



News Release

Unified Government Public Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 26, 2020

Wyandotte County Health Order Follows Ad Astra Phase 2

Local Health Order Remains in Effect; County Will Continue Following Kansas Phase 2 Guidance

Kansas Governor Laura Kelly announced that the Ad Astra Re-Opening plan has transitioned away from being a statewide requirement and into a statewide guidance document. Governor Kelly further announced that county health officers remain empowered to issue local orders adopting the Ad Astra Re-Opening plan if they choose.

The Health Order signed by the Unified Government's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Allen Greiner, on May 20, adopting Phase 2 of the Ad Astra Re-Opening plan, remains in effect in Wyandotte County.

"The Health Order we issued on May 20 remains in effect, and the Public Health Department strongly encourages everyone to continue the practices that have helped us slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community," said Dr. Erin Corriveau, Deputy Medical Officer. "Wyandotte County has a significant number of residents who are at high risk from a COVID-19 infection. The decisions we make every day to wear a mask, wash our hands, and practice social distancing help protect the most vulnerable members of our community and our friends, families, and neighbors."

Wyandotte County will continue to follow the State's Phase 2 guidance until at least June 8, 2020. The Phase 2 plan is available to view online at wycokck.org/COVID-19 under the "ReStart WyCo" tab or on the State website at covid.ks.gov.

"Wyandotte County will maintain a balanced approach to further relaxation of the health order, and continue to rely on high quality data as our guide," said Mayor David Alvey. "No matter what political battles rage at the state level, our fight has been and will continue to be against the novel Coronavirus. We will restrict, or relax, as much as is necessary to prevent overwhelming first responders and our health care system, while simultaneously working to re-open our community at the appropriate time."

Reducing Exposure Remains the Best Defense Against COVID-19

COVID-19 remains a threat in Wyandotte County, and residents, businesses, and visitors are reminded to be cautious. If businesses can continue to operate remotely, they are strongly encouraged to do so. The COVID-19 virus is still present in our community and minimizing exposure by working remotely continues to be a recommended strategy for limiting its spread.

Vulnerable populations, including people over 60 years old, individuals who have compromised immune systems, or who have underlying medical conditions should avoid close contact with others by practicing social distancing as much as is possible. The Public Health Department recommends wearing a mask or face-covering in public.

Under the Kansas Phase 2 plan, mass gatherings (where individuals are in one location and cannot maintain proper social distancing) of more than 15 people are prohibited. Other guidance of the Kansas Phase 2 plan includes:

- Individuals are encouraged to wear masks in public settings.
- When in public, people should maintain at least six feet of distance between themselves and others (not including people who reside together).
- Businesses can open if they can maintain at least six feet of distance between consumers.
- Restaurants or dining establishments can meet this requirement by using physical barriers to present the spread of virus between individual customers or groups of seated customers.
- Casinos (non-tribal) may re-open if they comply with uniform guidelines approved by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.
- Most activities and venues may re-open as long as they can maintain at least six feet of distance between individuals or groups and follow proper cleaning and public health practices.

Exceptions to the activities and venues re-opening are:

- Outdoor and indoor entertainment venues with a capacity of 2,000 or more people
- Fairs, festivals, carnivals, and parades
- Summer camps
- Public swimming pools
- Bars and nightclubs excluding already operating curbside and carryout services

Residents, businesses, and visitors with questions about this guidance should contact 3-1-1.

When Will We Move to the Next Phase?

Phase 2 will remain in effect until at least June 8. County health officials will continue to monitor key data on the status of COVID-19 to determine next steps in the community's re-opening process. Those metrics include:

- The number of hospitalizations and deaths in Wyandotte County and surrounding area hospitals over a 14-day period, and
- The percentage of positive tests over a 14-day period.

Why a Phased Approach to Re-Opening?

Wyandotte County's phased approach is designed to ensure two things:

1. That local hospitals are not overwhelmed by COVID-19 cases.
2. That vulnerable populations, including those over 60 years old, individuals who have compromised immune systems, or those who have underlying medical conditions are protected.

Protecting the health and wellness of everyone in the community, and especially our vulnerable populations, remains a top priority in Wyandotte County. The County has been hit especially hard by COVID-19, and our recovery process must include health protections for residents, businesses, and visitors. The recovery process will include a systematic and disciplined approach to re-opening based on what the data tells us about the spread of COVID-19 in Wyandotte County.

Residents with questions about the Phase 2 plan should contact 3-1-1 or visit the "ReStart WyCo" tab available at wycokck.org/COVID-19 . To learn more about the County's COVID-19 response, access important FAQs, and view additional information, visit wycokck.org/COVID-19.

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