



3rd GARFIELD COUNTY VARIANCE REQUEST

For Submission in website format: (language in bold is from the template)

Date: Friday, June 12, 2020

Name of County: Garfield County

Name of Submitter: Garfield County Board of County Commissioners

Garfield County requests a variance from the following restrictions in Executive Order D 2020 091 and/or 6th Amended Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home and in the Vast, Great Outdoors.

List the sections of Executive Order D 2020 091 and/or 6th Amended Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home and in the Vast, Great Outdoors that variances are being sought for:

Garfield County is requesting approval to govern and manage the COVID-19 response at the local level. We propose a tailored approach based on our Road Map to Reopening, by which all businesses will be considered “critical”, all activities will be considered “necessary”, and occupancy and gathering sizes will be guided by strict Social Distancing Requirements rather than a specific number. This would include, but not be limited to variations from PHO 20-28 I.J. and K., II. A., III. L, Appx. A.I (libraries) and III (indoor malls), Appx. C., and Appx. F (augmenting list of businesses considered critical).

Summarize alternate restrictions being proposed to replace the above-referenced restrictions and indicate where in the Plan these alternate restrictions are addressed:

See the attached Road Map to Reopening and Suppression Plan. Our road map is right sized for our local community and is supported by our ability and capacity to respond and manage cases, as evidenced by our Public Health resources and Hospital support. This approach allows Garfield County to make independent decisions about the governance and operation of our COVID-19 response.

Upload your county COVID-19 Suppression Plan and documentation demonstrating approval by the county commissioners, and confirmation from all impacted local hospitals that they can serve all individuals needing their care. [attached] Provide a brief summary of each of the

following elements contained in the county COVID-19 Suppression Plan and indicate where in the Plan more information can be found for each element.

1. Prevalence of COVID -19 within the county

As of June 9th, 2020, Garfield County has 170 COVID-19 cases. We are not seeing community-spread of COVID-19 in Garfield County currently. We have continued to see a downward trend in cases overall from our peak, March 9th through March 28th, and no significant changes in case numbers through the first Safer-at-Home period through the initial phase of our first variance. Garfield County has seen 23.93 cases per 100,000 persons for the 14-day period of 5/25-6/7.

2. Hospital Capacity

Garfield County hospitals (Valley View Hospital and Grand River Health) are safely able to treat all patients requiring hospitalization without resorting to crisis standards of care.

3. Local containment measures

Garfield County's capacity can accomplish 15 case investigations plus contact tracing (average 5-6 close contacts per case) per day with the ability to increase internal capacity as needed.

4. Conditions to determine the variance is not providing adequate COVID-19 protection and the triggers for tightening restrictions.

Garfield County is committed to adhering to the remainder of the applicable Public Health Orders of the CDPHE, but will also continue to promote the social distancing recommendations of the CDC to help further slow and ultimately stop the spread of COVID-19 within our community. If, at any time, cases double over a 14-day period or greater than 60 cases per our first variance, all measures revert back to a Safer-at-Home order.

Yes - We confirm that the variance requested does not lessen or eliminate the protections for Vulnerable Individuals in the Executive Order D 2020 091 and/or 6th Amended Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home and in the Vast, Great Outdoors.

Yes - We confirm that the County will collect and monitor data to evaluate the impacts of the variance and make such data available upon request by CDPHE.

Attachment to website submission:

GARFIELD COUNTY VARIANCE REQUEST AND SUPPRESSION PLAN

In accordance with paragraph II.J of Executive Order 091, Garfield County respectfully submits this application for a locally appropriate variance and, by the Commissioners' signatures below, certifies that the county has a low case count of COVID-19 related cases and that the proposed suppression plan has been approved by the local public health authority and by the two hospitals in Garfield County, Valley View Hospital and Grand River Health.

The requested variance and proposed suppression plan will allow Garfield County to implement a reopening procedure and timeline that best reflects and meets the needs of our community while maintaining a steady decline in COVID related illnesses and ensuring maximum protections for vulnerable populations. In collaboration with local partners, the County believes that it has created an alternative suppression plan that upholds the spirit and intent of Executive Order D 2020 091 and the 6th Amended Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home and in the Vast, Great Outdoors while also allowing certain specific modifications appropriate to local businesses and local needs. Close monitoring and specific criteria will demonstrate the success of the County plan and safeguards are in place that would trigger the re-imposition of tighter restrictions if necessary. Specifically, if case counts begin to rise and reach the point of doubling within 5 days, restrictions will be re-imposed by further LPHA order.

