

Montezuma County COVID-19 Suppression and Sustainable Re-Opening Plan

Healthy Community - Healthy Economy



109 West Main, Room 260
Cortez, Colorado 81321



Montezuma County Plan for COVID-19 Suppression and Sustainable Reopening – Phased Step Plan

Purpose

To develop a sustainable plan for reopening local businesses in an incremental fashion to prevent rapid spread of COVID-19, prevent a resurgence of disease in the community and allow our community to begin social and economic recovery.

Operational Plan

- County website will be available for public and State monitoring
- Provide Rapid COVID-19 disease testing 7 days/week for symptomatic persons
- Monitor to ensure that newly reported cases of COVID-19 continue to decrease or flatten out at a level that does not exceed capacity to investigate
- All newly reported cases of COVID-19 will be notified and contact tracing initiated within 24 hours of receipt
- All cases will be adequately isolated in compliance with current CDC guidelines with the objective of stopping transmission:
 - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) ; **and**
 - At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- Maintain capacity of the health and medical system to meet the community's medical needs
- **Southwest Health System Triage Process**
 - SHS has determined the maximum operating capacity (MOC) is as follows:

ICU Beds	4
Med Surge Beds	16
Convalescent Beds	33
Negative Pressure Rooms	7 (included in 53)
Ventilators	5

When SHS approaches its MOC, the Crisis Triage System and Incident Command will be activated. Activation may be implemented earlier based on availability of clinical staff to support the capacity.

- Monitor outpatient and inpatient visits looking for any indication of increased community illness
- Maintain a PPE stock to respond to a community-wide outbreak spanning over an 8 week period
- Protect residents that may be at greatest risk for severity of the disease
 - Vulnerable Individuals means:
 - Individuals who are 65 years and older
 - Individuals with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - Individuals who have serious heart conditions
 - Individuals who are immunocompromised
 - Pregnant women
 - Individuals determined to be high risk by a licensed healthcare provider
 - This will involve continued restrictions on visitation at extended care facilities, continued recommendation that those with underlying health conditions and older adults continue to observe stay-at-home behavior, that critical businesses' employees



wear masks and recommend mask wearing for all; and the capability for adequate testing and contact tracing of any positives to allow risk assessment for these groups.

- All businesses will have a physical distancing and sanitation protocol in place prior to re-opening
- Behavioral health needs of our community will continue to be addressed
- Partner with CDPHE and regional public health departments as we strive to serve as a model to be shared with other jurisdictions

Background

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus. The virus is a living thing. Its main purpose is to reproduce itself and therefore maintain its presence in the world. It does this primarily by infecting human beings. When it first appeared, very few, if any, humans were immune. The virus enters the body primarily through the nose, mouth or surface of the eyes (it can drain through tear ducts into the nose). Once in a person's body, it enters the cells of multiple organs and reproduces in those cells. For some infected persons, the illness is mild and goes away within a couple of weeks. For others, it can be so bad that the person may die. Once the virus has reproduced in a person's body, it tries to move on to the next person. That happens when people come into close contact and share, often without knowing it, the droplets that come out of our noses and mouths when we cough, sneeze, laugh, sing or even just with talking. The wearing of masks and staying 6 feet or more away from another person makes it much harder for the virus in those droplets to reach another person.

We know that the coronavirus is present in Montezuma County and surrounding areas. It will be here for months to come, probably until there is an effective vaccine to prevent it. There are ways to confront, contain and ultimately conquer this virus. Our main tool for that involves every person taking on the responsibility to make it happen.

We know that we cannot all stay at home and shelter in place forever. Our natural tendency is to be social, and we have a real need to be productive and earn a living. We need to balance this need for greater freedoms with the needs of the physical health of our community. It is only through the determined cooperation of every individual that a plan such as is outlined here will allow success.

This plan is based upon [Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening during COVID-19](#) – published by Johns Hopkins, Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Center for Health Security. Described below is a phased, low risk lifting of restrictions that may also have a high benefit to the community economically and socially. This phased approach is in alignment with the approach used by other local public health agencies in Colorado.

