



News Release

Unified Government Public Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wyandotte County, Kansas & Jackson County, Missouri Coordinate COVID-19 Response to Reduce Regional Spread of COVID-19

Leaders with the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, and Jackson County, Missouri, have coordinated to issue local health orders in response to a strong resurgence of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations in the region.

The Unified Government Public Health Department's (UGPHD)s new Local Health Order will lower capacity at businesses and restrict gatherings to ten or fewer people. This new Order will go into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, November 20, 2020, and will remain in effect until it is extended, rescinded, replaced, or amended.

"With increasing COVID-19 rates in our area, and local hospitals and public health experts warning of critical shortages in staffing and rooms as a result, we must undertake additional measures now to help slow the spread in our communities", said Mayor David Alvey. "These actions today, along with the continued usage of masks and social distancing, will hopefully allow us to avoid additional restrictions in the future. As we enter the holiday season, let us commit to one another to neither get nor give the virus."

"Let me be clear, we are currently experiencing uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in our communities. Due to the dramatically increasing rate of the disease in our community, our hospitals have warned that they are facing a breaking point and the care their patients desperately rely upon may soon have to be rationed, if not worse," said Frank White, Jr., Jackson County Executive. "Along with doctors from across the metro area, our public health professionals have urged us to implement dramatic, but targeted, changes to our public health orders in an attempt to 'flatten the curve.' These changes are not being made lightly, but instead were made because we have been convinced that they are necessary to protect the safety and welfare of our residents."

The Order is in response to a strong resurgence of recent COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations in Wyandotte County, Kansas and Jackson County, Missouri.

Unless otherwise noted in the Order, the following Public Gatherings are restricted:

- Entertainment venues including auditoriums; arenas; banquet halls; cinemas; conference centers; concert halls; performance venues; sporting venues; stadiums; and theaters;
- Recreational facilities and places of public amusement, including gyms, fitness, and recreational centers, amusement parks; arcades; bingo halls; bowling alleys; casinos; night clubs; skating rinks; adult entertainment clubs; water parks; and trampoline parks;
- parties, informal gatherings, lectures, meetings, parades, fairs, festivals, sporting events, and performances

Such Public Gatherings must limit the number of individuals (staff and customers) in the facility, building or room to 50 percent of the lowest occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy of the facility, building or room (whichever is lower) in which the gathering is occurring and is only permissible:

- If adequate social distancing of six feet or more can be maintained. If such social distancing cannot be maintained due to facility layout, the occupancy limit should be further reduced to allow for proper distancing.
- Masks or face coverings must be worn at all times
- Proper Personal Protective Equipment (such as masks and hand sanitizer) must be utilized.

Restaurants, taverns, and all other such venues serving food and/or drink indoors, including public, private, or membership-only venues, shall limit the number of occupants to no more than 50 percent of building occupancy and shall close no later than 10:00 p.m.:

- Indoor patrons must be seated and masked at all times except when actively eating or drinking;
- Indoor and outdoor parties are limited to eight (8) or fewer persons; and
- Parties shall be spaced with no less than six feet of distance between themselves and individuals from any other parties.

Other large public gatherings of people that are prohibited:

- Large public gatherings are those with more than ten (10) people in attendance or anticipated to attend, both indoor and outdoor, except for governmental and judicial functions, healthcare facilities, private business or retail operations, religious and faith-based activities, weddings, and funerals. A "gathering" does not include normal operations at spaces where persons may be in transit or coming and going individually or in groups of less than ten (10) persons.

For all gatherings of people, health officers strongly encourage everyone to follow guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), federal, state, and local public health officials and private medical providers.

Wyandotte County residents can learn more online at wycokck.org/COVID-19.

Jackson County residents can learn more online at jacksongov.org.

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