



Prevent • Promote • Protect

Office of Communication

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## NEWS RELEASE

November 23, 2020

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### **State moves El Paso County to Level Red: Severe Risk** *Effective Friday, November 27 at 5 p.m.*

**El Paso County, CO** – The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) notified local officials on November 23 that El Paso County is required to move from high-risk status (Level Orange) to severe risk (Level Red) on the [state's dial framework](#) in response to high levels of COVID-19 disease transmission, positivity rate and hospitalizations.

Moving to Level Red will require El Paso County to adhere to stricter limitations on social and commercial activities. The capacity limits are significant, requiring more aggressive mitigation efforts in Colorado and El Paso County, and go **into effect Friday, November 27 at 5 p.m.** Most indoor activities will be prohibited or strictly limited, and outdoor activities are encouraged as an alternative. Ahead of El Paso County, there are numerous Colorado counties who have already moved to Level Red in response to high levels of disease transmission.

As of today, [El Paso County's metrics](#) are as follows:

- Two-week incidence: 1160.7
- Two-week test positivity rate: 14.71%
- Two-week COVID-19 case count (new cases): 8,386

For a full list of COVID-19 testing sites in El Paso County, visit [El Paso County Public Health's testing page](#).

We are urging all residents to practice COVID-19 prevention measures and learn more about the [Small Acts, Big Impacts campaign](#):

- Keep gatherings small
- Limit unnecessary trips
- Wear a mask properly, making sure it covers the nose and mouth
- Practice social distancing
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water
- If you are sick, even with very mild symptoms, stay home. This is one of the most powerful tools we have to fight the spread of disease

As we head into Thanksgiving and the holiday season, it's important to think through ways to keep our loved ones and community safe as we celebrate. For guidance on how to celebrate Thanksgiving safely:

- [CDC Holiday Guidance](#)
- [CDC Thanksgiving Guidance](#)
- [CDPHE Thanksgiving Guidance](#)

### **Resources for the Community to Access Help**

**For business sectors with questions about what these new restrictions mean, contact:**

- [CDPHE Level Red: Severe Risk requirements by sector](#)
- Call El Paso County Public Health at (719) 578-3167
- Email El Paso County Public Health at [COVIDBusinessRecovery@elpasoco.com](mailto:COVIDBusinessRecovery@elpasoco.com)

**Call 2-1-1 for free, bilingual information, resources and referrals.**

- Hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### **Economic Recovery Initiative**

- The [Bundle Up for Small Businesses toolkit](#) is available with information, resources, and downloadable materials to help encourage safe participation in our local economy this winter.

### **Local Grant Opportunities**

- Early Child Care Education Program: Alliance for Kids, in partnership with the Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC), is launching a new local grant opportunity. Early childhood education (ECE) programs and family child-care homes (FCCHs) which meet the eligibility criteria will be funded in the order in which applications are received until funding is no longer available. This grant is to reimburse personnel and operational costs due to COVID-19 from March 10 – November 30. Up to \$11K for large ECE programs, \$7.5K for small ECE programs, and \$3.5K for FCCHs is available with a successful grant proposal. For the FULL grant details, eligibility, and link to apply, [click here](#).
- The seventh round of funding from the Colorado COVID-19 Relief Fund is now open. Deadline for application is December 3 at 7 p.m. The Fund will also be accepting applications for collaborative efforts that include three or more organizations. Collaborative applications may apply for up to \$100,000 and must meet criteria areas: organization type, populations served and alignment with the Impact priority area. See [www.helpcoloradonow.org](http://www.helpcoloradonow.org) for more information.

### **State Grant Opportunity**

- [The State's Winter Outdoor Dining Grant Program](#) second round of funding will open on November 30.

### **Federal Grant Opportunity**

- [Department of Agriculture's Fiscal Year 21 Community Connect Grant Program](#): provides broadband support in rural economically challenged communities. Award amounts are from \$100K to \$3M. Application deadline is December 23, 2020.

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