Colorado Executive Order D2020-44 and the [Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening during COVID-19](#) outlines the following four criteria to be met prior to lifting restrictions:

1. *"The County has low case counts and/or can document fourteen (14) consecutive days of decline in COVID-19 cases reported" and "The number of new cases has declined for at least 14 days."*
 - a. The occurrence of new cases in our county has been relatively low and is likely to remain low, thanks to the measures related to physical distancing and stay at home. In addition, the excellent contact tracing done by the staff at Montezuma County Health Department has quickly identified and quarantined infected individuals. The County



- recognizes that cases can increase and has determined that a doubling of cases within any fourteen (14) day period will be a trigger point for reversal of accelerated opening.
- b. We have seen an increase in behavioral health needs. Our community is experiencing a great deal of fear, anxiety and depression. Montezuma County is an Enterprise Zone, and there is a very real fear related to job loss and isolation
2. *“Rapid diagnostic testing capacity is sufficient to test, at minimum, all people with COVID-19 symptoms, as well as close contacts and those in essential roles.”*
 - a. There are three applicable ways to test for active COVID19
 - b. Diagnostic tests check samples from the respiratory system (such as swabs of the inside of the nose) to tell if a person currently has an infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
 - c. Diagnostic testing in Montezuma County is currently available through Southwest Memorial Hospital and at Cedar Diagnostics, a private laboratory. The majority of these tests are sent out of the area to a reference laboratory for analysis. Quest and CDPHE provide results ranging from 24-72 hours from the time the test is sent out
 - d. The laboratory at Southwest Memorial Hospital has on-site testing which gives a test result within an hour. Abbott on site testing can be performed however, there are only 28 tests available to SHS at this time.
 - i. Montezuma County Public Health Department has ordered an additional 150 tests from CDPHE.
 - e. Southwest Health System is ready and anxious to begin rapid testing as soon as they receive the BD MAX analyzer and sufficient test kits to use in that machine. Results from this would be available in 2-3 hours. Southwest Health placed a purchase order for the analyzer and test kits several weeks ago. Funds have been raised locally to pay for the analyzer. The device is in short supply and high demand. The manufacturer, Becton, Dickinson, and Company, has promised that we are “high on the priority list” to receive it.
 3. *“The healthcare system is able to safely care for all patients, including having appropriate personal protective equipment for healthcare workers.”*
 - a. Southwest Health System and other healthcare providers and agencies in our county have put a great deal of effort into preparation to meet the challenge of many ill persons. Please see page 1 of this document for SHS MOC information.
 - b. SHS has begun accepting elective surgeries and other procedures.
 - c. Trigger points have been set and agreed upon by all parties to prevent SHS from becoming overwhelmed. The trigger point agreed upon by the Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners, Montezuma County Health Department and Southwest Health Systems is any doubling of cases over a fourteen (14) day period.
 4. *“There is sufficient public health capacity to conduct contact tracing for all new cases and their close contacts.”*
 - a. The Montezuma County Health Department has done an exceptional job at contact tracing for the cases so far identified here. An increase in cases will require more resources for that, and a plan is in place to allow increased capacity as needed.
 - b. Logically, as more people are tested, there will likely be more cases which test positive. The County also acknowledges as exposure increases cases will likely increase also.



- c. At a special meeting of the Montezuma County Board of Public Health on April 29, 2020, the commissioners agreed that all staffing needs for the public health department to conduct contact tracing and isolation in a timely will be met.

Phase 1 – Lifting restrictions that have low risk for community spread of COVID-19 and have medium to high benefit for the residents of Montezuma County

- Limitations on Public Private Gatherings/Congregations
 - Allow for conditional opening of non-critical, non-essential, non-governmental businesses in Montezuma County
 - Continue to implement physical distancing protocols prior to re-opening
 - Clear expectations of employees and customers, including:
 - Protecting employee health
 - Preventing gatherings greater than 40% maximum building occupancy
 - Ensuring effective distancing of six (6) feet
 - Implement or maintain physical barriers for high-contact settings (e.g. cashiers)
 - Mandatory use of face cloth coverings for employees whose duties include close contact with members of the public
 - Strongly encourage public to wear masks in businesses where it is possible
 - Increasing sanitization
 - Preventing unnecessary contact
 - Reducing exposures during transportation
 - Implement no-touch payment where possible
 - Continue to limit non-essential travel
 - Include mandatory symptom screening for employees and, where possible and as supplies become attainable, employees should be checked with a temporal thermometer. Prior to supplies being available employees will be questioned regarding fever and other symptoms.
 - Restaurants to allow dine-in guests totaling no more than 40% of the capacity of the allowed building occupancy if required physical distancing requirements are met with curbside pick-up and delivery still available
 - Restaurants already comply with current health code standards which include proper use of chemical solutions to properly sanitize all surfaces
 - Restaurant must provide for physical distancing with a minimum of six (6) feet between tables
 - Have all staff wear face masks
 - Ask patrons to wear masks before and after meal
 - If restaurants are unable to keep full staffing, they will be unable to have their PPP loans (if they got them forgiven). It is a standard they have to meet.



