Gov. Edwards Announces Louisiana's Roadmap to Resilience Will Start Phase 2 on Friday, June 5

June 01, 2020

Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards announced that following continued improvement in Louisiana's COVID-19 outlook and a significant increase in testing capacity and contact tracing, Louisiana is ready to move to Phase 2 of the White House's reopening strategy on June 5.

Gov. Edwards will sign the official order for Phase 2 of a Resilient Louisiana by Thursday evening, with guidance being issued to individual industries and businesses via the OpenSafely.la.gov (https://opensafely.la.gov/) website throughout the week. In Phase 2, churches, places of worship and many more businesses will be able to operate at 50 percent capacity with social distancing, masks for public-facing employees and increased sanitation. In addition, the state strongly recommends that businesses consider offering temperature checks before a person can enter and posting the symptoms of COVID-19 outside with a request that symptomatic individuals not enter.

The Governor was advised by public health experts that Louisiana has seen decreasing reports of COVID-like illness, decreasing new case counts especially as a percentage of tests administered, and decreasing hospitalizations in almost every area of the state. A few areas of concern still exist, but through contact tracing and frequent testing, the state is able to quickly track increases and work to prevent large outbreaks.

- Click here (/assets/docs/covid/Roadmap-to-Resilient-Louisiana-Phase-Two-FINAL.pdf) to view the data from the Office of Public Health used to make the re-opening decision.

Phase 2 in Louisiana will last at least 21 days. Because more businesses will be open to more patrons and because the CDC has clarified that the illness is most likely to spread through the air and not on surfaces, the order will strongly encourage individuals to wear masks whenever they are in public and will recommend that people who enter businesses that are not taking proper precautions consider the risk to their health and their family in doing so.

"The people of Louisiana have done an incredible job flattening the curve here, and I'm thankful for their compliance and hard work. Likewise, the state has matched their efforts by ramping up both testing and contact tracing. All of this has allowed us to get to a place where we can move into Phase 2 on Friday," Gov. Edwards said. "However, as more people are out and about and occupancy increases and even more businesses operate, members of the public should be cautious as they enter businesses and leave any place that is not taking precautions against the spread of COVID-19, especially if employees interacting with the public are not wearing masks and customers are not being encouraged to do so as well. We know most business owners want to go above and beyond to make their patrons feel safe. I hope the people of Louisiana will support these businesses that are doing the right thing to protect their customers and employees."

"In addition, people who are at high risk for becoming seriously ill from COVID-19, including those over 65 and those with underlying health conditions, should still Stay at Home unless they are completing essential tasks, such as doctor visits or going to purchase medications, food or other necessary items. Everyone should consider their own risk and the risk of those in their households as they plan their public outings. There are still thousands of active COVID-19 cases in Louisiana and public health experts have increased warnings about asymptomatic people being able to spread the illness unknowingly."

OVERVIEW OF BUSINESSES THAT CAN OPEN:

Businesses that will be able to open at 50 percent occupancy include:

- Restaurants, cafes and coffee shops
- Shopping malls (including food courts, following restaurant guidance)
- Gyms and fitness centers
- Barber and beauty shops and nail salons
- Movie theaters
- Racetracks (not open to spectators)
- Museums (including children's museums), zoos, aquariums (no tactile exhibits)

- Bars and breweries with LDH food permits
- Massage establishments, spas, and tattoo establishments (under strict guidance from LDH), esthetician services (under strict guidance from the Cosmetology Board)
- Pool halls, bowling alleys and skating rinks (children must be accompanied by an adult)
- Event Centers and wedding venues
- Outdoor playgrounds and play centers (children must be accompanied by an adult)

Casinos and video poker establishments may open at 50 percent occupancy, but limited to 75 percent of their gaming positions, with spacing to allow for social distancing and with enhanced sanitation. Plans must be submitted to the Gaming Control Board which will issue guidance to these facilities.

Bars and breweries that do not have LDH food permits will be able to open with strict social distancing requirements and patrons seated at 25 percent occupancy.

Arcades and trampoline parks may open under approved plans by the State Fire Marshal, with minors accompanied by parents.

Summer camps were allowed to open with restrictions in Phase One, and additional guidance will be issued. Sleep-away camps are not allowed in Phase Two.

The following businesses remain closed: carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, fairs, contact sports, children's indoor play centers, theme parks, concert and music halls, and other similar businesses. Live entertainment is not permitted inside any building or indoor function.

The Governor encourages businesses that can allow employees to work remotely to consider doing so, especially if an employee is at high risk for becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 or shares a household with a high risk person.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Business and faith leaders can visit OpenSafely.la.gov (https://opensafely.la.gov/) to receive guidance and updates from the State Fire Marshal's Office and the Louisiana Department of Health. Businesses that require approval of reopening plans will be notified by the State Fire Marshal's Office or the Louisiana Department of Health.
- For a guide listing businesses that can be open at any given time, visit gov.louisiana.gov/page/can-this-business-open. (/page/can-this-business-open)
- Members of the public can continue to get information from the Governor's office by visiting Coronavirus.la.gov (https://coronavirus.la.gov/) and by texting LACOVID to 67283.
- Members of the public can continue to get information from the Department of Health by visiting ldh.la.gov/coronavirus (http://ldh.la.gov/Coronavirus/).
- People with general questions about COVID-19 in Louisiana can call 211.

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