



County Commissioners:

Keenan G. Ertel
Larry Don Suckla
Jim Candelaria

County Administrator:

Shalako L. Powers

Board of County Commissioners

109 West Main, Room 260
Cortez, CO 81321
(970) 565-8317
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May 4, 2020

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

RE: Relief from COVID-19 Related CDPHE + Executive Orders

Dear Ms. Ryan:

Please find enclosed two (2) hard copies of Montezuma County's plan for suppression of COVID-19 and request for exemption from certain parts of Colorado Executive Order D2020-44. An electronic copy was also sent to the department on May 4, 2020 .

Montezuma County is a rural county faced with unique economic challenges. The County has been deemed an Enterprise Zone and is the farthest geographically from Denver of any county in Colorado. Our depressed economic situation requires a localized plan that will allow for a healthy community and economy. The County has worked with the local municipalities, Health Department and Southwest Health Systems to tailor a plan related to the COVID-19 health pandemic to best fit the needs of our county. Attached is our plan to implement necessary protections to 1) primarily meet our citizens' health needs; while also 2) restarting our economy to assist our citizens in providing necessities for their families.

At the time of this writing the County has had sixteen (16) confirmed positive COVID-19 cases and 319 negative test results. Southwest Memorial Hospital in Cortez has capacity for up to 53 patients depending on the severity of symptoms. The Montezuma County Public Health Department will regulate social behavior including operations of business deemed capable of safely re-opening. If our trend reverses, they will implement more stringent limitations.

In the spirit of the Governor's order to reduce social interactions by sixty percent, the County is respectfully asking to allow certain businesses and gathering places, including restaurants and gyms to open to forty percent of their occupancy ahead of the State's schedule so long as those businesses and congregating areas continue to provide for physical distancing greater than six

feet, stringent and frequent sanitizing procedures and facial coverings. The County believes that the outlined plan provides for reopening in a way that will allow for a healthy community and economy.

Please know that the citizens of Montezuma County are grateful for this opportunity to implement local recovery efforts and do our part to help Colorado and everyone get through these trying times. Please reach out to us with any questions or comments.

Thank you,



Shalako L. Powers
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Enclosure: 1

1. Montezuma County Plan for COVID-19 Suppression and Sustainable Reopening