



STAGE 4

**STATE OF IDAHO
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE
STAY HEALTHY GUIDELINES**

May 11, 2021

BUSINESSES AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES MAY CONTINUE OPERATIONS AT PHYSICAL LOCATIONS IN THE STATE OF IDAHO.

ALL INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES, AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES SHOULD ADHERE TO THE PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND SANITATION REQUIREMENTS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 4.

COVID-19 VACCINES ARE ENCOURAGED FOR ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.

GATHERINGS, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, SHOULD ADHERE TO THE REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED IN SECTION 2.

FACE COVERINGS ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED PER GUIDANCE FROM THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC).

FACE COVERINGS ARE REQUIRED AT LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES.

THE GOVERNOR OF IDAHO AND DIRECTOR OF THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE FIND THAT:

The virus that causes Coronavirus 2019 Disease (“COVID-19”) has resulted in a global pandemic, is present in Idaho, and has infected over 188,000 Idahoans, resulting in more than 2,000 deaths to date. The virus is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to protect public health and safety and safeguard the ability of public and private healthcare providers to handle an influx of new patients.

These Stage 4 Guidelines are based on evidence of a decrease in the incident rate per 100,000 of cases of COVID-19 within the State of Idaho; as well as, the advice and input of state epidemiologists, public health experts, and guidelines provided by CDC. These guidelines are also based on the scientific evidence and best practices regarding the most effective approaches to slow the transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, and evidence that the age, condition, and health of a significant

portion of the population of the state places its citizens at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19.

Some individuals who contract the COVID-19 virus have no symptoms or have mild symptoms, which means they may not be aware they carry the virus. Because people without symptoms can transmit the disease, and because evidence shows the disease is easily spread, gatherings can result in transmission of the virus.

The most recent data from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare indicates that Idaho has a 7-day average of 8.6 cases per 100,000 population. According to the Brown School of Public Health, Idaho is currently is 11th best state in the country for cases. Idaho's positivity rate is at 4.3% of tests. On average, the daily number of newly admitted patients with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 to hospitals in Idaho is declining and 83% of hospitals are reporting care as normal.

Local health districts have traced reported infections to gatherings of people, including school-related events, social gatherings, and recreational events. In the judgment of public health officials, continuing to reduce or limit the size of these gatherings will reduce the spread of the virus in communities and protect vulnerable Idahoans. The more people an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer the interaction lasts, the higher the potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and COVID-19 spreading. People who have completed the COVID-19 vaccine regimen have a substantially lower risk of obtaining and spreading COVID-19.

The scientific evidence shows that at this stage of the pandemic, it is necessary to continue to slow virus transmission to protect Idaho's vulnerable population and to prevent the healthcare system from being overwhelmed. In consultation with state and federal epidemiologists and healthcare experts, these guidelines are intended to protect the lives and safety of Idahoans, preserve capacity in our healthcare system and slow the spread of COVID-19 by using COVID-19 prevention measures at public and private gatherings, encouraging face coverings in public per the CDC recommendations, encouraging individuals to maintain physical distancing whenever possible, and choosing to get vaccinated.

STAY HEALTHY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Vaccines.** COVID-19 vaccines are have had rigorous testing and are safe, highly effective and readily available. Getting vaccinated is an important element of slowing the spread of COVID-19. Getting a vaccine is encouraged.
2. **Gatherings.** As defined by the CDC, "gathering" means "a planned or spontaneous event, indoors or outdoors, with a small number of people participating or a large number of people in attendance such as a community event or gathering, concert, festival, conference, parade, wedding, or sporting event."

- a. Gatherings of any size are permitted if they adhere to the Physical Distancing and Sanitation Requirements in Section 4. Organizers of gatherings and events should consider local COVID-19 case rates when planning gatherings and events and contact their local public health district for consultation or questions.

3. **Face Coverings.**

- a. Individuals should wear a face covering over their nose and mouth as per guidance from CDC for vaccinated and unvaccinated people.
- b. Anyone who enters a long-term care facility or campus who is not a resident is required to wear a face covering that covers their nose and mouth at all times.
- c. Exemptions. This does not apply to:
 - i. Children under the age of 5;
 - ii. Any person while consuming food or drink;
 - iii. Any person with a diagnosed medical condition, mental health condition, or disability which prevents wearing a face covering; or
 - iv. Any person who is deaf or hard of hearing for purposes of communication, or any person communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.

4. **Physical Distancing and Sanitation Requirements.**

- a. Gathering and event organizers should:
 - i. Check the status of local COVID-19 case rates to inform planning;
 - ii. Provide adequate disinfection, sanitation and personal hygiene for guests;
 - iii. Provide for six (6) feet of spacing between guests to the extent possible;
 - iv. Host event outdoors, if possible, and if indoors provide for adequate ventilation; and
 - v. Assess staff and event hosts for symptoms of COVID-19 illness and if sick, exclude them from the event.
- b. Individuals not residing within the same household should maintain at least six-foot physical distancing from other individuals whenever possible.
- c. Individuals should:

- i. Wash hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or use hand sanitizer;
 - ii. Cover coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands);
 - iii. Regularly clean high-touch surfaces and not shake hands;
 - iv. Stay home if sick;
 - v. Wear face coverings per CDC guidance; and
 - vi. Follow additional protocols established in the Governor's Guidelines for Opening up Idaho published at <https://rebound.idaho.gov/>.
- d. Employers should:
- i. Develop and implement measures to ensure employees and customers maintain at least six-foot physical distancing from other individuals whenever possible;
 - ii. Provide adequate sanitation and personal hygiene for employees, vendors, and patrons;
 - iii. Frequently disinfect commonly touched and high-traffic areas and regularly clean those areas;
 - iv. Identify how personal use items such as masks, face coverings, and gloves may be required by employees, vendors, and/or patrons;
 - v. Provide services while limiting close interactions with patrons;
 - vi. Identify strategies for addressing ill employees, which should include requiring COVID-19 positive employees to stay at home while infectious, and may include keeping employees who were directly exposed to the COVID-19 positive employee away from the workplace, and the closure of the business until the location can be properly disinfected;
 - vii. On a case by case basis consider other actions recommended in CDC's [Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#); and
 - viii. Implement additional protocols established in the Governor's Guidelines for Opening up Idaho and the business-specific protocols published at <https://rebound.idaho.gov/>.

5. The Stay Healthy Guidelines dated February 2, 2021 are superseded by these guidelines.