



June 17, 2020

Kayla Marcella, Chair
Sarah Mudge, Commissioner
Mark Glenn, Commissioner
Lake County Board of County Commissioners
505 Harrison Avenue
Leadville, CO 80461

Colleen Nielson, Director
Lake County Public Health Agency

RE: Lake County Variance Request from portions of **Public Health Order 20-28**

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for your application to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) of a variance request to portions of **Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home**, as amended. We checked with Director Nielson to inquire if all of the variance requests were still needed after the most recent amendments to the Public Health Order, and she confirmed that Appendices B, C and D concerning houses of worship, outfitters, and lodging were no longer necessary. The remaining variance requests concern private clubs, local attractions and the outdoor education. I have had an opportunity to review these requests, and I have determined that they are approved, with some amendments, as explained further below.

As stated in Appendix G to PHO 20-28, when reviewing a variance request, we evaluate the current prevalence of COVID-19 in the jurisdiction, including whether cases are increasing, stable, or decreasing. Your application addresses particular requirements that you propose as an alternative to the Safer at Home model for each of these areas. The data and information included in your request demonstrates that Lake County has reported 39 COVID-19 cases with 7 cases (excluding cases among residents of facilities experiencing outbreaks) in the last two weeks, putting Lake County in the “high” variance category - see [here](#) for more information. Your application demonstrates that testing services are available, hospital capacity exists at St. Vincent Hospital, and there are plans in place to activate an alternate care site if needed.

Your variance application seeks to open and authorize specified capacity limits for the following entities:

- Local Attractions, including museums, trains, mines and outdoor venues, at no more than 30% occupancy or 50 people

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- Private Clubs such as the Elks and the Eagles at no more than 50% occupancy or a maximum of 50 people
- Outdoor education provided by High Mountain Institute at 27 summer students in isolated cohorts of 9, multi-night expeditions

These requests are approved.

This variance approval is granted based on the facts and circumstances today as you have described them in your request, and is subject to adjustment if conditions worsen as described [here](#). If the County observes 8 or more cases (excluding cases among residents of facilities experiencing outbreaks) in a two week period, notify CDPHE and then implement a mitigation plan for 2 weeks to try and restore virus transmission levels to the baseline under which the variance was approved. If after 2 weeks the levels are not restored, then the capacity limits are automatically adjusted to the maximum of the new level (low goes to medium, medium goes to high). If the county started at the “high” level for the variance, and after the 2 weeks of mitigation the baseline has not been restored, then the variance is rescinded. Additionally, CDPHE reserves the right to modify or rescind this variance approval as circumstances warrant. This approval is in effect until the final expiration of PHO 20-28, which will be extended in some capacity beyond the current expiration date of June 30, 2020.

I appreciate your thoughtful approach to these challenging issues and wish you all the best in your continuing efforts to ensure that Lake County residents are safe and healthy as we deal with this global pandemic. Lake County is a valued partner, and we are available to answer any questions and work with you on these matters. Please give me a call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jill Hunsaker Ryan, MPH
Executive Director