



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment

Application for Variance

Name of County: Hinsdale

Name of Submitter: Susan Thompson

Phone Number of Submitter: 970-901-0120

Email of Submitter: district1@hinsdalecountycolorado.us

Hinsdale County requests a variance from the following restrictions in Executive Order D 2020 044 and/or Public Health Order 20-28.

List the sections of Executive Order D 2020 044 and/or Public Health Order 20-28 that a variance is being sought for:

- > Restaurants (CDPHE Order II.A.1. and Appendix F. 4);
- > Places of Worship (Appendix F.5);
- > Private Residences Renting for Less than 30-Days (Appendix F.2)

Summarize alternate restrictions being proposed to replace the above-referenced restrictions and indicate where in the Plan these alternate restrictions are addressed:

Restaurants (pg 1) - open for dine in services, strict physical distancing practicing, employee screening guidelines, cleaning guidelines, and safety measures for patrons & employees

Places of worship (pg 2) - allowing onsite services, strict physical distancing practicing, cleaning guidelines, safety measures for staff and attendees

Private residences (pg 2) - allow short term rentals, physical distancing practices, proper cleaning protocols, employee & client safety measures in place

Upload your county COVID-19 Suppression Plan and documentation demonstrating approval by the county commissioners, and confirmation from all impacted local hospitals that they can serve all individuals needing their care. Provide a brief summary of each of the following elements contained in the county COVID-19 Suppression Plan and indicate where in the Plan more information can be found for each element.

1. Prevalence of COVID -19 within the county

(Pg 4)

First case reported 3/20/2020; Total of 3 positive cases; 0 active cases; last case cleared isolation on 4/13/2020

2. Hospital Capacity

(pg 4)

Local area hospitals state sufficient and adequate levels of supplies, equipment, beds and staff to provide its usual and customary care based on current COVID-19 infection data





3. Local containment measures

(pg 4) Test kits on hand; local messaging in place to report symptoms; local medical center & PH has joint monitoring system - includes daily monitoring list, local online symptom tracker survey; Local standing orders for Isolation and Quarantine in place for symptomatic & positive

4. Conditions to determine the variance is not providing adequate COVID-19 protection and the triggers for tightening restrictions.

(pg 6) PH: # of positive test cases increase; Increase of people on monitoring list; Increase of people reporting to survey; Communicable disease investigations require outside assistance; EMS: decrease in staff; increase in transports; Increase in positive cases in neighboring county

 Confirm that the variance requested does not lessen or eliminate the protections for Vulnerable Individuals in the Safer at Home Order and PHO 20-28.

 Confirm that the county will collect and monitor data to evaluate the impacts of the variance. and make such data available upon request by CDPHE.

Additional information relevant to the requested variance

By signing below, I attest that I am authorized pursuant to the adoption of the COVID-19 Suppression Plan by the Board of County Commissioners to submit this variance request to CDPHE for consideration.

DocuSigned by:

Susan Thompson

B734EA7C6EB7450

2020-05-14

Signature

Date

SAFER AT HOME HINSDALE COUNTY

MAY 13, 2020

VARIANCES REQUESTED

Hinsdale County is respectfully requesting a variance from some of the provisions of Governor Polis' Executive Order 2020 044 Safer at Home, and CDPHE Order 20-28. A variance, as outlined in CDPHE Order 20-28, iii.v. and Appendix G., will allow Hinsdale County to implement its own reopening plans in a timeframe that best meets the needs of our communities for:

- Restaurants (CDPHE Order II.A.1. and Appendix F. 4);
- Places of Worship (Appendix F.5);
- Private Residences Renting for Less than 30-Days (Appendix F.2)

