



**NEVADA
HEALTH
RESPONSE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 24, 2020

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Governor Sisolak signs directive related to public gatherings to mitigate spread of COVID-19

Las Vegas, NV — Today, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak signed an emergency directive related to public gatherings during the COVID-19 crisis.

Nevadans who are not living within the same household, working at or patronizing an essential business or providing essential services may not gather in groups of ten or more in any indoor or outdoor public area. This measure is aimed at helping mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Nevada.

"Protecting the health and safety of Nevadans is the top priority during this crisis and we must all band together to stay home for Nevadans. While getting outdoors is a great way to spend the time at home, gathering in large groups increases the likelihood of transmission," said Governor Steve Sisolak. "Please, practice aggressive social distancing and do not congregate in large groups."

Local governments are directed to limit the public's use of recreational equipment, including playground equipment, basketball courts, volleyball courts and baseball fields.

This is the seventh emergency directive signed by Governor Sisolak since declaring a state of emergency on March 12.

The Governor's prepared remarks are as follows:

Good evening.

As a state, we are taking informed, proactive and necessary measures to protect each other and mitigate the spread of this virus. These measures create new difficulties, and that is not lost on me, but they are made out of necessity, and my greatest hope is that by making the tough choices now, we can save lives and all return to normalcy sooner. And while there's no doubt that times are tough, I am uplifted every day by the examples I see of my fellow Nevadans who are staying home for our State and helping their families and neighbors do the same through acts of extraordinary kindness. I'm constantly seeing so much good in every corner of the Silver State.

And that battle born spirit must continue, especially as we see our numbers rise day-to-day. The enemy we're fighting cannot be seen. We can't hear it coming -- there are no warning alarms or sirens when it's close. So it's critical that as a State we remain on high alert with our defenses up -- do everything we can to hold the enemy off and eventually push it back. We must remain vigilant.

You've heard it from me and you've heard it from medical experts and other leaders across our country -- the best way to stop the spread of this virus is to practice aggressive social distancing and to keep large groups of people apart. This virus is persistent and spreads invisibly, it can live on surfaces for up to 72 hours or more. That's why distance is so important. It's our number one defense.

And I'm so proud that the vast majority of Nevadans are taking this seriously by practicing good social distancing and staying at home. But, unfortunately, there are some who still don't understand the severity of the issue we are facing, and they continue to gather in groups and congregate -- further increasing the risk of exposure in our communities. While I don't believe they intend to harm their neighbors, the reality is we need the tools to address those circumstances where people are engaged in reckless action that endangers the public health of our state.

That's why, today, I signed an emergency directive prohibiting the general public from gathering in groups of ten or more in any indoor or outdoor public space. This includes, but is not limited to: social clubs, parks, libraries, parking lots, sports fields, and more. To be clear, this does not mean your home. This is not to prevent your household members from going for a walk. If you live inside together, you can be outside together.

Additionally, this measure does not apply to our state's homeless population.

Local governments are further directed to limit the public's use of recreational equipment where more than ten people may gather and be closer than six feet apart. That includes, but is not limited to, playgrounds, basketball courts and baseball fields.

Nevadans who wish to enjoy our great outdoors can still do so, but we must do so safely to prevent the spread of this disease. You may enjoy a daily walk in the park with others in your household, but please, maintain a safe distance from those that are also enjoying the public spaces and do not touch any of the equipment where the virus may be lurking.

The intent of this directive is to help, not to punish. While this directive does come with consequences for those who fail to comply, law enforcement has to give warnings before moving to more drastic measures such as civil or criminal penalties.

My goal throughout this whole crisis has been to provide for the health and safety of Nevadans. And I have partnered with Attorney General Aaron Ford who is working with local law enforcement agencies across the state to ensure they understand the intent of this directive and how to implement appropriately.

As your governor, I understand that every choice I make has real life consequences for the citizens of this State. That is not lost on me. I wake up every morning thinking about the impacts of my decisions. But here's what I know: whenever I'm faced with a tough choice, there are a lot of factors that I must consider, but none more important than public health. Before making a final decision, I ask myself, will making this choice save lives and help protect our health care system. When it came to this measure, the answer was yes.

I know this is all moving very fast, but I assure you, as I make decisions I will continue to remain focused on one singular question: Will this action prevent more Nevadans from dying from this virus? That's the goal. By uniting together and fighting back against our invisible enemy, the more Nevadans we'll protect and the sooner we'll be able to open for business and get back to work.

Before I take some questions, I want to update Nevadans on other work we have been doing in my office to protect the public. Today, we issued guidance to ensure child care is prioritized for first responders and health care workers so they can continue to be on the frontlines of this fight during the COVID-19 crisis.

I also signed an emergency regulation, promulgated by the Board of Pharmacy, to limit the hoarding of two certain drugs, chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine. While the two drugs serve necessary medical purposes, there is no conclusive evidence at this time among COVID-19 experts or Nevada's own medical health advisory team that the drugs

provide treatment for COVID-19 patients. The emergency regulation is aimed at preventing hoarding of the drugs so that those who actually need them can have access to them.

In a continued effort to be honest with Nevadans and share the information I have, I will soon begin providing Nevadans with daily updates and situation reports.

Thank you. I will now take some questions.

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