- Personal Services (salons, tattoo parlors, massage therapy)
 - Personal service organizations already comply with State law with regard to sanitizing all tools and surfaces.
 - Ask patrons to wear masks during services, or before and after facial services
 - Staff wears face masks and gloves, and employers must provide the proper training for usage, donning and doffing
 - Allow one customer per technician inside building, no lobby or waiting room access
- Gyms
 - Allow guests totaling no more than 40% of the capacity of the allowed building occupancy
 - Limited to cardio and strength training with every other cardio machine turned off to maintain strict adherence to social distancing policies
 - Staff will ensure guests wipe down equipment after use
 - Hand washing between equipment
 - Online scheduling that limits access to reserved times, if possible
 - Signage and floor markers
 - Employee dedicated to cleaning and sanitizing equipment between uses at all times the gym is open
 - Should space equipment greater than six feet apart, recognizing that people engaged in vigorous activity breathe harder and droplets travel farther
- All businesses will work these into their plans to reopen regardless of opening to the public or not
 - Businesses will be educated by the Montezuma County Public Health Department and local chambers of commerce
 - Businesses will understand that:
 - Community wide goals of not seeing an exponential growth of positive COVID-19 cases will be the trigger for moving towards further easing or tightening of restrictions.
 - The increase in cases will be reviewed by the Board of Health, Health Department and Southwest Health Systems.
 - This will help the businesses understand how it behooves them to comply.
- Businesses should post physically on site the expectations for their employees and patrons/clients
- Businesses should post these to their websites if they have them
- These signs will give businesses the ability to self-enforce if violations are committed or complaints are received



- For businesses not open to the public, staff limitation should consider appropriate physical distancing and sanitizing
- Telework is encouraged where possible and efficient
- Businesses that are deemed critical or governmental as outlined in the State Public Health Order 20-28 will continue to operate as indicated
- Businesses and residents should understand the expectations for physical distancing:
 - Crowd Control – what number of people per square foot of store/office space will allow a business appropriate distancing of six (6) feet? If this cannot be accomplished, can barriers be installed?
 - Face coverings guidance will also be provided
 - Alternative models for delivery of goods are still encouraged, e.g. online purchasing with home-delivery or curbside pick-up.
 - Examples and best-practices of how businesses have already completed the social distancing protocol will be made available to assist others developing their protocol.

Recreation

- Maintain physical distancing: six (6) feet for walkers and hikers, fifteen (15) feet for runners and thirty (30) feet for bikers
- Allow the opening of outdoor recreation facilities where adequate controls can be implemented to ensure physical distancing and prevent close gatherings that violate the physical distancing requirements.
- Entities managing such lands will have the authority to implement measures necessary to ensure physical distancing including reducing crowding and other measures that further reduce risk of transmission of COVID-19. This may include, but is not limited to, restricting numbers of entrants, closing areas as appropriate to vehicular access, or to public access as appropriate.
- Consider restrictions to maintain restrooms.

Ongoing Prohibitions

- Businesses and Recreation Facilities will only be prohibited from beginning phased re-opening based upon epidemiological evidence of high risk of transmission such as, populations that may be at higher risk for severe disease, or are unable to limit gathering interactions or congregating sizes.
 - Sites that may be unable to control interactions between people may be dance floors, sports that require close proximity of participants or spectators (basketball, baseball, soccer, etc.) and other places and activities where close contact with other people is essential to the nature of the activity.
 - All parties agreed at the public meeting on April 29, 2020 that during Phase 1, events that can enforce distancing of participants such as racing, will only operate without spectators.
 - Services to high risk populations may be facilities such as senior centers

Health Care



Health care facilities are best informed to make their own decisions with trigger points of how and when to allow visitors and elective procedures.

Education

- Pre-K through 12 continue to follow State guidelines set out by Colorado Dept. of Higher Education
- Child care facilities may open but must utilize strict sanitation guidelines
- Summer camps may not reopen

Other Considerations

- Large venues (movie theaters, bowling alleys, sporting venues, places of worship) may be able to operate IF strict physical distancing practices are possible and enforced and enhanced sanitizing procedures are implemented.



Phase 2 If not otherwise indicated, all Phase 1 requirements remain in effect.

