



Gunnison County Plan for Sustainable Social Distancing – The First Incremental Step to Reopening

May 8, 2020

Purpose:

To develop a local plan for sustaining social distancing associated with COVID-19 in an incremental fashion that slowly lifts restrictions, prevents a resurgence of disease in the community, and allows our community to begin the social and economic recovery.

Operational Plan:

- Real time operational dashboard is available for public and state monitoring at <https://datastudio.google.com/reporting/1a68TUB1wc66ASwx4A1iurAZNpBIIWglf/page/XgtLB?s=kzAZT5XqkJg>
- Maintain PCR testing 6 days a week.
- Newly reported cases of COVID-19 continue to decrease or flatten out at a level that does not exceed capacity to investigate.
- All cases will be isolated for a minimum of 7 days or when they have no fever w/o use of medication for 72 hrs with an objective of no outside or household transmission.
- Maintain capacity of the health and medical system to meet all of the community's medical needs.
- Maintain the real-time monitoring of all outpatient and inpatient visits looking for any indications of increased community illness.
- Maintain monitoring of online self-reporting symptoms sheet, call center reporting and swabbing/testing sites for any indications of increased community illness.
- Maintain a PPE stock to respond to a community wide outbreak spanning over 4-week period. Vendors/suppliers have been identified with reliable sources of additional PPE.
- Protect residents that may be at greatest risk for severe disease (adults 65 yrs of age and older, people with underlying health conditions).
- All businesses will have a business hygiene and social distancing protocol in place prior to re-opening.
- Behavioral health needs of our community will continue to be met, regardless of ability to pay for these services.

Background:

This plan is based on the *National Coronavirus Response, a Road Map to Reopening* by AEI in consultation with Johns Hopkins University. Further below we describe a first phase of lifting low risk restrictions that may also have a high benefit to the community. The first phase proposed is in alignment with a common approach with other local public health agencies that outlines 3 phases for incremental reopening.

That National Coronavirus Response, A Road Map to Reopening outlines the following four triggers should be met before lifting restrictions:

1. A sustained decrease in cases for at least 14 days.
2. Hospitals are safely able to treat patients without resorting to crisis standard of care.
3. Testing can be performed for all people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection.
4. Active monitoring can be accomplished for all COVID-19 cases and their contacts.

Gunnison County has met the triggers outlined above and we are confident we are ready to take a step from the suppression and response phase to a reopening phase. Below is further description of how Gunnison County is meeting these requirements:

- 1. We have sustained reduction in cases for at least 14 days.**
 - All data in Gunnison County indicates that we peaked with COVID-19 cases between March 15- and March 30.
 - This is demonstrated by self-reports of onset, onset dates from lab confirmed cases, test date for lab confirmed cases, outpatient and inpatient hospital data and positivity rate for tests performed.
 - Each of these indicators continues to demonstrate a steady drop in new cases being reported.
 - We are concerned and monitoring behavioral health needs of our communities. Our County is experiencing a great deal of fear, anxiety and depression regarding loss and isolation.
- 2. Our Gunnison County Hospital is safely able to treat all patients requiring hospitalization without resorting to crisis standards of care.**
 - The data for hospital and medical system capacity mirrors the disease surveillance data.
 - This is demonstrated by peak admission and ED visits between March 15 and March 30. Two COVID transfer since April 24.
 - Reports from Gunnison Valley Health reflect we are beyond the medical surge by about 6 weeks.
 - Gunnison Valley Health and other local Health Care Providers have reinstated wellness and preventative visits as of May 1.
 - Indications from hospitals in neighboring Counties of Montrose and Chaffee indicate a similar trend with current census being low.
- 3. Gunnison County can test all people with COVID – 19 symptoms**
 - Testing capacity in Gunnison County has increased and can be performed 6 days a week.
 - Results has been delayed during our peak but, are now being returned within 24-48 hrs the CDPHE lab.
 - Swabbing abilities have increased with an increase in supply of NP swabs from the State Lab. Gunnison County is now developing a plan for random community testing for epidemiologic purposes.
 - We have Abbott machines available, but our requests for additional cartridges have gone unfilled.
- 4. Gunnison County is able to conduct active monitoring of confirmed cases and their contacts**
 - With fewer cases being reported, the capacity to actively monitor each patient is the highest priority. This includes case investigations and contact tracing, as well as ensuring active monitoring, housing and other necessities for the duration of isolation and/or quarantine.
 - Issuance of orders will be automated to the degree possible to ensure patients receive orders on the date of report.

- Gunnison County is part of a State Pilot Program using Public Health Students as investigators, who will be working remotely and also doing CEDRS entry. Training for contact tracing has begun.
- There is a surplus of retired healthcare workers in the Gunnison County also willing and able to assist with contact tracings, should we experience another surge. A training program has already been developed, should this be necessary.
- Symptoms, risks, history, recommendations, screenings, and results have been automated through a secure web portal, such that investigations can be performed by public health and contact tracings begin immediately.

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

Limitations on Public Private Gatherings/Congregations

- Increase the size of permissible gatherings from 10 to 25.
- Gatherings greater than 25 would still be prohibited.

Campgrounds

- Allow the opening of all private and government campgrounds.
 - By opening campgrounds, it will reduce congestion at trailheads and points of entry to Public Lands within Gunnison County. It will also allow for those who live in recreational vehicles to return to where they spend the summer months. This will also reduce camping in areas where camping is not allowed or in parking lots in town.
- Adequate controls in place to ensure physical distancing and prevent gatherings greater than allowed by Public Health Orders.
- Sites are designed to give space between guests and staff for a more enjoyable experience.
- Campsites usually accommodate group numbers of 10 people or less.
- Campgrounds are in an open-air environment.
- Retail areas will adhere to those Orders.
- Many RVs are self-sufficient with bathrooms and kitchens in place.

Places of Worship

- Remove Places of Worship from the Public Health Orders and allow them to obtain exemptions that will outline clear expectations for employees and the public.

Restaurants/Bars/Taverns

- Limit the number of customers to 25% of fire code capacity.
- Signage on doors telling guests that are experiencing COVID like symptoms to not enter.
- Post signs at entrances encouraging (or requiring if you choose) the public to wear cloth face coverings in order to enter the business.
- Group parties should be limited to six.
- Groups shall consist of family members and/or those in similar close relationships.
- Place markings on the floor to maintain at least six feet distance in customer lines.

- In-room dining, and outdoor seating shall follow strict physical distancing (six feet).
- Maintain physical distancing (six feet) in waiting areas.
- Self – serving stations shall remain **closed**.
- There will be no public sharing of utensils and condiments will either be cleaned in-between patrons or individual packets will be utilized.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at tables.
- Buffets shall have an employee serving the food. No self-serving allowed.
- Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of all services and increased frequency on high touch items/areas.
- Monitor workforce by checking for COVID-19 related symptoms and fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Employees shall wear face coverings over the nose and mouth.
- Implement touchless payment methods when possible
- Stagger shifts if feasible to decrease employee numbers at the business.
- Modify menus to create different workflows to “engineer” physical distancing in kitchens.

Ongoing Prohibitions

- Businesses and Recreation Facilities NOT permitted to open in this phase will be based on epidemiological evidence of risk for transmission, populations that may be at higher risk for severe disease, and inability to meet the limitations on size of gatherings or congregations:
 - Inability to meet the limitations on size of gatherings/congregations – e.g. concert venues
 - Inability to control the interactions between people – e.g. playgrounds, sporting events.