

News Release

March 29, 2020

SLCo Issues Public Health Order: “Salt Lake County: Stay Safe. Stay Home.”

Mandatory order emphasizes the importance of staying safe at home, closes some businesses and requires other businesses to more stringently follow social distancing recommendations

(SALT LAKE COUNTY)—Today, Mayor Jenny Wilson and Salt Lake County Health Department issued a new public health order to enact further protections designed to limit the spread of COVID-19. The new order, called “*Salt Lake County: Stay Safe. Stay Home,*” is effective tonight (12:01 a.m. on Monday, March 30) and will be in place until 11:59 p.m. on Monday, April 13. The order:

1. Directs all individuals to stay at home except to engage in essential activities, which includes going to work under the conditions outlined in the order.
2. Matches earlier county and state public health orders regarding food service operations.
3. Closes certain businesses that act as gathering places or involve close contact between people.
4. Closes children’s playgrounds and prohibits team sports, including pickup games, though outdoor sport courts and fields will remain open for individual and for individuals that reside in the same household. Residents are asked to responsibly enjoy recreational amenities by always maintaining 6 feet from people outside of their household.
5. Requires businesses to actively enforce social distancing practices and exclude ill employees from working; social distancing should include at least 6-feet between all people in the establishment, and workers symptomatic with respiratory illness or fever must not be present under any circumstances.
6. Defines essential businesses that should do their best to comply with social distancing recommendations but, due to the nature of their operations, may be unable to fully comply and are therefore exempt from order enforcement. Essential businesses must still exclude ill employees from working.

See SaltLakeHealth.org for expanded list of closed and essential businesses.

State law requires penalties for violating a local public health order. While penalties outlined by state code classify the offense as a misdemeanor (class B for the initial offense, class A for repeat offenses), Salt Lake County has asked local municipalities to enforce the public health order initially via warnings rather than citations. Repeat or egregious offenders may be cited and charged.

“This order complements both the Governor’s directive and the intent of Salt Lake City’s current order. Our collective goal is to save lives and keep our health system from being overwhelmed,” said Mayor Jenny Wilson. “Reducing opportunities for people to congregate is one of the most important things we can do to help ‘flatten the curve’ and minimize stress on our healthcare system. This order strikes the right balance between public and economic health by prohibiting only the business practices most concerning when it comes to transmission of COVID-19.”

“It is imperative that every individual and family in the county do their part to maintain physical distance from others in the community,” said Gary Edwards, executive director of the Salt Lake County Health Department. “The degree to which community members follow this order will directly determine how well Salt Lake County weathers this outbreak.”

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