The trigger for moving to phase 2 will be a re-evaluation of case numbers by the Montezuma County Board of Health, the County Public Health Department and Southwest Health Systems at least twenty-one (21) days from the implementation of Phase I. This was agreed to by all parties at a public meeting on April 29, 2020. All parties agreed that if increasing numbers of positive COVID-19 cases double in any fourteen (14) day period, it will trigger tighter restrictions to match State restrictions at that time.

➤ **Public Gatherings**

- Allow for gatherings no greater than 60% maximum building occupancy
- Continue to adhere to social distancing policies
- Continue to strongly encourage the use of cloth face coverings for employees whose duties include close contact with members of the public
- Continue to strongly encourage the public to wear face coverings in businesses

➤ **Businesses**

- Non-essential travel may resume
- Follow guidance for number of personnel in buildings base upon square footage(based on fire code as denominator)
- Maintain six (6) foot physical distance in common areas where employees are likely to congregate
- Continue to consider accommodations for vulnerable populations
 - Restaurants to allow dine-in guests totaling no more than 60% of the capacity of the allowed building occupancy if required physical distancing requirements may be met with curbside pick-up and delivery still available
 - Restaurants already comply with current health code standards which include proper use of chemical solutions to properly sanitize all surfaces
 - Restaurant must provide for physical distancing with a minimum of six (6) feet between tables
 - Have wait staff wear face masks
 - Ask patrons to wear masks before and after meal
 - Personal Services (salons, tattoo parlors, massage therapy)
 - Personal service organizations already comply with State law with regard to sanitizing all tools and surfaces.
 - Ask patrons to wear masks during services, or before and after facial services
 - Staff wears face masks and gloves, and employers must provide the proper training for usage, donning and doffing
 - Gyms
 - Allow guests totaling no more than 60% of the capacity of the allowed building occupancy
 - Continue to maintain strict adherence to social distancing policies
 - Staff will ensure that guests wipe down equipment after use





- Hand washing between use of equipment
- Online scheduling that limits access to reserved times, if possible
- Signage and floor markers
- Employee dedicated to cleaning and sanitizing equipment between uses
- **Retail Settings**
 - Grocery stores maintain phase 1 operations but relax the face covering requirement if permitted at that time by CDPHE guidance
- **Education**
 - Pre-K through 12 continue to follow State guidelines set out by Colorado Dept. of Higher Education
 - Child care facilities may open but must utilize strict sanitation guidelines
 - Summer camps may reopen but must utilize strict sanitation guidelines
- **Ongoing Prohibitions**
 - Services to high-risk populations
 - Health Care Facilities continue to make their own decisions with trigger points of how and when to allow visitors and elective procedures.
 - Events that can appropriately distance participants but will have spectators: will submit a written plan to the Public Health Department to present to the Board of County Commissioners detailing how they will enforce symptom monitoring, distancing, hygiene and facial coverings of spectators.


Reversal and tightening of Restrictions

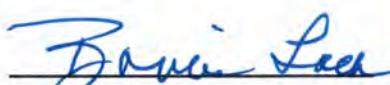
As agreed to by all parties at a public meeting on April 29, 2020 the trigger to re-implement tighter restrictions will be a doubling in the rate of positive COVID-19 test results in any fourteen day period.

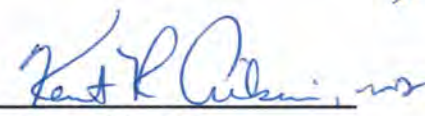
Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners

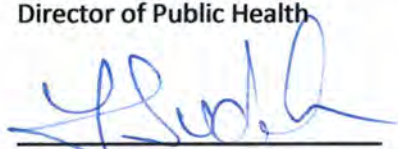

Larry Don Suckla
Chairman


Jim Candelaria


Keenan G. Ertel


Bobbi Lock, BSN
Director of Public Health


Dr. Kent Aikin, M.D.
Public Health Physician


Anthony Sudduth, CPA, FACHE, FHFMA
CEO Southwest Health System





Montezuma County Business Social Distancing Protocol

For each facility or work site

Business Name: _____

Facility Address: _____

Approx. gross square footage of space open to the public: _____

Businesses should implement all applicable measures listed below, and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is inapplicable to the business.

Signage

- Signs have been placed at each public entrance of the facility or work site to inform all employees and customers that they should: avoid entering the facility or location if they have a cough or fever; maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another; wear a mask or other face covering; sneeze and cough into a cloth or tissue or, if not available, into one's elbow; and not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact. *[Attached]*

- A copy of this Social Distancing Protocol has been placed at each public entrance to the work site.