VARIANCE RESTRICTIONS

Restaurants

1. Bars shall remain closed, including those that are part of restaurants, (restaurants will be able to sell alcohol with food/meal orders only).
2. Continuing take-out and delivery is highly encouraged.
3. Screen employees every shift. Screen for fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath. Exclude any employees with symptoms or any with close contact with anyone exhibiting symptoms.
4. Require the use of gloves for cleaning and sanitizing. Reusable impermeable gloves can be hand washed and sanitized between uses.
5. Require masks or cloth face coverings for any employees with public facing jobs.
6. Appoint one employee per shift to monitor staff and public for adherence to suggested safety measures.
7. Post high visibility signage advising patrons of recommended safety measures, including distancing requirements, the importance of handwashing, and sneeze/cough etiquette.
8. Require patrons to wear face coverings when entering, exiting, or accessing restrooms.
9. Limit the number of patrons in the establishment. Limit the number of people in a single party to immediate family or cohesive units no larger than 8. Remove some tables to accommodate 6 ft apart distancing.
10. Eliminate self-serve stations.
11. Follow strict cleaning guidelines, including sanitizing high touch areas more frequently than normal including restrooms. Thoroughly clean surfaces before sanitizing, and deep clean both front and back of house twice per week.
12. Consider supplying hand sanitizer or wipes at each table for use by patrons.
13. Modify the menu to encourage distancing in kitchens.
14. Discontinue reuse of condiments, offer single service instead.
15. Use menu boards or single service menus.
16. Implement a touchless pay system, if possible.
17. Encourage the use of reservations.

Places of worship

1. Continue online services as much as possible to accommodate the needs of high risk individuals
2. When offering on-site services:
 - a. Operate with strict physical distancing practices
 - b. Spread congregation out so there is at least six (6) feet distance between families throughout building
 - c. Physical contact such as handshakes will be suspended and safer alternatives explored
 - d. Implement or maintain one-way entry/exit and aisles when possible
 - e. Practices involving communally-shared items such as offering plates and communion elements will be suspended and safer alternatives explored
 - f. Hand sanitizer will be available during all meetings
 - g. Encourage employees and the public to wear cloth face coverings
 - h. Disallow people from attending if they are experiencing any symptoms
 - i. Perform frequent cleaning and disinfection of bathrooms and high-touch surfaces

Private Residences Renting for Less than 30-Days

A large portion of Hinsdale County's overall accommodation opportunities are made up of private, homeowner rentals. We do not have large hotel chains or a significant amount of multi-room places of accommodation. All places of accommodation will follow the same protocol.

1. Keep a copy of the driver's license, or other sufficient identification of the head of household for each group checking in, for 60 days for the purposes of epidemiological tracking by the health department, if needed. Logs will be made available to the Silver Thread Public Health District when necessary for case investigation.
2. Increase sanitation of common areas pursuant to recommendations of the health department <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
3. Face coverings are required to be worn by employees at all times during their shift, while interacting with the public and provide cleaning services.
3. Strongly recommend use of face coverings by guests at all times in indoor common areas per Executive Order D 2020 044.
4. Enforce 6-foot social distancing guidelines in all common areas. All public and private gatherings are limited to no more than ten (10) individuals.
5. Keep all meeting rooms and hot tubs closed.
6. Maintain a cleaning log with date and location available for inspection.
7. Post and maintain signage to remind groups to stand at least 6 feet apart and avoid congregating in common areas.
8. Food service shall follow guidance offered in this document.
9. Encourage digital check-in and checkout

10. For those checking in digitally, conduct a verbal basic health screening of all members of each party upon checking in, including self-assessment of symptoms identified as COVID-19
11. For in-person check-ins, conduct basic health screening of all members of each party upon checking in, including self-assessment of symptoms identified as COVID-19 and conduct a visual check.
12. Consider installing a plexiglass partition in areas coming into close contact with guests, i.e. registration.
13. If an individual has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or has developed symptoms of COVID-19, including early or mild symptoms (such as cough and shortness of breath), they should be in isolation (staying away from others) until they have had no fever for at least seventy-two (72) hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers), other symptoms have improved (such as cough or shortness of breath) and at least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
14. Both guests and lodging owners need to be made aware of the possibility that a guest may need to be isolated. If an individual who is a guest at a lodging facility is to be isolated due to testing positive for COVID-19 or developing symptoms of COVID-19, the lodging owner and guest must be prepared to extend the stay of the guest until isolation is no longer required for the guest.
15. Consider designating one staff member with proper training and protective equipment to attend to sick guests.
16. Decrease housekeeping services during guest stays to prevent transmission between rooms, encourage guests to bring their own linens when and where appropriate.
17. At such accommodations when linens are provided, cleaning a guest room entails providing a complete change of towels, linens, bedding, and guest consumable items and completely disinfecting all hard surfaces and high-touch areas with an EPA-registered chemical disinfectant.
18. Launder all exposed linens and cleaning supplies separately.
19. Provide guests with their own sanitation solutions or wipes.
20. When possible, rooms should have a 24-hour rest period prior to cleaning and new check-in, 48 hours would be ideal. As is possible consider spacing in occupancy by alternating rooms and closely spaced cabins.
21. For lodging with shared shower facilities, allow users at half capacity to help maintain distancing, or allow family units. Sanitize high touch areas once every 8 hours and more frequently when needed.
22. For shared toilet facilities, encourage normal hygienic protocols and sanitize high touch areas once every 8 hours and more frequently when needed.
23. Employees cannot be at work if symptomatic or feeling ill. Employees will conduct symptom checks with temperature at the beginning and end of shift. Logs will be kept and made available to the Silver Thread Public Health District when necessary for case investigation.

