

Frequently Asked Questions

See also the CDC's general [COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus FAQs](#)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is a novel coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the [coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans](#) and cause mild illness, like the common cold. A diagnosis with coronavirus 229E, NL63, OC43, or HKU1 is not the same as a COVID-19 diagnosis. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with common coronavirus diagnosis.

What is the source of the virus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people, and others, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, only infect animals. Rarely, animal coronaviruses that infect animals have emerged to infect people and can spread between people. This is suspected to have occurred for the virus that causes COVID-19. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are two other examples of coronaviruses that originated from animals and then spread to people. More information about the source and spread of COVID-19 is available on the [Situation Summary: Source and Spread of the Virus](#).

Will warm weather stop the outbreak of COVID-19?

It is not yet known whether weather and temperature impact the spread of COVID-19. Some other viruses, like the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months but that does not mean it is impossible to become sick with these viruses during other months. At this time, it is not known whether the spread of COVID-19 will decrease when the weather becomes warmer. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing.

When can I resume normal activities (return to work) after I have been exposed to COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19?

If you are asymptomatic, then you do not need to be tested for COVID-19. The incubation period for COVID-19 is 14 days. If you are tested while asymptomatic and within these 14-days, a negative test does not guarantee that you will not still develop COVID-19.

- If you have been exposed to a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, then you should stay home for 14 days from the last time you were exposed. During this time, you should monitor your temperature twice a day for fever and watch for cough or trouble breathing. You should practice social distancing as much as possible.
- If you have been notified that you are laboratory confirmed positive for COVID-19 you will be required to be isolated in your home until you are recovered. Recovery is defined as the resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) AND at least seven (7) days have passed since symptoms first appeared. You will work closely with Public Health to determine the exact length of isolation based on the course of illness and symptoms.

FOR WYOMING CITIZENS

Does anyone in Wyoming have this new virus now?

Yes, Wyoming has confirmed cases of COVID-19. Up-to-date information about testing and case counts in Wyoming are available at [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). The page is updated daily.

What health directives should Wyomingites follow?

First, Wyoming's State Health Officer and State Epidemiologist, Dr. Alexia Harrist, has issued three Public Health Orders regarding business closures and public gatherings that are discussed below. Per Wyoming statutes, the Wyoming State Health Officer has the authority to issue public health orders if she finds it necessary for the protection of the public health. Dr. Harrist's public health orders reflect the most up-to-date science and policy directives meant to protect the health of all Wyoming citizens.

Second, you should comply with any and all provisions of orders issued by your local county health officer to the extent the provision of the local order is more restrictive than the requirements of the Public Health Orders issued by the State Health Officer.

Finally, Wyoming residents should follow all guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control, the White House and the Wyoming Department of Health. This guidance is meant to help you avoid becoming ill and to avoid spreading COVID-19 to those who are most vulnerable. We should all work together to help keep our friends and neighbors safe.

General health guidelines to follow:

- Stay home when sick and avoid contact with other people unless you need medical attention.
- Follow advice from CDC on what to do if you think you may be sick.
- Follow common-sense steps such as washing your hands often and well; covering your coughs and sneezes; and cleaning and disinfecting.
- Nursing homes and other healthcare facilities should closely follow guidelines for infection control and prevention.
- As much as possible, assisted living facilities should follow the same infection control and prevention practices as nursing homes.
- Older people and those with health conditions that mean they have a higher chance of getting seriously ill should avoid crowds or close-contact situations.
- Follow current social distancing guidelines.

What directives apply across Wyoming?

March 13, 2020 -- [State of Emergency Declaration](#)

Governor Gordon declared a state of emergency to further mobilize all available state resources. The declaration officially authorized and directed the Wyoming Department of Health and the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security to increase coordination among all state and local agencies. The declaration allows Governor Gordon to activate the Wyoming National Guard if necessary, as well as to unlock federal funding for businesses.

March 16, 2020 -- [Statewide School Closures](#)

In an effort to grant school districts maximum flexibility in responding to these challenges, the State Superintendent Jillian Balow is exercising her authority under W.S. 21-13-307(a)(ii)(B) to hold districts harmless from daily proportional reduction of block grant funding due to school closures. Superintendent Balow is approving all school closures occurring on school calendar days from

March 16 to April 3, 2020 for this purpose. This action is necessary for public health, safety, and welfare.

March 19, 2020 -- [Closures of Restaurants, Bars, Schools and Other Businesses through April 3](#)

Governor Gordon endorsed a decision by the Wyoming State Health Officer to close bars, restaurants, theaters, gymnasiums, childcare facilities, schools, colleges, universities and trade schools for a two-week period to help slow the community spread of COVID-19. The closure order extends through April 3. (See following questions for more information.)

