



# NEW LIMITS ON LARGE GATHERINGS, OTHER EMERGENCY STRATEGIES TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

**Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin County are issuing a Public Health order to minimize the health impacts of COVID-19.**

Not only has COVID-19 presented in our tri-county region, but there has also been community transmission between affected individuals. The role of counties is to protect the health, safety and welfare of their citizens.

**The Public Health order will become effective immediately and will be revisited on April 8, 2020.**

Under this order from Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin counties, Public Health prohibits large gatherings and events of more than 50 people (see information below regarding schools and restaurants). Gatherings of less than 50 attendees are prohibited unless measures are taken by event organizers to minimize risk.

This Order is adopted pursuant to the legal authority set forth in sections 25-1-506 and 25-1-508, Colorado Revised Statutes. Under these laws, the local Public Health Director(s) has the duty to investigate and control the causes of the epidemic or communicable diseases and conditions affecting public health and to establish, maintain, and enforce isolation and quarantine, and in pursuance thereof, and for this purpose only, to exercise physical control over the property and over the persons of the people within the jurisdiction of the agency as the agency may find necessary for the protection of the public health.

## **Large events and gatherings**

Under this Public Health order in Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin counties:

- Events with more than 50 attendees are prohibited.

- An event is a gathering for business, social, or recreational activities including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; assemblies; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities.
- An event does not include activities that are primarily individual or occur in small groups or in non-congregate settings, such as places of employment or primarily small-group sports like skiing, as long as social distancing occurs, particularly in areas where congregating in groups is unavoidable, such as lift lines.
- An event does not include restaurants, as long as restaurants adhere to the requirements for social distancing.

**Events with fewer than 50 attendees are recommended to take the following steps to mitigate risks.**

- Social distancing recommendations include limiting contact of people within 6 feet from each other.
- Older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions that are at increased risk of serious COVID-19 are encouraged not to attend (including employees).
- Potential screenings for COVID-19 symptoms each day and exclusion from the gathering if symptomatic.
- Proper hand hygiene and sanitation measures must be readily available to all attendees, employees, and vendors.
- Environmental cleaning guidelines from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are followed (e.g., clean and disinfect high touch surfaces daily or more frequently).

**Why now?**

These actions are the most available and effective tools to help slow the spread of the virus in our community – and, importantly, to reduce the number of potential deaths caused by COVID-19.

By slowing the spread, we have a chance to protect our family, friends, and neighbors who are at risk for severe illness. In particular, this includes all adults over age 60 and anyone with an underlying health condition.

These actions will limit the cascading impacts on critical services due to high absenteeism if large numbers of workers become ill. Such actions will help hospitals, first responders, and other healthcare services continue to provide services for those

who need them (along with utilities, human services, and businesses) in the coming weeks and months.

### **Who enforces?**

We will not be actively searching for violations, but if we receive reports of events contrary to the order, we will reach out to the organizer to educate and provide guidance.

### **Schools**

At this point, we are not recommending closing schools, but we are watching the outbreak closely and may determine that school closures are necessary. **Schools, parents and employers should take steps now to prepare for the possibility of prolonged mandatory closures.**

In particular, schools should plan for how to continue to provide non-educational support for their students such as providing food, developmental disability support, and school-based healthcare.

### **Collective action can save lives**

We all have a lot at stake for the safety of our community.

Giving up social events will not be easy, but this is our best chance to save lives. These actions will help to contain the spread of COVID-19 to protect everyone. This is also in support of the most vulnerable in our community.

The more united we can be in preventing the spread the greater the benefit for the whole community.

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[Pitkin County Standing Public Health Order Related to Events](#)

**MEDIA INFORMATION**

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