HINSDALE COUNTY CONDITIONS AND SUPPRESSION PLAN

Disease Transmission is Under Control

- The number of daily positive COVID-19 cases has remained flat since the first positive case was reported to Hinsdale County on 3/20/20; there are a total of three (3) positive cases as of 05/11/2020
- We currently have zero (0) active cases. The last case was without symptoms since 4/13/20
- Hospitalizations among Hinsdale County residents have been minimal; there has been one (1) total hospitalization related to COVID-19 since 03/19/2020
- The online Symptom Tracker used by the Silver Thread Public Health District has had 2 entries since 5/5/2020. Neither reporting person exhibited symptoms. Therefore no tests were conducted as a result of these entries on this survey tool.

There are Sufficient Health System and Public Health Capabilities

- The Silver Thread Public Health District has test kits on hand and can test up to 10 residents with symptoms per day. As of 05/10/2020 Hinsdale County has had 3 confirmed positive and 7 negative tests.
- Gunnison Valley Hospital (GVH), the closest hospital located in Gunnison County, indicates they currently have 0 ICU beds available as they are a Critical Access Hospital without ICU services. An assessment of ICU capabilities at hospitals normally used for ICU patient transfer, Montrose Memorial Hospital currently has 7 ICU beds available and St. Mary's in Grand Junction has 22 ICU beds available and such ICU beds are sufficient for GVH to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.
- GVH has a licensed capacity of 24 beds. Average daily census for admitted patients (COVID and non-COVID) has remained at an average of 4 for the last two weeks and bed availability is sufficient to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.
- GVH currently has 8 ventilators available and such ventilators are sufficient for GVH to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.
- GVH has adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.
- GVH has adequate levels of hospital staff to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.
- Silver Thread Public Health District has a *Pandemic Plan 2018, Community Disease Containment Plan 2016, and a Point of Dispensing Plan 2019*. SNS supplies were received in March/April 2020 including PPE.
- There has been no evidence of community transmission in Lake City. The three positive cases most likely contracted the corona virus during shopping trips to Gunnison.

- Silver Thread Public Health is now able to conduct testing on site at the Lake City Area Medical Center. Specimens are collected by our one PHN. Lake City Area Medical Center courier then transports the specimen to Gunnison Valley Hospital lab where the state lab courier receives it
- Silver Thread Public Health is the first point of contact for receiving information on test results and is able to initiate contact tracing immediately upon verification of positive results. With limited staffing, we have set our threshold at 2 communicable disease investigations that would require recruiting assistance from external partners
- Silver Thread Public Health is able to provide daily monitoring on all symptomatic individuals as well as those awaiting test results and those confirmed positives during their isolation periods
- Silver Thread Public Health has standing Isolation and Quarantine Orders filed with the county and can issue documents at any time to assist with containment measures
- Silver Thread Public Health receives guidance from state and regional epidemiology teams to assist with communicable disease monitoring and control

Outbreak Risks in High-Vulnerability Settings are Minimized

- Hinsdale County does not have any confined senior facilities. The senior population live in private homes
- The Silver Thread Public Health District continues providing services for families and individuals in need. Food bank clients are receiving weekly boxes/vouchers with strict social distancing protocols in place. Our Senior Services Coordinator provides check-ins with our aging population.

Workplace Preventive Measures Established

- State guidelines have been distributed and followed as workplaces are reopening under state orders.