March 20, 2020 -- [Restrictions on Public Gatherings through April 3](#)

Governor Gordon endorsed a decision by the Wyoming State Health Officer to forbid public gatherings of 10 people or more for a two-week period to help slow the community spread of COVID-19. The closure order extends through April 3. (See following questions for more information.)

March 20, 2020 -- [Executive Order Regarding Relief from Hours of Service for Carriers](#)

Governor Gordon signed Executive Order 2020-3 Emergency Exemption From Permissible Operating Time Regulations and Waiver of Allowable size and Weight Permit Fees. This order grants motor vehicles and carriers relief from hours of service. Relief will also be provided to those carriers providing direct support to the emergency relief efforts from size and weight permit fees.

March 24, 2020 -- [Closure of Various Service Providers through April 3](#)

Governor Gordon endorsed a decision by the Wyoming State Health Officer to close nail and hair salons, barber shops, massage parlors, tattoo, body art and piercing shops, and businesses providing cosmetology, electrology and esthetic services to help slow the community spread of COVID-19. The closure order extends through April 3. (See following questions for more information.)

March 24, 2020 -- [Executive Order Regarding Drivers' Licenses](#)

Governor Gordon signed Executive Order 2020-4 Suspension of Provisions of Certain Statutes and Rules Related to Driver Licenses Due to a Public Health Emergency. This order will allow a 90 day grace period from the expiration date of Wyoming driver licenses and identification cards expiring between March 15, 2020, and June 1, 2020. Also, late fees associated with expired driver licenses and identification cards related to this grace period will be waived at the time of renewal.

Non-commercial driving tests will be suspended up to 90 days and commercial tests will continue to

be administered by appointment. The Department of Transportation will reassess the suspension of testing by April 20, 2020.

Additional directives

Check back to the State of Wyoming [COVID-19 Information](#) page for additional updates as they arise.

WYOMING'S PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS

What do Wyoming's Public Health Orders Say?

The [first Public Health Order](#) issued by the Wyoming State Health Officer on March 19th, 2020 closes bars, restaurants, theaters, gymnasiums, child care facilities, K-12 schools, colleges, universities and trade schools in the State of Wyoming with certain exceptions (like child care facilities that provide services to "essential personnel") through April 3, 2020.

The [second Public Health Order](#) issued by the Wyoming State Health Officer on March 20th, 2020 forbids gatherings of 10 or more people in the State of Wyoming with certain exceptions through April 3, 2020.

The [third Public Health Order](#) issued by the Wyoming State Health Officer on March 24th, 2020 closes nail and hair salons, barber shops, massage parlors, tattoo, body art and piercing shops, and businesses providing cosmetology, electrology and esthetic services through April 3, 2020.

See questions below and copies of the Public Health Orders for more information.

What facilities are closed or must provide limited services at this time?

The Public Health Order issued by the Wyoming State Health Officer, Dr. Alexia Harist, on March 19, 2020 outlines the closure of certain businesses to ingress, egress, use and occupancy by members of the public but also describes conditions under which these businesses may continue to have limited operations. This Order extends through April 3. Except for some exceptions, the businesses affected by the March 19 Order include:

- Restaurants, food courts, cafes, coffeehouses, and other similar places of public accommodation offering food or beverage for on-premises consumption
- Bars, taverns, brew pubs, breweries, microbreweries, distillery pubs, wineries, tasting rooms, special licensees, clubs, and other places of public accommodation offering alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption
- Cigar bars
- Gymnasiums
- Movie and performance theaters, opera houses, concert halls, and music halls.
- Child care centers and home daycares, subject to the following:
 - Child care centers or home daycares that provide care for children of essential personnel may continue to operate to provide child care for children of essential personnel.
- K-12 schools
- Colleges, universities and trade schools

In addition, the Public Health Order issued by the State Health Officer on March 24, 2020 closes the following businesses to the public:

- Nail salons, hair salons and barber shops
- Cosmetology, electrology and esthetic services
- Massage parlors (excluding massage performed for medical purposes)
- Tattoo, body art and piercing shops

Under what conditions can a restaurant or other business closed to public access by the March 19, 2020 Public Health Order continue to operate?

