

Idaho moves back to Stage 3 amid healthcare capacity constraints statewide

Monday October 26, 2020

Boise, Idaho – Governor Brad Little signed a statewide public health order today moving Idaho back into a modified Stage 3 of the Idaho Rebounds plan as healthcare facilities throughout the state face alarming demand and capacity constraints due to increasing COVID-19 spread.

“Hospitals throughout the state are quickly filling up or are already full with COVID-19 patients and other patients, and way too many healthcare workers are out sick with COVID-19,” Governor Little said.

Under the new Stage 3:

- Indoor gatherings are limited to 50 people or less.
- Outdoor gatherings are limited to 25-percent capacity.
- Physical distancing requirements are in place for gatherings of all types.
- Long-term care facilities will not be allowed to operate without requiring masks on their premises.
- There will be seating only at bars, restaurants, and nightclubs. Nightclubs can only operate as bars.
- Employers should continue to protect at-risk employees by allowing telework or by making special accommodations for these individuals in the workplace.
- All individuals and businesses should follow recommended protocols for minimizing transmission of the virus available at Rebound.Idaho.Gov.

Governor Little said the new order does not mean the economy is on lockdown. Idaho’s economy will remain open. It does not mean in-person church services will end. It does not mean travel is restricted in and out of the state.

Governor Little also said the new order does not mean schools should go to full remote learning.

“We put millions of dollars and substantial effort toward the safe operation of schools to ensure they are safe places to learn and work. The state rolled out a Back to School Framework in the summer, providing local school leaders a blueprint for safe opening. Our students fall too far behind when they’re away from their teachers and classmates. We must continue to prioritize safe in-person learning for students across Idaho,” Governor Little said.

Governor Little said the eventual shift to a localized approach was the right thing to do but it has not worked as well as it should because the virus is relentless and in some parts of the state there simply have been insufficient efforts by local health boards, mayors, and county commissioners to protect lives.

“I sincerely hope that some people have finally passed the point of thinking the pandemic is not real or not a big deal, or that their personal actions don’t really affect anything. We have seen the direct impact between rising case numbers in our communities and the overwhelming impacts on our healthcare system – something that affects all of us, whether we have COVID or not,” Governor Little said.

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