



News Release

March 31, 2020

Tooele County Health Department Issues Public Health Order

Mandatory order emphasizes the importance of staying safe at home, closes some businesses and requires other businesses to more stringently follow social distancing recommendations

(TOOELE COUNTY)—Today, Jeff Coombs executive director and health officer of the Tooele County Health Department issued a new public health order to enact further protections designed to limit the spread of COVID-19. The new public health order is effective tonight (11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31) and will be in place until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 30. The order:

1. Prohibits gathering of more than ten individuals.
2. Matches earlier state public health orders regarding food service operations.
3. Closes children's playgrounds though outdoor sport courts and fields will remain open for individual and for individuals that reside in the same household. Residents are asked to responsibly enjoy recreational amenities by always maintaining 6 feet from people outside of their household.
4. Closes certain businesses that act as gathering places or involve close contact between people.
5. Directs individuals to refrain from visiting nursing care facilities, assisted living facilities, and retirement homes except to provide critical assistance.
6. Directs individuals to avoid discretionary travel, shopping trips (other than shopping for food and other essentials), and social visits.
7. Directs individuals over the age of 60 and individuals who are immunocompromised to avoid contact with other individuals.
8. Directs businesses to actively enforce social distancing practices and exclude ill employees from working; social distancing should include at least 6-feet between all people in the establishment, and workers symptomatic with respiratory illness or fever must not be present under any circumstances.
9. Defines essential businesses that should do their best to comply with social distancing recommendations but, due to the nature of their operations, may be unable to fully comply and are therefore exempt from the order. Essential businesses must still exclude ill employees from working.
10. Provides an exception to the prohibition of gatherings of more than ten individuals, not having this apply to grocery stores. Grocery stores are encouraged to remain open to provide necessary food items and other goods.

This order complements the Governor's directive. Our collective goal is to save lives and keep our health system from being overwhelmed. Reducing opportunities for people to congregate is one of the most important things we can do to help 'flatten the curve' and minimize stress on our healthcare system. This order strikes the right balance between public and economic health by prohibiting only the business practices most concerning when it comes to transmission of COVID-19.

"It is imperative that every individual and family in the county do their part to maintain physical distance from others in the community," said Jeff Coombs, executive director of the Tooele County Health Department. "The degree to which community members follow this order will directly determine how well Tooele County weathers this outbreak."

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