

**SECOND CONTINUATION OF WESTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH VARIANCE
NO. 2021-4**

**COUNTYWIDE VARIANCE TO THE RESTRICTIONS MANDATED IN
STATEWIDE PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER #4: REQUIRING FACE COVERINGS
IN CERTAIN PLACES, WITH EXCEPTIONS**

WHEREAS, Weston County Public Health Variance 2021-4 was initially ordered by the Wyoming State Health Officer on January 25, 2021, to run through February 14, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Order was extended through February 28, 2021; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no county health officer in Weston County, pursuant to Wyoming Statute § 35-1-306(a); and

WHEREAS, Wyoming Statute § 35-1-240(a)(i), (ii), (iii), and (iv) gives the power to the Wyoming Department of Health, through the State Health Officer, or under her direction and supervision, or through the other employees of the Wyoming Department of Health to control the causes of communicable disease; to close theaters, schools, and other public places; and to forbid gatherings of people when necessary to protect public health; and

WHEREAS, as evidenced by her signature below, Alexia Harrist, MD, Ph.D., the Wyoming State Health Officer, has reviewed and does hereby authorize the issuance of this countywide variance order, and Dr. Alexia Harrist, also specifically makes the finding that this order is appropriate for the health of the public in Weston County; and

WHEREAS, that State Health Officer has entered Statewide Public Health Order #4 Requiring Face Coverings in certain places, with exceptions; and

WHEREAS, Statewide Order #4 is specifically titled: "Fourth Continuation of Statewide Order #4: Requiring Face Coverings in Certain Places, with Exceptions. Statewide Order #4 is set to expire on March 15, 2021, unless the State Health Officer revokes the order before March 15, 2021; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 was first detected in Wuhan, China in 2019, and since then has spread to over 60 countries including the United States; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory illness, transmitted through person-to-person contact or by contact with surfaces contaminated with the virus. Persons infected with COVID-19 may become symptomatic two to fourteen days after exposure. The symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. In some cases, COVID-19 can result in severe disease including hospitalization, admission to an intensive care unit, and death; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a worldwide pandemic as of March 11, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020 the President of the United States declared a national emergency concerning the coronavirus, specifically stating that, in “December 2019 a novel (new) coronavirus known as SARS-Co V-2 (“the virus”) was first detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, People’s Republic of China, causing outbreaks of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that has now spread globally. The spread of COVID-19 within our Nation’s communities threatens to strain our Nation’s healthcare systems. Additional measures are needed to successfully contain and combat the virus in the United States;” and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon declared a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency in the State of Wyoming, and the State of Wyoming is experiencing a public health emergency in response to the evolving COVID-19 outbreak; and

WHEREAS, Governor Gordon’s Declaration of a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency directs the Wyoming Department of Health to take all appropriate and necessary actions, and that in the judgment of the Director of the Wyoming Department of Health, any actions necessary should be taken to provide aid to those locations where there is a threat or danger to public health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of Wyoming citizens are at risk of serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, people with mild symptoms, and even asymptomatic people, place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk; and

WHEREAS, a large number of persons with serious infections can compromise the ability of the healthcare system to deliver the necessary healthcare to the public; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the above findings, stopping the spread of COVID-19 includes washing hands often, practicing physical distancing by avoiding close contact with others, staying at least six feet away from someone who is ill or showing signs of illness, avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth, covering your cough or sneeze into your elbow or by using a tissue, and wearing a face covering in public; and

WHEREAS, as of February 25, 2021, the number of laboratory-confirmed positive cases in Weston County is 527 with 520 laboratory-confirmed recovered cases. As of February 25, 2021, the number of probable cases in Weston County is 95 with 92 probable recovered cases. There have been 5 COVID-19 associated deaths in Weston County. Thus, there are presently 2 active laboratory-confirmed cases and 3 active probable cases in Weston County; and

WHEREAS, as of February 25, 2021, the rate of newly reported laboratory confirmed cases in Weston County over the previous 14 days is 14 cases per 100,000 population; and

WHEREAS, as of February 25, 2021, the percent of tests that are positive over the previous 14 days is 1.5%; and

WHEREAS, as of February 25, 2021, Weston County has conducted 953 molecular tests per 100,000 population over the previous 14 days, with additional antigen tests being conducted; and

WHEREAS, as of February 25, 2021, there are no skilled nursing facilities or assisted living facilities with active resident COVID-19 infections and no other communal settings with active outbreaks; and

WHEREAS, Monument Health, Hometown Medical Clinic and Weston County Health Services have an adequate supply of viral transport media and swabs to test symptomatic patients if there were an increased demand for testing, with additional testing supplies available from Weston County Public Health Nursing; and

WHEREAS, Monument Health, Hometown Medical Clinic and Weston County Health Services have an adequate supply of PPE available in the event of an increased incidence of positive cases; and Weston County Public Health Nursing has additional PPE supplies if needed.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT, that individuals within Weston County, Wyoming are exempt from the requirements in Statewide Public Health Order #4. Washing hands often, practicing physical distancing by avoiding close contact with others, staying home when ill, avoiding touching your faces, eyes, nose, and mouth, covering your cough or sneeze into your elbow or by using a tissue, and wearing a face covering in public are still encouraged.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, that the State Health Officer may issue more restrictions to Statewide Public Health Order #4 on a case by case basis after evaluation outbreak progress in Weston County; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, that this Countywide Variance to Statewide Public Health Order #4 shall remain in effect until such time as the State Health Officer enters a decision to revoke or modify this variance; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, that any person or legal entity that violates this variance shall be subject to criminal prosecution under Wyo. Stat. Ann. §§ 35-1-105 and -106.

DATED THIS 26 DAY OF February, 2021.

Direction to Issue Variance

I, Dr. Alexia Harrist, the Wyoming State Health Officer, hereby state that I have reviewed the above variance and hereby direct, pursuant to Wyo. Stat. Ann. §§ 35-1-227 and -240(a)(i), (ii), (iii), and (iv), this variance to be issued in Weston County. As the State Health Officer, I specifically deem this variance appropriate for Weston County, Wyoming. I will reassess the necessity of this variance as appropriate to do so and according to accepted epidemiological and medical standards.



Alexia Harrist MD, PhD
Wyoming State Health Officer