mexico's operative emergency public health order, means any business or non-profit entity falling within one or more of the following categories:

- Health care operations including hospitals, walk-in-care health facilities, pharmacies, medical wholesale and distribution, home health care workers or aides for the elderly, emergency dental facilities, nursing homes, residential health care facilities, research facilities, congregate care facilities, intermediate care facilities for those with intellectual or

developmental disabilities, supportive living homes, home health care providers, drug and alcohol recovery support services, and medical supplies and equipment manufacturers and providers;

- Homeless shelters, food banks, and other services providing care to indigent or needy populations;
- Childcare facilities;
- Grocery stores, supermarkets, food banks, farmers' markets and vendors who sell food, convenience stores, and other businesses that generate the majority of their revenue from the sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet food, feed, other animal supply stores, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products;
- Farms, ranches, and other food cultivation, processing, or packaging operations;
- Infrastructure operations including, but not limited to, public works construction, commercial and residential construction and maintenance, self-storage facilities, airport operations, public transportation, airlines, taxis, private transportation providers, transportation network companies, water, gas, electrical, oil drilling, oil refining, natural resources extraction or mining operations, nuclear material research and enrichment, those attendant to the repair and construction of roads and highways, gas stations, solid waste collection and removal, trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal, sewer, data and internet providers, data centers, technology support operations, and telecommunications systems;
- Manufacturing operations involved in food processing, manufacturing agents, chemicals, fertilizer, pharmaceuticals, sanitary products, household paper products, microelectronics/semi-conductor, primary metals manufacturers, electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturers, and transportation equipment manufacturers;
- Services necessary to maintain the safety and sanitation of residences or essential businesses including security services, towing services, custodial services, plumbers, electricians, and other skilled trades;

- Veterinary and livestock services, animal shelters and facilities providing pet adoption, daycare, or boarding services;
- Media services;
- Automobile repair facilities, bike repair facilities, and retailers who generate the majority of their revenue from the sale of automobile or bike repair products;
- Utilities, including their contractors, suppliers, and supportive operations, engaged in power generation, fuel supply and transmission, water and wastewater supply;
- Hardware stores, “big box” stores, and other large retailers;
- Laundromats and dry cleaner services;
- Crematoriums, funeral homes and cemeteries;
- Banks, credit unions, insurance providers, payroll services, brokerage services, and investment management firms;
- Businesses providing mailing and shipping services;
- Laboratories and defense and national security-related operations supporting the United States government, a contractor to the United States government, or any federal entity;
- Professional services, such as legal or accounting services, but only where necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities; and
- Logistics, and also businesses that store, transport, or deliver groceries, food, materials, goods or services directly to residences, retailers, government institutions, or essential businesses.

RETAIL SPACES:

Retail spaces that are identified as essential businesses may operate in a limited fashion. An essential business identified as a “retail space” – such as hardware stores, automobile and bike repair facilities, laundromats, dry cleaner services, grocery stores, convenience stores, food banks and large “big-box” retail spaces – may not exceed either 25 percent of the maximum occupancy as determined by

the relevant fire marshal or more than 75 customers in the business space at any given time, whichever is lesser. Essential retail spaces shall limit the sale of medications, durable medical equipment, baby formula, diapers, sanitary care products and hygiene products to three items per individual. These retail spaces must close each night at 10 p.m. and may reopen beginning at 4 a.m.

CLOSE-CONTACT BUSINESSES:

Close-contact businesses – such as barbershops, hair salons, gyms, group fitness classes, tattoo parlors, nail salons, spas, massage parlors, esthetician clinics, tanning salons, guided raft tours, guided balloon tours, bowling alleys, ice skating rinks, and personal training services – must reduce their in-person workforce at each business or business location by 100% through Nov. 30 for the duration of the public health order.

CLOSE-CONTACT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES:

Close-contact recreational facilities – such as indoor movie theaters, indoor museums with interactive displays or exhibits and other similar venues, miniature golf, arcades, amusement parks, aquariums, casinos, concert venues, professional sports venues, event venues, bars, dance clubs, performance venues, go-kart courses, automobile racetracks, adult entertainment venues and other places of recreation or entertainment – must remain closed.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP:

Houses of worship may hold religious services, indoors or outdoors, or provide services through audiovisual means, but may not be used as a venue for non-religious events. “Houses of worship” may not exceed either 25 percent of the maximum occupancy of any enclosed building or 75 individuals at any one time, whichever is smaller. Houses of worship should err on the side of remote or audiovisual services during the current public health emergency.

PLACES OF LODGING:

Places of lodging – hotels, motels, RV parks, and short-term vacation rentals – that have completed the N.M. Safe Certified training offered at nmsafecertified.org may operate up to 25 percent of maximum occupancy. All other “places of lodging” must close. Healthcare providers who are engaged in the provision of care to New Mexico residents or individuals utilizing “places of lodging” for extended stays, as temporary housing, or for purposes of quarantining shall not be counted for purposes of determining maximum occupancy.

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES:

Outdoor recreational facilities – such as outdoor golf courses, public swimming pools, outdoor tennis courts, ski basins, youth programs, youth livestock shows, u-pick produce operations and corn mazes, horse racing tracks, botanical gardens, outdoor zoos, and New Mexico state parks – will close for through Nov. 30 for the duration of the public health order.

INDOOR MALLS:

Indoor malls are closed. individual essential businesses with separate outdoor entrances may continue to operate to the extent otherwise permitted by the public health order.

MASS GATHERINGS:

Any gathering of more than five individuals is prohibited; this includes amateur youth sports. New Mexicans are instructed to remain at home except for only those trips that are essential for health, safety and welfare. A mass gathering does not include the presence of more than five individuals where those individuals regularly reside. A mass gathering also does not include individuals who are public officials or public employees in the course and scope of their employment.

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Archives

July 2021

June 2021

May 2021

April 2021

March 2021

February 2021

January 2021

December 2020

November 2020

October 2020

September 2020

August 2020

July 2020

June 2020

May 2020

April 2020

March 2020

February 2020

January 2020

December 2019

November 2019

October 2019

September 2019

August 2019

July 2019

June 2019

May 2019

April 2019

March 2019

February 2019

January 2019

December 2018

Categories

Early Childhood Education

Press Releases

Uncategorized

CONTACT

The Office of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham is located on the fourth floor of the New Mexico State Capitol in Room 400.

Address:
490 Old Santa Fe Trail Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Phone: (505) 476-2200
Toll free: (833) 520-0020

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