



2019 Novel Coronavirus [COVID-19]

phd3.idaho.gov/covid19

Public Health Advisory for Southwest District Health's Jurisdiction: Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Washington Counties *Issued November 20, 2020*

Background

COVID-19, the disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, is a serious, and sometimes deadly illness. Southwest District Health (SWDH) is seeing a significant increase in the number of cases being reported among residents of all six counties SWDH serves. Cases have quadrupled in the last month and our public health and healthcare systems are being impacted at this time. The extraordinary high levels of COVID-19 spread within our communities has made it no longer possible for SWDH to conduct disease investigations and contact tracing for every person infected.

While many people infected with SARS-CoV-2 recover, and most have no or mild symptoms, some will end up with severe illness and require hospital care. Because this is a new disease, everyone in our population is susceptible and that is why we are so concerned about a large proportion of our population becoming infected around the same time. When this occurs, the number of those who become severely ill is higher than we would normally see if this disease was not new. Their medical needs, in addition to those who are ill or injured due to other causes, put a burden on our public health and healthcare system that cannot be met. This means our family members, friends, and neighbors who work in public health and healthcare are unable to meet everyone's needs.

In order to support our public health and healthcare system so they can continue providing appropriate levels of care for COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients, and to protect the health of our citizens, SWDH is issuing the following strong recommendations to its entire jurisdiction which includes Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Washington Counties:

Individuals

Wear a face covering at all times around anyone who is not a member of your household when physical distancing of at least 6 feet cannot be maintained. The only exceptions are for children younger than age 2, people who have trouble breathing, people who cannot remove the mask without assistance, or people who are obtaining a service involving the nose, face, or head for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the services.

- Work from home, if possible.
- Minimize non-essential travel.
- Suspend visits to congregate living facilities.
- Avoid social gatherings, including among family members who do not live in your household.
 - Per Governor Little's [Modified Stage 2 Stay Healthy Order](#), the current public health order requires social gathering sizes to be limited to 10 or fewer people.
- Anyone age 65 and older, *or* who smokes, *or* with a health condition that puts them at risk for severe outcomes, avoid close contact with anyone other than immediate household members except for necessary services, such as accessing healthcare.
 - Per the [CDC](#), health conditions that put a person at a high risk include:
 - Chronic kidney disease,
 - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease),
 - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies, Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant, Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²), Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²), Pregnancy, Sickle cell disease and Type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Outings/Activities/Places of Business

- Businesses implement delivery/curb-side services.
- Places of worship implement hybrid (in-person and virtual) or virtual services.
- Discontinue youth and adult sports/activities in which physical distancing is not possible.
- Discontinue school extracurricular activities of all types in which physical distancing cannot be maintained AND where physical distancing can be maintained but the activity requires increased breathing, such as choir and band.
- Bars, restaurants, breweries/taprooms/wineries/distilleries – all patrons must remain seated while consuming food or drink or when otherwise remaining on the premises, except for when entering, exiting, or using the restroom; seating must be arranged so that tables are spaced at least six feet apart; and nightclubs may continue to operate as a bar but must comply with the requirements of the [Stage 2 Stay Healthy Order](#).

Duration of Advisory

This advisory will remain in effect until a county has met requirements to return to the orange health alert level. This is

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typically indicated by a two-week case rate of less than 3.0/10,000 daily new cases along with other factors. If one of the three large hospitals, St. Luke's, Saint Alphonsus, or West Valley Medical Center implement crisis standards of care as authorized by the State of Idaho, this advisory may include additional recommendations.