

SAFER AT HOME MINERAL COUNTY

MAY 7, 2020

I. VARIANCES REQUESTED

Mineral County is respectfully requesting a variance from some of the provisions of Governor Polis' Executive Order 2020 044 Safer at Home, and CDPHE Order 20-28. A variance, as outlined in CDPHE Order 20-28, III.V. and Appendix G., will allow Mineral County to implement its own reopening plans in a timeframe that best meets the needs of our communities for:



Restaurants (CDPHE Order II.A.1. and Appendix F. 4);

Places of Worship (Appendix F. 5)

II. VARIANCE RESTRICTIONS

Restaurants

1. Bars shall remain closed, including those that are part of restaurants, (restaurants will be able to sell alcohol with food/meal orders only)
2. Continuing take-out and delivery is highly encouraged
3. Screen employees every shift. Screen for fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath
Exclude any employees with symptoms or any with close contact with anyone exhibiting symptoms
4. Require the use of gloves for cleaning and sanitizing. Reusable impermeable gloves can be hand washed and sanitized between uses
5. Require masks or cloth face coverings for any employees with public facing jobs.
6. Appoint one employee per shift to monitor staff and public for adherence to suggested safety measures
7. Post high visibility signage advising patrons of recommended safety measures, including distancing requirements, the importance of handwashing, and sneeze/cough etiquette
8. Require patrons to wear face coverings when entering, exiting, or accessing restrooms.
9. Limit the number of patrons in the establishment. Limit the number of people in a single party to immediate family or cohesive units no larger than 8. Remove some tables to facilitate distancing
10. Eliminate self-serve stations
11. Follow strict cleaning guidelines, including sanitizing high touch areas more frequently than normal including restrooms. Thoroughly clean surfaces before sanitizing, and deep clean both front and back of house twice per week
12. Consider supplying hand sanitizer or wipes at each table for use by patrons.
13. Modify the menu to encourage distancing in kitchens
14. Discontinue reuse of condiments, offer single service instead

15. Use menu boards or single service menus.
16. Implement a touchless pay system, if possible.
17. Encourage the use of reservations

Places of worship

1. Continue online services as much as possible to accommodate high risk individuals
2. When offering on-site services:
 - a. Operate with strict physical distancing practices
 - b. Spread congregation out so there is at least six (6) feet distance between families throughout building
 - c. Implement or maintain one-way entry/exit and aisles
 - d. Implement touchless offering options as much as possible
 - e. Encourage employees and the public to wear cloth face coverings
 - f. Disallow people from attending if they are experience any symptoms
 - g. Perform frequent cleaning and disinfection of bathrooms and high-touch surfaces

III. MINERAL COUNTY CONDITIONS AND SUPPRESSION PLAN

Disease Transmission is Under Control

- The number of daily positive COVID-19 cases has remained flat since the first positive case was reported to Mineral County on 03/28/2020; there are a total of two (2) positive cases as of 05/05/2020
- We currently have zero (0) active cases. The last case was without symptoms since 04/02/2020
- Hospitalizations among Mineral County residents have been minimal; there has been one (1) total hospitalization related to COVID-19 since 03/28/2020
- The online Symptom Tracker used by the Silver Thread Public Health District has had three (3) entries since 05/05/2020. One survey entry has been tested based on symptoms

There are Sufficient Health System and Public Health Capabilities

- The Silver Thread Public Health District has established a mass testing plan on 04/20/2020, and can test up to 50 residents with symptoms per test day. As of 04/30/2020 Mineral County has had one (1) confirmed positive, one (1) probable positive and ten (10) negative tests
- Rio Grande Hospital has zero ICU beds but does have access to three adult critical care ventilators, which are used in the emergency department. The San Luis Valley, through SLV Regional Medical Center in Alamosa and Conejos County Hospital in La Jara, has access to a total of 12 adult critical care ventilators, 6 ICU beds, and 7 negative pressure beds. Potential COVID patients are seen and initially treated in the Rio Grande Hospital Emergency room to include intubation

if needed. Once stabilized, these patients are transported by ambulance to San Luis Valley Health Intensive Care COVID unit. Rio Grande Hospital is not hospitalizing COVID patients until needing transitional care.

