

Johnson County Recovery Plan

DRAFT

April 27, 2020

Introduction

In response to the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 both Johnson County and Governor Laura Kelly issued Stay At Home orders as a public health mitigation strategy to slow the spread of the virus.

On April 20, 2020 the Board of County Commissioners established a Johnson County Recovery Planning Task Force to make recommendations of how to responsibly remove the Stay At Home order while continuing to protect the community's health and safety. The primary goal of the task force is to recommend a phased approach to the re-opening of business and gathering locations.

There are a few key points that will affect the recommendations moving forward:

1. There is a lot about COVID-19 that we do not know. We do not know whether ambient temperature has an impact. We do not know whether this will end up being seasonal. We do not know if an infection proffers some measure of immunity and if yes, how much. We also do not know enough about how it spreads. This plan is based on the best information that is currently available and may change as our knowledge improves.
2. Once the orders are lifted, especially when social distancing and gathering size requirements are relaxed, will most likely cause an increase of varying magnitudes in COVID-19 spread. How the orders are lifted is a key determinant.
3. Until a vaccine or other therapeutic interventions become available some level of social distancing will be required.
4. Residents returning to work and travelers coming to Johnson County will cause new introductions of the virus in our county.
5. Before the orders is lifted, the public health system needs to have a robust surveillance system in place to enhance our capacity to detect outbreaks. This will include new and trained staffing, adequate sample collection instruments, laboratory testing resources, sentinel sites and frequent drive-through testing. Mitigation measures will need to be re-introduced if wide-spread transmission detected.
6. Communication plans need to be developed to inform and educate the community to increase confidence and belief that, with modifications in place, it is ok to return to work, play and worship.

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Universal Precautions and Basic “must-do” tasks in all phases

These universal precautions and basic “must-do” tasks are intended to provide guidance throughout all the recovery phases. It is anticipated that these tasks will be modified and added to as we learn more about COVID-19 and the best ways to stop the spread.

1. Continue to encourage our residents to wear barrier masks whenever they are out in the community. These barrier masks should be laundered daily. Continue frequent hand washing, refrain from touching their faces and continue to practice staying 6 feet away from others.
2. Continue to encourage residents to avoid large crowds and limit close physical interactions.
3. Continue to encourage citizens to not embark on unnecessary travel and to restrict travel to areas with high transmission of coronavirus. Quarantine requirements should remain in place for those that travel.
4. Continue to restrict visits to our long-term care facilities.
5. Continue to encourage high-risk residents, e.g. those with immune disorders, elderly, to continue to ‘stay at home’ as much as possible.
6. Protect our vulnerable populations.
7. Businesses of different sizes will be allowed to open only when they can maintain physical distancing measures. Businesses will be required to encourage telecommuting, utilize shift control and to continue to do some of what they are currently doing to ensure physical distancing.
8. Businesses are encouraged to have executed their reopening plans in phases, rather than opening at full capacity. Some may only be able to operate at less than 100% capacity to meet the physical distancing measures. For example, restaurants may operate at 50% capacity and augment with deliveries and pick-ups.
9. Businesses should consider resources available to them to provide PPE to employees in determining when to open and the level of operation. Again, we expect processes to be optimized to ensure that employees and customers are protected.
10. It is also best practice to encourage employees to monitor their symptoms and stay at home if they are sick.

Phased Approach to Recovery

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Opening the economy and rolling back some of the measures in place is expected to occur in phases with the overarching consideration being to prevent spread of COVID-19 and the protection of the health of the public.

We must understand that this will be on a ‘trial and error’ basis. There will be an increased risk of exposure to our residents and thus, increased risk of serious consequences and overwhelming of our hospital capacity. We must understand that we may need to again implement the same or even stricter measures if we find evidence that wide-spread transmission is detected.

The county, businesses and establishments will continue to work to ensure that PPE and other resources are available.

After every phase, the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment will conduct surveillance to measure community impact.

This recovery plan is intended to address “non-essential” businesses under the current Stay at Home order issued by Governor Kelly. State of Kansas Executive Order 20-16 identified “essential” businesses that are already allowed to operate. It is recommended that “essential” businesses to observe the universal precautions and basic “must-do” tasks to protect the health of our residents.

Duration of Phases

Proceeding to the next phase will depend on meeting the applicable gating criteria including the impacts on the spread of the virus, impacts on our vulnerable populations, and our hospital capacities. Specifically, these must occur before proceeding to the next phase:

1. Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period OR
2. Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests)

Given what we currently know about the virus, we will begin monitoring the impacts of roll back in each phase after 14 days.

Parameters and criteria for determining businesses that will be in each phase

The following factors will be used to determine where businesses fall in the three phases. An assessment of the risk posed by business categories to COVID-19 transmission and the impacts will be made qualitatively based on the following:

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1. Risk of transmission in an establishment (staff and customers) that is representative of an industry group. The goal is to minimize close contacts for a prolonged period of time.
2. How modifiable the processes are in the business group to minimize interactions.
3. What other risk management and risk reduction strategies can be implemented.

Businesses in the First Roll-Back phase will be on the lower end of the risk assessment scale. In this plan, we use the term “business” broadly to include “for profit”, “not for profit”, “governmental”, “non-governmental” organizations.

Following the White House Opening Plan, we should move forward to phased opening when we can satisfy the ‘Gating Criteria’:

- SYMPTOMS:
 - a. Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses (ILI) reported within a 14-day period, AND/OR
 - b. Downward trajectory of COVID-like syndromic cases reported within a 14-day period,

AND

- CASES
 - a. Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period OR
 - b. Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests)

AND

- HOSPITALS
 - a. Treat all patients without crisis care
 - b. Robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including (when ready) emerging antibody tests.

Phases

1. *Current Phase* – continue until the numbers confirm that we have truly succeeded in our measures to flatten the curve.
2. *Phase 1* – This will include businesses and sectors that are considered to present low risk of COVID-19 transmission, do not include large groups gatherings, have low risk of prolonged interactions, are adaptable and can put in place steps to reduce transmission.
3. *Phase 2* – The next categories of business will be allowed to open when the “Gating Criteria” are met. These will allow additional types of businesses deemed to present

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moderate risks to operate. Large gatherings of people will continue to be restricted, masks will continue to be worn, and other physical distancing will continue.

4. *Phase 3* - The next categories of business will be allowed to open when the “Gating Criteria” are met. These will allow remaining types of businesses deemed to present high risks to open. Large gatherings of people may still be restricted, masks may still be encouraged to be worn, and other physical distancing may still be required to continue.
5. *Phase 4* - The remaining categories of business will be allowed to open when the “Gating Criteria” are met. These will allow remaining types of businesses deemed to present very high risks to open. This phase will most likely be associated with availability of vaccine and/or therapeutic for COVID-19.

Business groups that fall in each phase are categorized in the table below. We expect best practices from every establishment as they open. More detailed risk reduction steps and guidance for specific industry and sectors exist. We will provide links to some in the appendix. However, we are strongly encouraging individual businesses and establishment to familiarize themselves with the details relevant to them, so they can operate within the spirit, requirements and intent of this plan. This is an evolving situation and it is expected that new guidance documents will be developed and released. Businesses are expected to follow the latest version of guidance documents in their respective sectors.