



LAS ANIMAS-HUERFANO COUNTIES DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Huerfano and Las Animas, CO – On May 2nd, Huerfano and Las Animas Counties will devolve the COVID-19 Dial. At that time, the COVID-19 Dial evolves into LAHCDHD Amended Public Health Order adopting the CDPHE [Public Health Order 20-38: Limited COVID-19 Restrictions](#) /Guidance and Executive Orders.

The dial framework, originally implemented on September 15, 2020, standardized the levels of openness or restrictions on a county level, based on the metrics of disease transmission, the level of local testing, and hospitalizations. It allowed Colorado to tailor its response on a county level, recognizing that conditions vary locally. With increased vaccination rates and less threat to hospital capacity, the state's role in continuing to mandate statewide restrictions is lessening and the role of local communities to regulate and manage the virus is increasing. The Colorado dial will remain as guidance to counties, and the state still strongly recommends that businesses and other entities follow best practices for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

The new, post-dial, statewide public health order:

- Rescinds and replaces PHO 20-36 COVID-19 Dial and PHO 20-29 Voluntary and Elective Surgeries and Procedures
- Requires compliance with Executive Order D 2020 138, as amended and extended, concerning face coverings
- Requires all businesses and government entities consider reasonable accommodations for individuals who cannot access or cannot take COVID-19 vaccines, follow the mask executive order, and strongly encourages following Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) sector guidance for disease mitigation
- Requires 6 feet distancing and masks for mass indoor gatherings, defined as gatherings in public indoor spaces that exceed 100 individuals, and caps these gatherings to no more than 500 people absent a variance. Exempts places of worship, retail settings, restaurants that have seated dining and do not have gathering spaces that allow for more than 100 people to congregate, and allows local public health agencies to approve prom and graduation plans in excess of these caps in accordance with CDPHE guidance.
- Requires schools to follow the CDPHE schools and childcare outbreak guidance and further requires that when learning is all remote due an outbreak, extracurricular activities are not authorized in person.
- Requires CDPHE approval of all outdoor seated, ticketed event venues in excess of 30,000 square feet, in consultation with the local public health agency.
- Continues existing hospital reporting requirements.

- Continues authority for CDPHE to require additional restrictions for any county when a county's resident hospitalizations threaten to exceed 85% of hospital or hospital system capacity

In response to the devolution of Dial 3.0, Huerfano and Las Animas Counties are amending the local public health order as recommended by the LAHCDHD Board of Health effective today, May 2nd. The emphasis is on getting our county optimally vaccinated, keeping our local and regional hospital systems from experiencing a surge due to COVID-19, continuing the mask mandate, and focusing on indoor and outdoor event capacity. The local public health order that takes into consideration virus transmission trends, vaccination rates, hospital capacity, and allowing for the majority of restrictions to be lifted while also strongly recommending that our county remain vigilant about wearing masks when appropriate, washing hands, maintaining physical distancing, staying home when sick, and getting tested when symptomatic. We hope this new local order allows all of us to enjoy the things we have been looking forward to for over a year.

The LAHCDHD amended public health order is summarized by the following:

- Indoor event capacity shall be capped based on a six-foot (6') social distancing requirement when considering the size of the venue. Maximum capacity for an indoor event shall be determined by utilizing the social distancing space calculator available at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/distancing-calculator>.
- Any organization/person(s) seeking to host an event of more than 175 people for both Indoor and Outdoor events in Las Animas or Huerfano Counties shall submit their proposed event plan to LAHCDHD for review and support.
- Masks, except for exempted individuals and in certain settings, must be worn in indoor public spaces, regardless of how many people are present.
- If 85% or more of local or regional hospital bed capacity is reached due to COVID-19, LAHCDHD will review opportunities for mitigation with a focus on the sectors of transmission rather than placing restrictions on all sectors.
- If Las Animas and Huerfano Counties reaches a 70% vaccination rate of the eligible county population, further lifting of restrictions will be considered. (For reference, Huerfano County is at 41% and Las Animas County is currently at 44.8%.)
- Schools and school-related activities will continue to follow their specific guidance and requirements set forth by the state.
- LAHCDHD recognizes the need for long-term planning for events and activities throughout the summer months. Because of the need for this consistency for event planning, this Order is in effect and will continue to be in effect until midnight Mountain time August 31, 2021, unless extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing. This Order is subject to amendment at any time provided the circumstances change. LAHCDHD will review the current metrics and circumstances monthly in an effort to determine if such an amendment is necessary.

It is anticipated that over the upcoming weeks, sections of the order, such as mask wearing in public indoor spaces, may expire before others or August 31, 2021. LAHCDHD will continue providing the various sectors of Las Animas and Huerfano County with recommendations, resources, and supports throughout the next few months.

Huerfano and Las Animas County has ample vaccine supplies to vaccinate everyone who is eligible, essentially anybody who is 16 and older. To schedule a vaccination appointment with LAHCDHD, call 719-846-2213 or 719-738-2650.