News Release

# Gov. Ricketts Announces Changes To Directed Health Measures, Encourages Nebraskans To Avoid The “Three C’s”

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***Governor's Media Release:***

**LINCOLN –** Today, Governor Pete Ricketts announced changes to the State's directed health measures (DHMs) that will take effect statewide on October 21, 2020. The Governor also launched a campaign to encourage Nebraskans to avoid the “Three C's" to help slow the spread of the virus: 1) crowded places, 2) close contact, and 3) confined spaces.

Dr. James Lawler, associate professor of infectious disease at UNMC, joined the Governor to emphasize the increasing spread of the virus across the state. The State's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Gary Anthone, announced the State of Nebraska is allocating up to $40 million of CARES Act funding to support hospital capacity.

Gina Uhing, Health Director for Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department, urged Nebraskans to continue social distancing and wearing masks to help mitigate the risk of infection. Additionally, Matthew Blomstedt, Commissioner of the Nebraska Department of Education, discussed his department's work to reinforce the importance of students practicing healthy behaviors in school, at home, and out in the community.

**Changes to the State's DHMs: Effective Statewide as of Wednesday, October 21st**

- **Elective Procedures/Surgeries**
  - In order to continue elective procedures, hospitals must maintain at least 10% of their staffed general and ICU beds as reserve capacity to treat COVID-19 patients.
  - Hospitals must continue to accept and treat COVID-19 patients and must not transfer COVID-19 patients to create capacity for elective procedures.
- **Bars & Restaurants**
  - Patrons will be required to be seated while on premise unless they are placing an order, using the restroom, or playing games.
  - 100% of rated occupancy continues.
  - Maximum of eight (8) individuals in a party (groups larger than eight (8) will need to split into multiple tables).
- **Gatherings**
  - INDOOR Gatherings will be limited to 50% of rated occupancy (not to exceed 10,000).
  - OUTDOOR Gatherings will remain at 100% of rated occupancy (not to exceed 10,000).
  - Gatherings include but are not limited to Indoor or Outdoor Arenas, Indoor or Outdoor Auctions, Stadiums, Tracks, Fairgrounds, Festivals, Zoos, Auditoriums, Large Event Conference Rooms, Meeting Halls,

Indoor Theaters, Libraries, Swimming Pools, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.

- Groups shall be no larger than eight (8) individuals.
- Plans for reopening or expanding to new capacity limits must be submitted to the local health departments and approved for all indoor and outdoor locations/venues that hold 500 or more individuals (1,000 or more in counties over 500,000 population) before reopening is permitted. The reopening plan must contain planned number of guests, how the location will meet social distancing guidelines, and sanitation guidelines.

- **Wedding & Funeral Reception Venues**
  - Maximum of eight (8) individuals in a party (groups larger than eight (8) will need to split into multiple tables).
  - 100% of rated occupancy continues.
  - Limited dances or other social events requiring guests to gather outside of their respective tables in guidance.

The DHM changes listed above are scheduled to remain in effect through November 30, 2020.

Video from today's press conference is available by clicking here.

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