

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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LANCASTER COUNTY COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS
EXTENDED THROUGH MAY 10

Local businesses urged to provide input on draft guidelines

Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and Pat Lopez, Interim Director of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD), today announced that the COVID-19 Directed Health Measure (DHM) for Lancaster County will be extended through Sunday, May 10. The DHM went into effect March 26 and was scheduled to expire May 6. Governor Pete Ricketts has also announced an identical extension of the State's DHM for Lancaster County.

"What we are working to achieve through the Directed Health Measure is a reduction of the negative impact – both health and economic – that could result from increased transmission of the virus," said Mayor Gaylor Baird.

Lancaster County has seen 73 cases in the last four days, nearly 38 percent of the community's total of 193 cases. The number of positive cases is one of the major factors officials are monitoring to guide future action. Others include testing capacity, the positivity rate, the strength of the local health care system, and public health capacity for contact tracing.

A complete list of the Lancaster County DHM provisions is available at COVID19.lincoln.ne.gov. They include the following:

- Gatherings of 10 or more individuals in a single room are prohibited.
- Gatherings of less than 10 people are prohibited when the six-foot distancing rule cannot be maintained. This includes beauty and nail salons, barber shops, and massage therapy businesses and body art establishments.
- Food and beverage sales at restaurants, bars, taverns, private clubs and any dine-in establishments are restricted to drive-through, carry out, and delivery only.
- Alcohol sales are restricted to carry-out sales and delivery only.
- Daycare and childcare facilities operate under restricted conditions.

The Governor today announced his intention to issue new State DHM for three Health Districts across the State, including Lincoln-Lancaster County, Three Rivers Public Health and the West Central District beginning May 11 and extending to at least May 31.

"We want to work in concert with the State of Nebraska to support efforts to carefully and safely bring our economy back to life," said Gaylor Baird. "That said, we reserve the right to reconsider the relaxation of measures if the status of our community demands that we do so."

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LLCHD has developed draft guidelines for reopening and operating local businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The draft documents can be found at **lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: guidance)**. LLCHD is seeking input from businesses on the guidelines, and information on how to respond is included in the draft documents. The deadline for businesses to respond is 5 p.m. Friday, May 1.

“We want business owners to take this opportunity to provide input to ensure practical guidance documents are implemented for their specific industry,” Lopez. “We will need to continue to be innovative and find ways to combine public health measures with everyday business practices. Everyone has been incredibly receptive, and any loosening of restrictions will be done with the health and safety of the public and the people who work in those service areas in mind.”

“We encourage all businesses impacted by the Directed Health Measure to review the draft guidance and contact our health department staff to assist you as you make preparations to reopen,” Gaylor Baird said. “We are here for you and look forward to collaborating on this guidance to make the transition of your operations as successful as possible.”

In developing the guidelines, the LLCHD requested initial feedback from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Food Advisory Committee, Nebraska Restaurant Association, the Nebraska Board of Barber Examiners, Nebraska Board of Cosmetology, and several local owners, operators, and practitioners. The LLCHD also consulted documents from various national organizations and associations.

To assist businesses with planning for the impact of the virus on business operations, employees, and customers, LLCHD has also compiled a **Business Pandemic COVID-19 Planning Checklist** at **lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: checklist)**.

More information on COVID-19 and the City’s response is available at **COVID19.lincoln.ne.gov**. The website includes information on how those with symptoms of COVID-19 can be tested in Lincoln.