



Salt Lake County COVID-19 Response

MEMO

To: General Jefferson Burton

From: Mayor Jenny Wilson and Director Gary Edwards

Subject: Request to Maintain Salt Lake County Under Moderate Risk-Level Guidelines

Date: May 11, 2020

REQUEST

As the State of Utah considers moving between risk levels of *Utah Leads Together's* Phased Guidelines (the guidelines), Salt Lake County recommends more time to assess the potential impact as well as assure residents that the positive trends that have been achieved during the high risk phase of response are also maintained during the moderate risk level phase of response.

While we have observed a definite leveling of cases, we believe it is too early to know for sure that the spread of COVID-19 can be managed under the moderate risk level of the guidelines. We believe an additional 10 days (until May 21) of operating under the moderate risk level is prudent in order to analyze trends and to be truly confident that stabilization of the spread of COVID-19 has occurred. This would also give us the opportunity to clarify with the Utah Department of Health some concerns Salt Lake County has with various allowances described in the "low risk" categories (as outlined in the current version 4.1)

If the State moves to the low risk phase of the guidelines prior to May 21, Salt Lake County requests an exemption to operate under moderate risk level guidelines.

RATIONALE

The State and counties of Utah have made tremendous effort in managing the spread of COVID-19. The promise of our efforts is now being realized, allowing Salt Lake County to state the following:

1. The residents of Utah have been able to successfully pressure the virus during the high risk phase of response. We have seen the doubling rate of the virus extended, as well as daily confirmed cases and hospitalization rates stabilize.
2. We have seen our medical systems operate without having to resort of crisis standards of care, including decreases in hospitalizations and admissions to the ICU.
3. We maintain the availability of testing for any resident with symptoms of COVID-19.
4. We maintain a robust operation to monitor and conduct contact tracing by confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Our rationale to maintain operations under the moderate risk level guidelines is as follows:

1. Salt Lake County's active positive case rate is over four times the State's rate, and while the State's active positive case rate appears to be gradually declining, the county's rate remains static.
2. Understanding the characteristics and behavior of COVID-19, we have not yet been able to analyze a full incubation period of the virus (understood as 14 days) under the moderate risk level of the guidelines.
3. Salt Lake County has identified numerous hotspots aligned with communities that include diverse and underserved populations where response continues. In addition, several counties across the state have seen hotspots develop between the transition period of high risk and moderate risk levels of the guidelines.
4. There has been a significant investment in maintaining pressure of COVID-19 in Utah to date, and Salt Lake County wants to ensure that there is understanding and evidence that the virus can be managed under the guidelines.

We value collaboration with the State and look forward to discussion and agreement on a way forward that maintains the safety of our residents and the continued deference to evidence and analysis. We look forward to your response to our request and look forward to continued dialog as we collective work to protect Utah.