Garfield County Public Health, in collaboration with local businesses, has developed a Roadmap to Reopening and applicable criteria ("Roadmap Criteria"), including a Garfield County Business Social Distancing Plan ("Social Distancing Plan"), which must be completed by any business prior to reopening in Garfield County. To date, nearly 900 Social Distancing Plans have been submitted and reviewed by those business who chose to begin to reopen in accordance with Executive Order D 2020 091 and the 6th Amended Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home and in the Vast, Great Outdoors. The Roadmap Criteria, **attached**, closely mirrors the Governor's phased recovery plan. Garfield County is committed to its role as a steward of the intent and purpose of the State's public health orders.

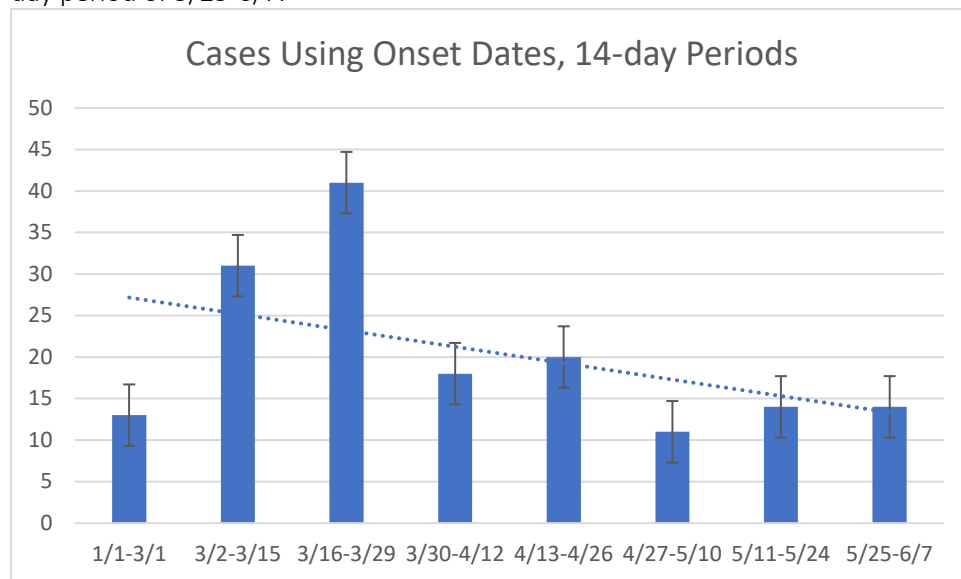
Since mid-March, 2020, Garfield County has engaged various industry / local community and business stakeholder groups including oil & gas, restaurants, construction / trades, chambers of commerce, small business development, local governments, lending and finance, tourist attractions and outdoor recreation businesses. This variance request and suppression plan represent the input and collaboration of all representatives of those industries. More specifically, Garfield County initiated a County Economic Recovery Team (CERT) which has a robust stakeholder outreach component where we solicited specific input from these stakeholders about their ability to reopen as well as challenges and gaps they see in their respective industries.

We have also engaged the Task Force which is the core component of the CERT whose purpose is to bring challenges, concerns, gaps in recovery assistance from their respective sectors or parts of the Garfield County local economy & community. The task Force works toward potential solutions for those concerns raised which will likely be centered around / driven by guidance from the State and County Public Health. This group can assist in developing creative ways our local businesses can operate so that they can remain in business and open to the fullest extent possible within the parameters of Public Health orders. (Much of this will include resource identification and communication which we do well with the County website already.)

Garfield County is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all Coloradans by focusing on physical, emotional and financial needs of its local citizens.

1. Prevalence of COVID-19 within Garfield County

As of June 9th, 2020 Garfield County has 170 COVID-19 cases. For the first time since our first reported case on March 14th, 2020 we have more lab-confirmed cases than probable cases, 88 and 82 respectively. The county has seen an uptick in cases, but we have not seen a doubling of cases over the previous 14-day periods. The recent increase in cases stem from clusters that we have been able to identify and implement quarantine and isolation protocols through the work of our increased contact tracing nurse team. We are not seeing community-spread of COVID-19 in Garfield County currently. We have continued to see a downward trend in cases overall from our peak, March 9th through March 28th, see attached graph, and no significant changes in case numbers through the first Safer-at-Home period through the initial phase of our first variance. Garfield County has seen 23.93 cases per 100,000 persons for the 14-day period of 5/25-6/7.