Risk of Imported Cases Managed

- Non-essential travel is being discouraged.
- Although outdoor recreation is not discouraged, appropriate social distancing practices are being advertised and encouraged.
- Protocols are in place for current hotels and places of accommodation allowed under Safer At Home Orders.

Communities are Fully Engaged

- Wee Care in Lake City: has implemented all required and recommended practices from Colorado Department of Education and CDPHE. New COVID-19 procedures of operation have been reviewed by the Public Health Nurse childcare health consultant. Wee Care has been closed since 3/16/2020 and will open under state recommendations as the demand from families increase.

- Lake City Community School practices: School campus learning is currently closed and the school district is implementing on-line learning. Graduation ceremony is following guidance from the state of Colorado. The school lunch program is offering grab-and-go lunches 2 times per week. The school is receiving communication from CDE in preparation for the school year 20/21.
- The Town of Lake City has adopted safe cleaning practices for all facilities that are currently open to the public. The Mayor and Board of Trustees passed an ordinance that allows for public meetings to be held remotely. The Town has continued to provide and maintain utility services for sewer and safe drinking water for the community.
- The county offices located in the Hinsdale County Courthouse will reopen on April 27, 2020 with appropriate social distancing practices in place and sanitation stations available.
 - Sanitation is available in each office.
 - Masks are required for all employees having close contact with the public.
- Hinsdale County Combined Courts remain closed except by appointment (status May 11, 2020).

PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF HINSDALE COUNTY

- ✓ **PEOPLE WITH SYMPTOMS SHOULD STAY HOME AND SHOULD NOT GO TO WORK OR INTO PUBLIC PLACES**
- ✓ **Adults 65 years and older and high-risk populations should abide by the stay-at-home recommendations in the state Safer-At-Home order**
- ✓ Maintain physical distancing (at least 6 feet)
- ✓ Use cloth face coverings for interactions where physical distance is not possible or when entering public places
- ✓ Wash hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

DETERMINING SUCCESS DURING ALL PHASES OF REOPENING

The determination on whether the social distancing policies are working will be based on:

- 1. Keeping the confirmed active positive tests in Hinsdale County to no more than 2 active;**
- 2. Staying below the threshold of no more than 10 symptomatic being monitored by the Silver Thread Public Health District;**
- 3. Greater than 2 new symptomatic persons or households per day reported via LCAMC telephone triage or Hinsdale/Mineral symptom tracker**
- 4. No more than 2 communicable disease investigations occurring at the same time that would require outside agency assistance;**

5. **Local EMS experiences more than 2 transport within a 4 hour period with any consistency at all, would require mutual aid support;**
6. **Local EMS loses an ALS provider to illness or injury or 2 basic providers to illness or injury, decreasing their ability to respond to an uptick in call volume;**
7. **Monitoring neighboring Gunnison County. If they experience another wave of cases and begin to order greater distancing measures, we would need to evaluate appropriate actions necessary to protect Hinsdale County since our counties are so closely connected with essential travel between residents and visitors**

If respective numbers for any of these measures exceeds the stated limit, actions will be taken to improve social distance practices in Hinsdale County. It may be necessary to reissue local Stay-at-Home orders.

GUIDELINES IN PLACE FOR ALL SECTORS:

- ✓ Perform frequent environmental cleaning disinfection (concentrate on high touch surfaces like tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.)
 - [Per CDC Recommendations](#)
- ✓ Employees and contracted workers whose duties include close contact with members of the public are required to wear a non-medical cloth face covering over the nose and mouth. Employees without face coverings shall not perform tasks that require engagement with the public or with other coworkers.
- ✓ Maintain at least six feet distance between both employees, and employees and customers.
- ✓ Encourage frequent breaks to allow employees to wash or sanitize their hands.
- ✓ Conduct daily temperature checks and monitor symptoms in employees, logging all results.
- ✓ Implement or maintain return to work policies
 - Employees who have had potential exposure (means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic) he/she should self-isolate at least 10 days from time of exposure before returning to work.
 - Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 should not return to work until at least 72 hours of being symptom free (without the aid of medication) and at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS BY SECTOR

Public gatherings

- ✓ Allow public gatherings of no more than 10 people **while** maintaining at least six (6) feet distance from each other
- ✓ Large venues shall remain **closed** (theatre, gymnasium, fraternal halls, community center)

