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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State law enforcement and public health officials urge Coloradans to follow state public health order during coronavirus emergency

Enforcement guidance includes voluntary compliance, stronger action when necessary

March 20, 2020 (DENVER, Colo.)— State officials today provided guidance to local law enforcement and local public health agencies on enforcing the state public health order that the state health department issued earlier this week to protect Coloradans from the widespread transmission of COVID-19.

Officials from the Attorney General’s Office, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), and the Colorado Department of Public Safety are urging Colorado residents to exercise civic and personal responsibility and voluntarily comply the public health order. Leaders from these state agencies, however, said they will use their authority under state law to enforce the order when necessary and appropriate.

“The State has taken decisive action to protect Coloradans from the spread of COVID-19. We understand that residents may feel anxious or frustrated by limits on gatherings or closures of businesses and institutions around the state,” said Attorney General Phil Weiser. “Our expectation is that residents will respect their fellow Coloradans, use good judgment and follow the public health order. When necessary and appropriate, however, we will work with our state and local law enforcement partners to ensure that residents obey the order.”

“The gravity of the public health orders are appropriate for the gravity of this situation,” said Jill Hunsaker Ryan, executive director of CDPHE. “The transmission of COVID-19 is an event unlike anything we have seen and we must take dramatic precautions to save lives. These policy decisions are grounded

in science and what has been learned from other countries and states. The swifter and more decisively we act, the greater the possibility that we can flatten the epidemiological curve, preserve the availability of hospital beds for those who need them, and eventually return to normal life."

Earlier this week, the executive director of CDPHE issued [Public Health Order 20-22](#) Closing Bars, Restaurants, Theaters, Gymnasiums, Casinos, Nonessential Personal Services Facilities, and Horse Track and Off-Track Betting Facilities Statewide. The order went into full effect on March 19, 2020, and remains in effect [until April 30, 2020](#), unless it is extended in writing by the executive director.

Under Colorado law, it is unlawful for any person, association, or corporation to willfully violate, disobey, or disregard the provisions of the public health laws or the terms of this or any other public health order. Any person who violates the order may be subject to civil and criminal penalties.

Residents who suspect that someone is violating the order should first contact their local public health agency to report any concerns. Residents may also file a report with the Attorney General's Office at covid19@coag.gov if local law enforcement or a local public health agency is unresponsive.

For more information about public health orders and how they are enforced [click here](#).