- a) All data in Garfield County indicates a peak during Mar 9-Mar 24.
- b) New case reports dropped for 4-5 weeks post the peak and have since flattened.

- c) Similarly, this same trend can be demonstrated by self-reports of onset, onset dates from lab-confirmed cases, test date for lab confirmed cases, out-patient and in-patient hospital data and positivity rate for tests performed.
- d) Behavioral health care needs continue to be a concern. Our community is experiencing a great deal of fear, anxiety and depression within our community regarding job loss and isolation. We hope that with the introduction of CredibleMind individuals will find another resource to help during these times.
- e) Triggers have also been established for when to tighten restrictions (Attachment B). It is not one trigger, rather a combination of the following:
 - I. Number of hospitalizations,
 - II. Case count exceeding 60 new cases over 14-day period (per first variance),
 - III. Increase at outpatient clinics (based on our trend data),
 - IV. Increasing trend of percent of tests positive over 15 days.

2. Hospital Capacity

Garfield County hospitals (Valley View Hospital and Grand River Health) are safely able to treat all patients requiring hospitalization without resorting to crisis standards of care. Our Garfield County Hospitals are safely able to treat all patients requiring hospitalization without resorting to crisis standards of care.

- a) The data for hospital and medical system capacity mirrors the disease surveillance data.
- b) Admissions and ED visits have not been overwhelmed beyond capacity since April 27th.
- c) Reports from Valley View Hospital, Grand River Health, and from our EMS services continue to report no increase in call volume related to COVID-19 call.
- d) Medical providers have been able to, at their discretion, reopen for elective procedures as of April 27th.
- e) All medical providers have reinstated.
- f) Indications from hospitals in neighboring counties of Eagle and Pitkin indicate a similar trend with current census being low.

3. Local Containment Measures Being Proposed

- a. Garfield County Public Health Investigation Capacity

Garfield County's Capacity can accomplish 15 case investigations plus contact tracing (average 5-6 close contacts per case) per day with the ability to increase internal capacity as needed.

- b. Local Containment Measures: *(describe the contact tracing resources and protocols)*

Garfield County has 10 contact tracers who are currently able to do contact investigations on every positive case. Case investigations are initiated within 24 hours. Contact tracing is also performed with people who were in direct contact with identified positive cases.

With fewer cases being reported that capacity to actively monitor each patient is the highest priority. This includes case investigations and contact tracing, as well as ensuring active monitoring, housing and other necessities for the duration of isolation and/or quarantine.

If at any time, cases double over a 14-day period, all measures revert to a Safer-at-Home order.

c. Outbreak Risks in High-Vulnerability Settings are Minimized:

Garfield County has been actively working with our most vulnerable communities via public health teams.

d. Workplace Preventative Measures are Established:

Garfield County has established a robust Road Map to Recovery and has reviewed over 900 local business Social Distancing Plans that follow existing social distancing and COVID-19 protocols.

e. Communities are Engaged - Yes

Garfield County has been actively working with all City Managers through the Government Liaison role to the Incident Management Team and has worked extensively with various community stakeholders in the County's Economic Recovery Team (CERT).

f. Vulnerable populations – Yes

Garfield County will continue to follow the state orders around vulnerable and high-risk populations.

4. Conditions to determine the variance is not providing adequate COVID-19 protection and the triggers for tightening restrictions

Although there is no doubt that Garfield County has been affected by the spread of COVID-19, the prevalence of the virus has been considerably less than that of other counties throughout the State of Colorado. Garfield County attributes this to the County's close alliance with local hospitals and a network of other qualified health care professionals who, in collaboration with the County's Public Health Department and other County officials, have been able promptly identify cases, implement isolation procedures, and provide community supports to encourage compliance and effectuate containment.

Notwithstanding the variances requested herein, the County is not only committed to adhering to the remainder of the applicable Public Health Orders of the CDPHE, but will also continue to promote the social distancing recommendations of the CDC to help further slow and ultimately stop the spread of COVID-19 within our community. Ultimately, if at any time, cases double over a 14-day period or greater than 60 cases per our first variance, all measures revert to a Safer-at-Home order.

Commissioner John Martin, Chair

Commissioner Tom Jankovsky

Commissioner Mike Samson