Offices

- ✓ Encourage telework, wherever possible
- ✓ Maintain at least six (6) feet distance from customers and each other
- ✓ Resume at fifty percent (50%) in-office occupancy
- ✓ Desks, work stations, and other work areas should be separated by at least six (6) feet
- ✓ Implement or maintain physical barriers for high-contact settings, i.e., reception areas
- ✓ Implement physical distance protocols in common areas (separate tables and chairs by at least six (6) feet)
- ✓ Place marking on the floor to maintain at least six feet distance in customer lines
- ✓ Discourage non-essential travel
- ✓ Implement or maintain flexible work schedules
- ✓ Consider accommodations for high-risk individuals or populations
- ✓ Employees and contracted workers whose duties include close contact with each other or members of the public are required to wear a non-medical cloth face covering over the nose and mouth. Employees without face coverings shall not perform tasks that require engagement with the public or with other coworkers.

Retail and personal services

- ✓ Critical businesses that were open under the Stay-At-Home order and continue to stay open under the Safer-At-Home order will maintain the same precautions and physical distance practices mandated in the State orders.
- ✓ As much as possible continue curbside delivery while phasing into public opening
- ✓ Personal services (salons, dog grooming, massage therapy, etc.) and non-critical businesses can open under the State Safer-At-Home guidelines

Recreation (all state and federal campgrounds are closed still)

- ✓ Maintain physical distancing in outdoor settings (6 ft while hiking, 15 ft while running or biking)
- ✓ Limit public gatherings to no more than 10 people
- ✓ Camping should be limited to one family per campsite
- ✓ No group camping allowed
- ✓ Playground equipment shall remain closed
- ✓ Perform frequent cleaning and disinfection of bathrooms and high-touch surfaces
- ✓ Colorado State Parks intends to open the Mason Family State Wildlife Area on May 15th with protocols in place
- ✓ Hinsdale County remains in close contact with public land management agencies about potential openings of developed recreation sites

Real Estate

- ✓ In-person home showing can resume per State Safer-At-Home guidelines
- ✓ Open houses are **prohibited** at this time



Hinsdale County Office

304 W. Third St.
P.O. Box 277
Lake City, Colorado 81235
(p) 970.944.0321 | (f) 970.944.1122

Mineral County Office

802 Rio Grande Ave.
P.O. Box 425
Creede, Colorado 81130
(p) 719.658.2416 | (f) 719.658.3001

May 13, 2020

Jill Hunsaker Ryan, Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246

Greetings Ms. Ryan:

I write to you to endorse the proposed variance application submitted by Hinsdale County. It is imperative that we begin to acknowledge the economic pressures facing our community as a consequence resulting from our Public Health response efforts. Local Public Health will continue to monitor the situation happening locally within our county as well as within neighboring Gunnison County due to our intimate connection for surge capacity. Hinsdale County is aware that we have trigger points that could necessitate another shift in how we are addressing suppression of COVID-19.

I feel that the proposal presented to you addresses a comprehensive plan for lifting a few of the restrictions under the current Safer At Home Orders and will allow Hinsdale County to have local control over aspects of economic development necessary for the survival of small business owners unique to our rural mountain community. If there are elements that have been inadvertently missed or sections that require further guidance not included, I am confident that Hinsdale County will be willing to make adaptations. We have partnered well together to address a well-balanced, blended approach between what's best for the economy with what's best for health and safety.

I certify that we have had low case numbers throughout the course of this emergency event, I believe much of which is a reflection of the dedication of our community to follow local and state orders.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tara Hardy".

Tara Hardy
Public Health Director
Silver Thread Public Health District



May 13, 2020

Jill Hunsaker Ryan, Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246

On April 26, 2020, Governor Jared Polis issued Executive Order, D 2020 044, Safer at Home (the "**Executive Order**"). Section II.M. of the Executive Order, provides for application for variances for the Executive Order as follows:

"Any county wishing to apply for a local variance from part or all of this Executive Order must submit a written application to CDPHE certifying that the county has low case counts of COVID-19 cases or can document fourteen (14) consecutive days of decline in COVID-19 cases reported in the county. The application must include a written COVID-19 suppression plan approved by the appropriate local public health authority, all hospitals within the county (unless no hospitals are located in the county), and a majority of the county commissioners, or, in the case of the City and County of Denver, the mayor of Denver, or, in the case of the City and County of Broomfield, the city council."