A restaurant, food court, cafe, coffeehouse or other similar place of public accommodation offering food or beverage can continue to serve the public under the following conditions:

1. Food and beverage may be served using delivery service, window service, walk-up service, drive-through service or drive-up service so long as the establishment mitigates the potential transmission of COVID-19, including social distancing
2. Online and telephonic credit card transactions are strongly encouraged (e.g., Venmo, Squarecash, Googlepay, Apple Pay and similar payment apps)
3. Staff who handle cash or credit cards may not be involved in the preparation, handling or delivery of food
4. In offering food or beverage, a food establishment may permit up to 5 members of the public at one time in the place of public accommodation for the purpose of picking up their

food or beverage orders, so long as those individuals are at least 6 feet apart from one another while on the premises

5. For hotel restaurants, food items may one by delivered as room service or as described above
6. Management shall ensure on a daily basis, that no employee who presents symptoms of illness will be permitted to work.

Please note that a public accommodation cannot sell alcohol for off premises consumption without the proper license. Questions regarding enforcement and interpretation of these orders should be directed to your county public health office.

What are the exceptions to the businesses closed by the March 19, 2020 Public Health Order?

The following are exempt from closure under the March 19 Public Health Order:

1. Places that offer food and beverage not for on-premises consumption, including grocery stores, markets, retail stores that offer food, convenience stores, pharmacies, drug stores and food pantries
2. Room service in hotels
3. Health care facilities, residential care facilities, congregate care facilities, and juvenile justice facilities
4. Crisis shelters or similar institutions
5. Airport concessionaires
6. Emergency facilities necessary for the response to the events surrounding the public health emergency and state of emergency caused by COVID-19

Under what conditions can child care centers and home daycares continue to operate under the March 19, 2020 Public Health Order?

Child care centers or home daycares that provide care for children of essential personnel may continue to operate to provide child care for children of essential personnel.

Who is considered essential personnel for purposes of child care and home daycare operations?

Under the March 19, 2020 Public Health Order, the following are considered essential personnel:

1. Staff and providers of childcare and education services, including custodial and kitchen staff and other support staff, who do not do their work remotely
2. Providers of healthcare including, but not limited to, employees of clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, long-term care and post-acute care facilities, respite houses, designated agencies, emergency medical services, as well as necessary custodial, kitchen, administrative, and other support staff
3. Criminal justice personnel including those in law enforcement, courts, and correctional services
4. Public health employees
5. Firefighters, Wyoming National Guard personnel called to duty for responding to COVID-19, and other first responders
6. State employees determined to be essential for response to the COVID-19 crisis
7. Active duty military staff
8. Pharmacy staff
9. Foster families with children through grade 8
10. 2-1-1 and 9-1-1 call center staff; critical infrastructure and utility workers, including electrical, plumbing, telecommunications, water, and wastewater operators, workers, and staff
11. State, municipal, and commercial public works and sanitation crews
12. Grocery and food supply workers
13. Supply chain, postal, and delivery drivers and warehouse workers
14. Manufacturers of medical devices, equipment, testing equipment, and supplies
15. Fuel distribution workers

What gatherings are prohibited under the March 20, 2020 Public Health Order?

Any gathering of 10 people or more is prohibited in order to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the health of the public.

Are there any exceptions to the prohibition of gatherings under the March 20, 2020 Public Health Order?

Gatherings at the following are exempted under the March 20, 2020 Public Health Order:

1. Hotels and motels for lodging purposes
2. Livestock auctions
3. Groups of workers being transported to a location for their jobs
4. Government business, military and National Guard facilities, law enforcement, jails, secure treatment centers, and correctional facilities, including any facility operated by the Wyoming Department of Corrections, and any facility used to respond to natural disasters or public health emergencies
5. State and local government facilities, including government service centers
6. Relief facilities, including food pantries and shelter facilities
7. Residential buildings
8. Grocery stores, markets, convenience stores, pharmacies, drug stores
9. Truck stops, gas stations, and auto-repair facilities
10. Retail or business establishments, where more than 10 people may be present but are generally not within 6 feet of one another
11. Healthcare facilities, including hospitals, medical facilities, home health agencies, personal care agencies, hospices, adult family homes, mental health centers, and pharmacies
12. Alcohol and drug treatment centers
13. Long-term care and assisted living facilities, including nursing homes and assisted living facilities, as long as the facility complies with guidance and directives from the CDC, the Wyoming Department of Health, and appropriate licensing and regulatory agencies

I am concerned about the virus and want to close my office. What do I need to do?

If you think there is a concern to your health or that of your clients, you can alter your operations. An order from the State is not necessary to reduce hours or to close your business. If your business is not affected by the Public Health Orders and you decide to remain open, you should be following all other CDC and state health recommendations to help stop the spread of COVID-19.