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[Home](#) / [News](#)

/ [Burgum announces changes to county risk levels, recommended gathering sizes to slow COVID-19](#)

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[<< All News](#)

*Wednesday, October 14, 2020 - 04:30pm*

BISMARCK, N.D. – With active COVID-19 cases continuing to rise in North Dakota, Gov. Doug Burgum today announced updates to the ND Smart Restart guidelines to help reverse the trend and reduce the spread of coronavirus in communities.

“We can better target the source of community spread of COVID-19 by reducing the recommended size limits for gatherings while also collaborating with communities to promote social distancing, wearing face coverings and practicing good hand hygiene to save lives and livelihoods,” Burgum said.

Effective 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, the updated ND Smart Restart guidelines are as follows for counties under these risk designations:

- **Critical** (red): Non-essential businesses closed
- **High** (orange): 25% occupancy with a cap of 50 people (changed from non-essential businesses closed); encourage businesses to require face coverings
- **Moderate** (yellow): 50% occupancy with a cap of 100 people (down from 250); encourage businesses to require face coverings
- **Low** (green): 75% occupancy with a cap of 200 people (down from 500)
- **New Normal** (blue): operate as usual.

Burgum also announced that for the first time, 16 counties are being moved into the high-risk (orange) level, which now recommends reduced occupancy rather than business closures. Nine counties are moving from low risk to moderate risk, and two are moving from the new normal to low

risk. The risk level map will be updated [here](#).

The changes to county risk levels are specific to large gatherings and businesses, not the instructional model within K-12 schools.

Larger indoor and outdoor gatherings are permitted if approved by community leaders and the local health authority. Community leaders may require event planners to submit a logistics and emergency operations plan to their local health authority no later than 30 days prior to the event. The ND Smart Restart recommendations are intended to supplement and not replace local requirements.

Burgum and Lt. Gov. Brent Sanford also met with more than a dozen mayors from North Dakota's largest cities on Wednesday to discuss their local challenges, strategies to increase adherence to guidelines and how the state can best support local efforts.

For more information on North Dakota's COVID-19 response, visit [www.health.nd.gov/coronavirus](http://www.health.nd.gov/coronavirus) or [www.ndresponse.gov](http://www.ndresponse.gov).

<< All News