



INYO COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

e-mail: cquilter@inyocounty.us



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Carma Roper, Public Information Officer
croper@inyocounty.us

UPDATE ON INYO COUNTY'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

INYO COUNTY, May 8, 2020 – At today's special Board Meeting to discuss COVID-19 response, the County Board of Supervisors heard an update from Health and Human Services officials and the County Health Officer about modifications to the Governor's statewide Stay-at-Home Order, which will allow lower risk retail including: bookstores, clothing stores, florists, and sporting goods stores, to reopen for curbside pick-up beginning Friday, May 8. In addition, supply and manufacturing operations related to retail activities may resume based on guidance provided at <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap/#guidance>.

The Board was also updated about the County's plans to submit an attestation to the California Department of Public Health that certifies that necessary metrics have been met for accelerating Stage Two of the California Resilience Roadmap, and expediting the reopening Inyo County's lower risk retail establishments. This may include modified seating at dine-in establishments and some retail shopping. The County hopes to fast-track work on the attestation and have it completed on or before May 19.

On May 4, 2020, the Governor announced that the State would be modifying orders and entering Stage Two by Friday, March 8, 2020. Governor Newsom's described Roadmap provided a more detailed plan of how Stage Two will be phased in throughout the state. This phased in plan allows for counties to move through the Stage at a pace that is driven by local data rather than at a standardized pace, as long as the County Public Health Officer and the County's Board of Supervisors can attest to meeting the readiness parameters and provide a plan to the California Department of Public Health that demonstrates a variety of readiness factors.

Readiness factors are substantial and include some elements that require the partnership of health care providers and local businesses to attest to their own readiness. In addition, the ability to attest that we are prepared for Local Variance requires a low local prevalence of COVID-19, and any increase or spike in cases could prevent the county from moving forward. The county must also attest that we meet testing and contact tracing criteria, that the local health care system is prepared in case they see a sudden rise in cases, and that the county has plans in place to protect vulnerable populations. Inyo County plans to move as quickly as possible through Stage Two, with the anticipation of opening up limited access to retail and in-person dining as soon as possible.

"The County of Inyo and its EOC partners are aware of the serious financial hardships caused to many local businesses by the Governor's Executive Order, and we are committed to reopening local commerce in a thoughtful and responsible way," stated Inyo County Emergency Director/CAO, Clint Quilter. "We will maintain a Health First Focus that will include proactive preventative measures, and will be prepared to scale back if increases in COVID-19 cases increase beyond acceptable levels."

As the Governor modifies the State's Stay-at Home Order, the County seeks to not be more restrictive, unless local conditions require it. To that end, Local Health Officer Orders that will be rescinded are:

- Order issued 3/20/2020 - Temporary Prohibition of Non-Essential Public Gatherings, Required Social Distancing Measures, Closure and Limitations of Certain Businesses.
- Order issued 3/31/2020 - Businesses Operating During COVID-19

Those that remain in effect are:

- A May 8, 2020 revision of the Order issued March 27, 2020 that requires self-isolation and quarantine for individuals who are diagnosed with COVID-19, and their close contacts.
- Order issued on April 23, 2020, amended and superseded the Health Officer order issued on March 31, 2020 and prohibits certain short-term rentals.
- Order issued on April 27, 2020 provides for universal use of face masks at all residential, long-term care, and skilled nursing facilities and provides guidance as to the types of masks that can be used under certain conditions.

In addition a NEW ORDER issued on May 8, 2020 provides for universal use of cloth face coverings by the general public when leaving their homes to access essential and non-essential services, especially when unable to maintain 6' social distancing.

The Governor's modified Stay-at-Home Order still restricts non-essential and leisure travel, and recommends everyone stay "safer-at-home" to the fullest extent possible. Any spike in the number of cases in Inyo County may prevent the County's ability to accelerate through stage two, so it's of critical importance to the ability of our local businesses to open that residents continue to practice social distancing, facial covering, and regular hand washing, and that we slow the flow of tourists from COVID hotspots.

#####