- Rio Grande County Hospital collects specimens for testing for all elective surgery patients and has been sending out testing for all healthcare staff, first responder staff and patients at risk with symptoms as well as all hospitalized patients. In the first month 88 tests per month were performed at the local hospital with the ability to increase to 120 tests once surgery facilities are fully operational. None of the three hospitals are able to perform antigen or antibody testing due to reagents and/or equipment not being available to acquire or purchase presently. All testing must be sent outside of the Valley to other reference labs, but turnaround time for test results has been reduced to 48 hours.
- Silver Thread Public Health District has a *Pandemic Plan 2019, Community Disease Containment Plan 2017, and a Point of Dispensing Plan 2020*. SNS supplies received in March/April are the only Personal Protection Equipment available that is not expired. Silver Thread Public Health has available PPE, however the majority expired in 2007
- The first identified case is considered a community acquired with no known source. Second case is a probable positive and identified case contact to the first case
- Silver Thread Public Health is now able to conduct testing on site at our single local Public Health facility. Tests are conducted with our one PHN who then transports the specimen to the Rio Grande Hospital lab where the state lab courier transports the specimen to the state lab
- Silver Thread Public Health is the first point of contact for receiving information on test results and is able to initiate contact tracing immediately upon verification of positive results. With limited staffing, we have set our threshold at 2 communicable disease investigations that would require recruiting assistance from external partners
- Silver Thread Public Health is able to provide twice daily monitoring on all symptomatic individuals as well as those awaiting test results and those confirmed positives during their isolation periods
- Silver Thread Public Health has standing Isolation and Quarantine Orders filed with Mineral County and can issue documents at any time to assist with containment measures
- Silver Thread Public Health relies on San Luis Valley regional epidemiology team to assist with communicable disease monitoring and control

Outbreak Risks in High-Vulnerability Settings are Minimized

- Mineral County does not have any confined senior facilities. The senior population live in private homes
- Mineral County sponsors a Senior Lunch Program. Currently, there are no congregate meal services. All meals are delivered with social distancing and

mask/glove protocols in place. The volunteers make minimal physical contact with the recipients that have requested meals Monday-Friday to confirm well-being

- The Silver Thread Public Health District has procedures in place for monitoring our Access and Functional Needs (AFN) population. Homemaker clients are checked on once weekly through phone calls; AmeriCorp members make contact with school clients; and AFN list is used to assess and check in on clients as needed; Food bank clients are receiving weekly boxes/vouchers with strict social distance protocols in place

Workplace Preventive Measures Established

- State guidelines have been distributed and followed as workplaces are reopening under state orders.

Risk of Imported Cases Managed

- Non-essential travel is being discouraged.
- Notice has been made to appropriate property owners prohibiting short-term vacation rentals for less than 30 days for non-essential workers (private homes rented for less than thirty days, often through online applications like VRBO and AirBNB).
- Mineral County proposes the following for hotels, guest ranches, and B & B's.
 - Keep a copy of the driver's license, or other sufficient identification of the head of household for each group checking in, for 60 days for the purposes of epidemiological tracking by the health department, if needed. Logs will be made available to the Silver Thread Public Health District when necessary for case investigation.
 - Increase sanitation of common areas pursuant to recommendations of the health department [Per CDC Recommendations](#)
 - Face coverings are required to be worn by employees at all times during their shift, while interacting with the public and provide cleaning services
 - Strongly recommend use of face coverings by guests at all times in indoor common areas per Executive Order D 2020 044.
 - Enforce 6-foot social distancing guidelines in all common areas. All public and private gatherings are limited to no more than ten (10) individuals.
 - Keep all convention rooms, meeting rooms and swimming pools/hot tubs closed
 - Maintain a cleaning log with date and location available for inspection
 - Post and maintain signage to remind groups to stand at least 6 feet apart and avoid congregating in common areas
 - Food service shall follow guidance offered in this document
 - Fitness Centers shall remain closed
 - Encourage digital check-in and checkout