Pursuant to the Executive Order, Gunnison Valley Health ("**Hospital**") has been asked by Hinsdale County ("**County**") to review the County's COVID-19 Suppression Plan with respect to the County's request for a Variance (the "**Variance Request**"), dated May 13, 2020, under the Executive Order.

In reviewing the County's COVID-19 Suppression Plan, and except as expressly set forth below, Hospital assumes the completeness and accuracy of all facts and assumptions set forth in the Variance Request; however, Hospital does not provide an opinion with respect to the accuracy or completeness of such facts or assumptions. Hospital is also expressly relying on completeness and accuracy of data for current and estimated rates of infection and hospitalizations in and around the County's primary service area provided to Hospital by the County and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment ("**CDPHE**") Finally, Hospital does not opine on the secondary effect of people traveling to or from the County's primary service area to other locations in the State or nationally.





Based on the foregoing assumptions:

1. Hospital currently has 0 ICU beds available as Hospital is a Critical Access Hospital without ICU services. An assessment of ICU capabilities at hospitals normally used for ICU patient transfer, Montrose Memorial Hospital currently has 7 ICU beds available and St. Mary's in Grand Junction has 22 ICU beds available and such ICU beds are sufficient for Hospital to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on the current infection data;
2. Hospital has a licensed capacity of 24 beds. Average daily census for admitted patients (COVID and non-COVID) has remained at an average of 4 for the last two weeks and bed availability is sufficient to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.
3. Hospital currently has 8 ventilators available and such ventilators are sufficient for Hospital to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data;
4. Hospital has adequate personal protective equipment ("PPE") to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data; and
5. Hospital has adequate levels of hospital staff to provide its usual and customary care for COVID-19 patients based on current infection data.

Based solely on the foregoing, and subject to the qualifications and limitations set forth herein, Hospital believes that it can provide the services as set forth in the County's COVID-19 Suppression Plan. Hospital believes that both the County and CDPHE should actively monitor the accuracy of, and any changes to, the assumptions and facts set forth in the Variance Request. Hospital shall update the County and CDPHE if the facts set forth in #1-5 above materially and adversely change.

Rob Santilli
Chief Executive Officer
Gunnison Valley Health





311 N. Henson St. Lake City, Colorado 81235 970-944-2225 www.hinsdalecountycolorado.us

May 14, 2020

Jill Hunsaker Ryan
Executive Director, CDPHE
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246

Dear Ms. Ryan,

We, the Board of County Commissioners for Hinsdale County, are respectfully requesting the consideration of the attached variance from Governor's Polis Executive Order D 2020 044 and Public Health Order 20-28.

The requested variances allow Hinsdale County to implement its own re-opening plans for restaurants (not bars), places of worship and private residences used as rentals for less than 30 days. The variances include strict social distancing protocols which have been detailed in each request.

Residents of Hinsdale County have been following public health orders and guidelines for social distancing and other precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our community has been lucky to have had very few cases so far. Now our summer tourist season is upon us, and we as a board feel our community is ready to re-open, with guidelines in place, in order to support our local businesspeople.

Hinsdale County's economy relies on summer tourism, and a majority of lodging available in our area are made up of private homes that rent for less than 30 days through individuals or property management services. These lodging providers participated in a planning process to adopt restrictions that will allow them to open. Our small restaurant community has also participated in an ongoing planning process to be ready to open with restrictions in place to protect their staff and customers. Variances for these businesses allows our residents to get back to work and make the most of our short summer season.


And finally, we support the opening of places of worship with social distancing restrictions to allow our residents and visitors to participate in this important social and spiritual activity during this stressful time.


May and early June is still a slow time in Hinsdale County, so as our community opens and gets back to work, our local Silver Thread Public Health District will be able to monitor the health of our community based on the determination for success points outlined in the accompanying document.

We thank you for your consideration of this variance request. Please rest assured that the three of us are unanimously in unconditional support of this request.

Sincerely,


Susan Thompson
Chair


Kristine Borchers
Commissioner


Sara Gutterman
Commissioner