

Summit County Public Health Order (PHO)- Informational Call

March 20, 2020

Summit County's Public Health Order can be found [here](#) or CCI's Website [here](#)

Background:

-March is the busiest time of the year for Summit County due to Spring Break. With that in mind extra precautions were needed to ensure public safety and welfare given Summit's limited medical capacities. [Summit's altitude is certainly a factor as well for treating respiratory illnesses.]

-PHO was issued March 16th and went into effect at 10:00 pm that day, the order **covers the entire county and includes all towns and municipalities.**

-The Summit County Board of Health/Public Health Director has broad authority to protect the public health from communicable disease including to exercise physical control of persons and property within its jurisdiction. There is only the County Board of Health in Summit County so this order encompasses the towns as well. The towns are following Summit County's lead but we are all collaborating and desire to be consistent and united in our efforts – and we need their partnership because their police will help enforce the PHO in the towns.

Details of the PHO:

Definitions: Section B of PHO has the most questions as it is a list of essential businesses. Summit county is continuously working on this section to better define essential businesses. Some key points from this section that took effect immediately:

- Suspended ALL transportation, this includes Ubers and Lyft
- Shut down all short-term lodging i.e air bnb, motels, hotels. Established a good causes exemption to be used in only extreme cases, for example, family of four from out of state who absolutely can't get out. Summit is currently working on getting resort workers safely out of the county and state
- Exempted marijuana dispensaries but with the limit of five people in a retailer at a time with social distancing.

The 3/17 PHO will be modified to include a list of non-essential services like hair salons, nail salons, etc.

Most of our compliance protests came from big box retailers rather than small businesses.

Large Events and Gatherings of the PHO is going to be updated to include 10 or less as mandated by the Governor

Limitations on Establishment Providing Retail Goods and Services allowed gas stations to be open 24/7.

The 3/17 PHO will be modified to remove the limit on hours of operation because many retailers are already limiting their hours.

Businesses have become very creative and are finding ways to comply. Hair salons are taking over the phone orders for shampoo and other products and delivering them. Local restaurants are offering special deals on take outs. Many are also offering to bring takeout orders to people's cars so they don't even have to come in and pick it up.

Q&A:

- Will an updated version of the PHO be made available?
 - Yes, it will be available on both Summit County and CCI's websites (now Monday March 23rd)
- Are liquor stores and dispensaries exempt from this?
 - Yes, both are exempted but are to follow the same rules as carry out restaurants and with a maximum of five people in the store at a time
- Is the PHO being taken seriously?
 - Yes, at the bottom of the PHO there is fine and penalties clause that we are taking seriously
- Where did you experience push back on this?
 - Summit County received most push back from stores like Target and Walmart- people can buy online and do same day pick up. Want to encourage these stores to not have gatherings of people.
- What is the role of the commissioners of the board of health?
 - In Summit, the Board of Health is the Summit Board of County Commissioners in an ex officio capacity. The BOH is being briefed by the County Public Health Director, Emergency Management and senior management/attorneys on the latest developments and actions by the County Public Health Director. The Public Health Dept. is taking the lead on Summit's actions with the review and consent of the BOH. It is similar to any other supervisor role the BOCC has where they set policy and the staff carries it out but there is certainly deference given to the medical expertise of the Public Health Director and medical community/emergency management folks. The BOH supervises the County Health Director and has broad powers to make rules and orders. [The BOCC of course funds the BOH/Public Health Dept. activities.]
- What is the workload associated with such a POH?
 - The work is constant; conference calls, emails, discussions, and working on updating the PHO constantly in collaboration with the state and local governments.

Wrap up:

While public health orders are a key tool to ensuring public safety, they are a lot of work. It requires frequent updates to reflect changes at the state level and you learn about necessary modifications as

you go. Also, public health officials will receive many calls asking questions about the order, whether or not something qualifies as an essential service and other compliance-related calls.

Be sure to consult with you own County Attorney and public health officials for advice in your communities.