Measures To Protect Employee Health (check all that apply to the facility or work site)

- Everyone who can carry out their work duties from home has been directed to do so.

- Discussions have taken place with employees about the fact that older adults and those with chronic medical conditions may be at higher risk for serious illness. Options have been explained to high risk employees, including ways to minimize face-to-face interactions, maintaining six feet of distance from other people, remote work if possible, and leave policies for employees who choose not to come to work.

- All employees have been told not to come to work if sick (including any of the following: headache, sore throat, fever, dry cough, recent inability to taste and smell, shortness of breath, ear aches, body aches, diarrhea, fatigue, vomiting, and abdominal pain).



- If able, symptom checks are being conducted before employees may enter the work site. [template attached]

- Copies of this Protocol have been distributed to all employees.

- Optional — Describe other measures:

Measures To Keep People At Least Six Feet Apart (check all that apply to the facility or work site)

- All employees have been instructed to maintain at least six feet of distance from customers and each other (employees may momentarily come closer when needed to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or when otherwise unavoidable).
- All desks, individual work stations, or work areas are separated by at least six feet.
- Tape or other markings have been placed at least six feet apart in customer line areas inside the store and on sidewalks to public entrances with signs directing customers to use the markings to maintain distance.
- Order areas are separated from delivery areas to prevent customers from gathering.
- Optional — Describe other measures:

Measures To Prevent Crowds From Gathering: (check all that apply to the facility or work site)

- The number of customers in the store at any one time is limited to _____ , which allows for customers and employees to easily maintain at least six-foot distance from one another at all practicable times.

- An employee is monitoring the door to ensure that the maximum number of customers in the facility set forth above is not exceeded.

- Optional—Describe other measures:



Measures To Increase Sanitization (check all that apply to the facility or work site)

- Hand sanitizer, soap and water, or effective disinfectant is available to the public and employees at or near the entrance of the facility or work site, at checkout counters, workstations, and anywhere else where people have direct interactions. Location(s) include:

- Disinfecting wipes or spray that is effective against COVID-19 are available near workstations and all high-contact surfaces (including payment portals, carts, baskets, pens, shared tools, heavy equipment, etc.).
Location(s) include:

- Employee(s) have been assigned to disinfect all high-contact surfaces frequently.

- Break rooms, bathrooms, and other common areas are being disinfected on the following schedule: _____

- Break Rooms _____
- Bathrooms _____
- Other _____

- Optional — Describe other measures:

p.2

Measures To Prevent Unnecessary Contact (check all that apply to the facility or work site)

- Contactless payment systems have been provided or, if not feasible, payment systems are sanitized regularly. Describe:

- Curb-side drop-off/pick-up of products is available.

- People are prevented from self-serving any items that are food-related (including bulk food, plates, cups, lids, etc.).

- Optional—Describe other measures (e.g. providing senior-only hours):



Measures To Reduce Exposures in Employee Transportation (check all that apply to the facility or work site)

- Hand sanitizer is used by each passenger when entering the vehicle.
- Passengers sit in locations to maximize the distance between one another and the driver.
- Passengers will wear a non-medical, cloth face-covering when in a vehicle.
- Windows will remain open and ventilation is increased.
- All high-contact surfaces of the vehicle are disinfected at the end of each day.

Any additional measures not included here should be listed on separate pages, which the business may attach to this document.

You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:

Name: _____ **Phone number:** _____



This business is complying with Colorado and Montezuma County Public Health Recommendations

Please observe the following rules:



Avoid this area if you have a cough or fever or are otherwise experiencing symptoms of COVID-19



Maintain a minimum six-foot distance between you and others



Clients or patrons are encouraged to wear a mask or bandana



Do not shake hands or engage in unnecessary physical contact with others

Thank you for respecting these rules to protect everyone's health.

Este negocio cumple con las recomendaciones de Salud Pública de Colorado y del condado de Montezuma

Por Favor, respeta las siguientes normas:



Evite esta área si tiene tos o fiebre o si experimenta síntomas del COVID-19



Mantenga una distancia mínima de seis pies entre usted y otras personas.



Se anima a los clientes a llevar una máscara o pañuelo



No dé la mano a otros ni participe en contacto físico innecesario con otras personas

Gracias por respetar estas reglas para proteger la salud de todos