- Consider installing a plexiglass partition in areas coming into close contact with guests, i.e. registration
 - If an individual has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or has developed symptoms of COVID-19, including early or mild symptoms (such as cough and shortness of breath), they should be in isolation (staying away from others) until they have had no fever for at least seventy-two (72) hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers), other symptoms have improved (such as cough or shortness of breath) and at least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - Both the guests and lodging owner need to be made aware of this possibility which could include extending stay if the test comes back positive.
 - Consider designating one staff member with proper training and protective equipment to attend to sick guests
 - Decrease housekeeping services during guest stays to prevent transmission between rooms, encourage guests to bring their own linens when and where appropriate.
 - At such accommodations when linens are provided, cleaning a guest room entails providing a complete change of towels, linens, bedding, and guest consumable items and completely disinfecting all hard surfaces and high-touch areas with an EPA-registered chemical disinfectant
 - Launder all exposed linens and cleaning supplies separately
 - Provide guests with their own sanitation solutions or wipes
 - When possible, rooms should have a 24 hour rest period prior to cleaning and new check-in, 48 hours would be ideal. As is possible consider spacing in occupancy by alternating rooms and closely spaced cabins.
 - For lodging with shared shower facilities, allow users at half capacity to help maintain distancing, or allow family units. Sanitize high touch areas once every 8 hours and more frequently when needed.
 - For shared toilet facilities, encourage normal hygienic protocols and sanitize high touch areas once every 8 hours and more frequently when needed.
 - Employees cannot be at work if symptomatic or feeling ill. Employees will conduct symptom checks with temperature at the beginning and end of shift. Logs will be kept and made available to the Silver Thread Public Health District when necessary for case investigation.
 - Conduct basic health screening of all members of each party upon checking in, including self-assessment of symptoms identified as COVID-19 and conducting a visual check
- Mineral County is in contact with the United States Forest Service District Office and Colorado Parks and Wildlife manager regarding recreation taking place on public lands.

- Rio Grande National Forest and Colorado Parks and Wildlife have closed all developed facilities, including campgrounds and visitor centers. The Forest Service also has a fire ban in place on all National Forest Lands, thus discouraging dispersed camping.
- Although outdoor recreation is not discouraged, appropriate social distancing practices are being advertised and encouraged.

Communities are Fully Engaged

- Creede Early Learning Center: has implemented all required and recommended practices from Colorado Department of Education and CDPHE. New COVID-19 procedures of operation have been reviewed by STPHD nurse child care health consultant.
- Creede Schools practices: School campus learning is currently closed and the school district is implementing on-line learning. Graduation ceremony has received approval to perform services at a drive-in theater located in Rio Grande County. The school lunch program is offering a meal 4 times per week Monday-Thursday to all children of Mineral County and to students in South Fork. Lunch is pick-up only with strict contact precautions. Lunch must be ordered by online Google form by the Sunday prior to the Monday meal. The school is receiving communication from CDE in preparation for school year 20/21
- City of Creede: Administrative offices remain closed until such time as the State of Colorado determines that it is safe to reopen.
 - Administrative staff continue to operate from Town Hall with proper social distancing measures in place and face coverings required if interacting with the public
 - Public works staff continue to operate in the field and are adhering to proper social distancing measures
 - Board of Trustee meetings will be physically closed to the public, the public will be able to attend public meetings remotely through a virtual meeting application
 - City park remain open, picnic tables and other features that promote gathering have been removed
 - Public restrooms remain open and are disinfected once per daily, after May 31, they will be disinfected twice per day
 - The City has passed an ordinance allowing retail stores and restaurant to operate within public ROW so that social distancing measures can be maintained while allowing the local economy to operate during the tourist season
- Mineral County: Courthouse will reopen on May 7, 2020 with appropriate social distancing practices in place and sanitation stations available.
 - Remote operations, including a drop off box, are still the preferred manner of operation
 - Only one entrance will be available

- Sanitation is available at the one entrance
- Masks will be required for all employees having close contact with the public and recommended for customers
- Plexiglass sneeze guards have been installed at public counters
- Bathrooms are closed to the public
- Meeting rooms are closed to the public, public meetings will be held virtually
- Mineral County Courts: Will reopen on May 8, 2020
 - Remote hearings are still considered the appropriate method; however, the judge and clerk will be in the courtroom for appearances that can't be done remotely
 - Social distancing practices are in place both in the courtroom and in the waiting area. No more than 3 people (not counting judge and clerk) can be in the courtroom at one time and no more than 4 can be in the waiting area, All the rest will be asked to remain outside of the building until it is appropriate to enter
 - Bathrooms will be cleaned periodically during the day on court days (two Fridays a month)

IV. PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF MINERAL COUNTY

- ❖ **PEOPLE WITH SYMPTOMS SHOULD STAY HOME AND SHOULD NOT GO TO WORK OR INTO PUBLIC PLACES**
- ❖ **Adults 65 years and older and high-risk populations should abide by the stay-at-home recommendations in the state Safer-At-Home order**
- ❖ Maintain physical distancing (at least 6 feet)
- ❖ Use cloth face coverings for interactions where physical distance is not possible or when entering public places
- ❖ Wash hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

V. DETERMINING SUCCESS DURING ALL PHASES OF REOPENING

The determination on whether the social distancing policies are working will be based on:

