



Monongalia County Health Department

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MONONGALIA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT UPDATE

West Virginia Governor has continued to follow the science, advice of Covid Leadership, and through his WV Strong, Comeback Plan has modified previous orders to safely open commerce in a step-wise fashion. The following are a synopsis of the Governor's new orders which modify previous Monongalia County Health Department orders.

Restaurants and Bars

Gov. Justice signed Executive Order 6-21, increasing capacity limits for all restaurants and bars from 50 percent of seating capacity to 75 percent seating capacity.

This change applies only if social distancing can be maintained between groups that arrive and sit together.

Bars may only increase capacity to extent they have physical seating for every patron. No standing room is allowed for people to congregate.

This change will be effective at midnight February 20, 2021.

Businesses must still continue to follow all applicable safety guidelines, including, but not limited to, mandatory face coverings and social distancing.

Additional Information may be found:

<https://governor.wv.gov/Documents/Covid%20Week%205/2020.05.29%20Restaurant%20and%20Bars%20Guidelines.pdf>

Small Businesses and Retail Stores

At direction of Gov. Justice, WV DHHR has amended its rules on capacity limitations for small businesses, retail stores, and grocery stores.

For small businesses and retail stores, capacity will be permitted to increase from 2 people per 1,000 square feet to 4 people per 1,000 square feet.

For grocery stores, capacity will be permitted to increase from 3 people per 1,000 square feet to 6 people per 1,000 square feet.

These businesses must still continue to follow all applicable safety guidelines, including, but not limited to, mandatory face coverings and social distancing.

Social Gathering Limit

Executive Order 6-21 also raises social gathering limits from 25 people to 75 people.

This limitation applies only for any gathering of people for purely social purposes. This limitation does not apply to any activity, business, or entity that has been deemed essential, such as religious services, weddings, or group meetings, conferences, or other special events held for essential businesses and operations, as defined by Executive Order 9-20, as amended.

Those partaking in such purely social gatherings must continue to social distance, wear face coverings, and follow all other applicable safety guidelines.

Schools and Sports

Gov. Justice also noted that, by next week, all teachers and school service personnel over 50 years of age, who requested to be vaccinated, will have completed their second dose.

Therefore, the Governor is calling on West Virginia Board of Education to make it mandatory that all counties send their students in grades Pre-K-8 back to school full-time. Gov. Justice also signed Executive Order 7-21, clarifying that statewide, all Pre-K-8 students, in all counties should be in school.

WVSSAC and the Governor have been working on the upcoming winter sports season, set to commence on this year's spring sports calendar. All county school boards are to ensure that they have occupancy rules or attendance limitations in place that meet social distancing requirements and all other guidelines.

Live Music

The Governor also issued a reminder that, he issued Executive Order 5-21, clarifying existing prohibition on live indoor music performances.

Live music performances, except for those incorporating vocals or using wind instruments, may take place indoors, so long as the event is held in accordance with all applicable safety guidelines.

Live music incorporating vocals or using wind instruments may be performed indoors only for simulcast or other broadcast to remote audiences where no audience is physically present.

Additional information may be found:

<https://governor.wv.gov/Documents/Covid%20Additional%20Guidances/2020.10.5%20Guidance%20for%20Live%20Performances.pdf>

All guidance documents may be found:

<https://governor.wv.gov/The-Comeback/Pages/default.aspx>

Therefore, in compliance with existing Executive Orders, Monongalia County Health Department amends their previous order dated April 9, 2020 and this amended order becomes effective upon signing.

Monongalia County continues to urge all citizens to be prudent in their actions and activities and continue to wear a mask, wash your hands frequently, and to watch your distance. Any adult member of public can report non-compliance with these orders by calling Monongalia County Health Department at 304-598-6703.

Monongalia County Health Department reserves the right to amend this order as necessary to protect the health and welfare of the public. Any amendment made will be communicated by media release and other reasonable methods of notification.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lee B. Smith" with "MD, JD" written in smaller letters to the right.

Lee B. Smith, MD, JD, FACEP
Executive Director & County Health Officer

Amended & Signed February 22, 2021