



Prevent • Promote • Protect

Office of Communication

1675 W. Garden of the Gods Rd., Suite 2044  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907  
(719) 578-3199 *phone*  
(719) 575-8664 *fax*  
[www.elpasocountyhealth.org](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org)

## NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Michelle Hewitt, Public Health Information Officer  
(719) 244-1947 cell

### **El Paso County to move to Safer at Home Level 2 status in the state's dial framework We urge all El Paso County residents to help our community reverse the trend**

**El Paso County, CO** – In response to recent increases in COVID-19 case rates, test positivity, and hospitalizations, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) notified El Paso County this morning that El Paso County is being required to move to Safer at Home Level 2: Concern in the [state's dial framework](#).

**CDPHE has given El Paso County by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4 to fully implement these changes.** El Paso County submitted an [updated mitigation plan](#) to CDPHE last week, and is working diligently to implement additional mitigation strategies with partners to reverse the concerning trends. Key takeaways from the mitigation plan include:

- Working with the Economic Development Regional Recovery Council, schools, and broader community partners and sectors
- Working with the Pikes Peak Chapter of the Colorado Restaurant Association on a COVID-19 safety certification initiative which will provide an opportunity for restaurants and bars to be evaluated on standard COVID-19 safety criteria and receive acknowledgement
- Increased low-barrier testing sites throughout El Paso County. For a full list of sites, visit [www.elpasocountyhealth.org/covid-19-testing-information](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/covid-19-testing-information)

As of October 29, [El Paso County's metrics](#) are as follows:

- Two-week incidence: 278.6
- Two-week test positivity rate: 6.94%
- Hospitalizations: While the daily admissions are stabilizing (although at an elevated level), there are concerns for the near future based on increasing hospitalizations

The move to Safer at Home Level 2 implements the following guidelines and restrictions:

- Preschool - 12 Schools: In-person, hybrid, or remote as appropriate
- Higher Education: In-person, hybrid, or remote as appropriate
- [Places of Worship](#): \*\*Pursuant to a federal court order, capacity limits do not currently apply to indoor Places of Worship, though social distancing requirements must still be met; outdoors, six feet of social distance must be maintained as well
- Restaurants: 50% capacity or up to 50 people per room (or up to 100 with social distance calculator), six feet between parties outdoors
- Offices: 50% capacity
- Bars: Closed, unless food is served from a retail food licensee with tables spaced at least six feet apart and set seating for on-premise consumption. 50% capacity or up to 50 people per room (or up to 100 with social distance calculator). Dance floors are not permitted. Bars that operate must follow all the requirements listed in Appendix H of [Public Health Order 20-35](#).

- Gyms/Fitness: 25% capacity up to 50 people per room
- Group Sports: 25-person cap per activity
- Retail: 50% capacity
- Personal Services: 50% capacity up to 50 people per room
- Indoor Events: up to 100-person cap per room (with social distance calculator)
- Outdoor Events: up to 175-person cap per designated activity (with social distance calculator)
- Senior Facilities: Outdoor and compassionate visitation, indoor under limited circumstances
- Outdoor Guided Activities: 50% capacity up to 10 people

As a reminder, every Safer at Home level in the dial limits personal gatherings not otherwise covered by [Public Health Order 20-35 Safer at Home Dial](#) to 10 or fewer people from no more than two households.

Now more than ever, we need residents to follow the guidelines and proven prevention measures. Recognizing that people are experiencing COVID-19 fatigue, here are some small, actionable steps you can take:

- Keep gatherings small
  - Pick your “bubble” and stick to it
  - Per [Public Health Order 20-35 Safer at Home Dial](#), personal gatherings are limited to 10 people from no more than two households
- Limit unnecessary trips
  - Condense grocery trips and other errands to once or twice a week. Make a list so you are prepared and can get through the store quickly. If you’re able, go to the store at times of day that tend to be less crowded (early morning or later evening)
- Wear a mask
  - Keep a clean cloth mask in several places so you are always prepared: keep one in your glove box, your purse, or by your keys so you don’t forget it
- Practice social distancing
  - It’s important to remember that social distancing is not a substitute for wearing a mask. By practicing both prevention tips—wearing a mask and social distancing—it can greatly help reduce the spread of disease
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water
  - If you’re going out, always make sure to bring hand sanitizer with you in case you don’t have access to soap and water
- If you are sick, even with very mild symptoms, stay home. This is one of the most powerful tools we have to fight the spread of disease

“This has been a difficult year for everyone and we appreciate the continued COVID-19 prevention actions being practiced by each person daily to include staying home when you are sick, wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and washing your hands frequently,” said Susan Wheelan, El Paso County Public Health Director. “We urge our community to step up prevention efforts once again to impact El Paso County’s disease transmission and help reduce exponential growth of COVID-19 to protect public health and to support our economy and schools in the safest and most sustainable way possible. We need your help to get us to where we want to be as a county.”

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