- 1. Keeping the confirmed active positive tests in Mineral County to no more than 2 active;**
- 2. Staying below the threshold of no more than 10 symptomatic being monitored by the Silver Thread Public Health District;**
- 3. With no more than 2 communicable disease investigations occurring at the same time that require outside agency assistance;**
- 4. The San Luis Valley has developed a Suppression Plan, the draft of which includes:**

- **In addition to case counts as measured in conjunction with CDPHE, the SLV Public Health Partnership and the SLV Healthcare Coalition are partnering to monitor the following measures pertinent to this plan under the umbrella of a regional Department Operations Center (recently scaled down from a regional Emergency Coordination Center). This information is updated daily Monday through Friday:**
- **Nurse call lines**
 - **Daily call volumes**
 - **Number of symptomatic individuals who are medically high risk and have been told to isolate at home within the past 7 days.**
 - **Number of individuals told to quarantine in the past 14 days**
- **Number of current confirmed and probable COVID-19 patients currently hospitalized in a local hospital**
- **ICU bed availability**

If respective numbers for any of these measures exceeds the stated limit, actions will be taken to improve social distance practices in Mineral County. It may be necessary to reissue local Stay-at-Home orders.

VI. GUIDELINES IN PLACE FOR ALL SECTORS:

- ❖ Perform frequent environmental cleaning disinfection (concentrate on high touch surfaces like tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.)
 - [Per CDC Recommendations](#)
- ❖ Employees and contracted workers whose duties include close contact with members of the public are required to wear a non-medical cloth face covering over the nose and mouth. Employees without face coverings shall not perform tasks that require engagement with the public or with other coworkers.
- ❖ Maintain at least six feet distance between both employers and employees and customers.
- ❖ Encourage frequent breaks to allow employees to wash or sanitize their hands.
- ❖ Conduct daily temperature checks and monitor symptoms in employees, logging all results.
- ❖ Implement or maintain return to work policies
 - Employees who have had potential exposure (means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic) he/she should self-isolate at least 10 days from time of exposure before returning to work.

- Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 should not return to work until at least 72 hours of being symptom free (without the aid of medication) and at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS BY SECTOR

Public gatherings

- ❖ Allow public gatherings of no more than 10 people **while** maintaining at least six (6) feet distance from each other
- ❖ No festivals or other large gatherings until at least June 13, 2020. Conditions will be evaluated on or before June 1, 2020 to determine if it is appropriate for festivals and other types of large gatherings to resume
- ❖ Large venues shall remain **closed** (theatre, gymnasium, fraternal halls, community center)

Offices

- ❖ Encourage telework, wherever possible
- ❖ Maintain at least six (6) feet distance from customers and each other
- ❖ Resume at fifty percent (50%) in-office occupancy
- ❖ Desks, work stations, and other work areas should be separated by at least six (6) feet
- ❖ Implement or maintain physical barriers for high-contact settings, i.e., reception areas
- ❖ Implement physical distance protocols in common areas (separate tables and chairs by at least six (6) feet)
- ❖ Place marking on the floor to maintain at least six feet distance in customer lines
- ❖ Discourage non-essential travel
- ❖ Implement or maintain flexible work schedules
- ❖ Consider accommodations for high-risk individuals or populations
- ❖ Employees and contracted workers whose duties include close contact with each other or members of the public are required to wear a non-medical cloth face covering over the nose and mouth. Employees without face coverings shall not perform tasks that require engagement with the public or with other coworkers.

Retail and personal services

- ❖ Critical businesses that were open under the Stay-At-Home order and continue to stay open under the Safer-At-Home order will maintain the same precautions and physical distance practices mandated in the State orders.
- ❖ As much as possible continue curbside delivery while phasing into public opening
- ❖ Personal services (salons, dog grooming, massage therapy, etc.) and non-critical businesses can open under the State Safer-At-Home guidelines

Recreation (all state and federal campgrounds are closed still)

- ❖ Maintain physical distancing in outdoor settings (6 ft while hiking, 15 ft while running or biking)
- ❖ Limit public gatherings to no more than 10 people
- ❖ Camping should be limited to one family per campsite
- ❖ No group camping allowed
- ❖ Playground equipment shall remain closed
- ❖ Perform frequent cleaning and disinfection of bathrooms and high-touch surfaces

Real Estate

- ❖ In-person home showing can resume per State Safer-At-Home guidelines
- ❖ Open houses are **prohibited** at this time