

# Nebraska: State-by-State COVID-19 Guidance

## NEBRASKA

*Please note: As of April 15, 2021 we are no longer doing regularly scheduled updates to this page.*

April 15, 2021:

Nebraska has [implemented](#) a new Directed Health Measure pertaining to individuals who have completed COVID-19 antibody testing. Unvaccinated persons are not required to quarantine if they:

- Have tested positive for antibodies within the past three months; and
- Are not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

The five-phase DMH remains in effect, and the state is currently in the green phase.

April 12, 2021:

In response to recent [CDC and FDA recommendations](#), Nebraska DHHS is [pausing](#) the administration of the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine.

April 8, 2021:

The state launched a rental assistance program—applying to all areas except Lancaster County, Douglas County, Lincoln, and Omaha—on February 22, 2021. As of April 5, the Omaha, Lincoln, and Lancaster County rental assistance programs [are live](#). The Douglas County program is scheduled to begin in mid-April.

The state is currently in the green phase of the five-phase series of directed health measures. The green phase [removes](#) capacity restrictions for indoor gatherings (except in Lancaster County), but Nebraskans are encouraged to follow guidance to prevent virus transmission. Additional, organizers of events with 500 or more people (or 1,000 or more in Douglas County) must still receive approval from their local health department in order to proceed with the event.

March 29, 2021:

As of March 29, 2021, Nebraska has implemented the Essential Public Functionality Pass, as well as [for analytics, personalization and targeted advertising](#). To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).  
On March 29 at 12:00 a.m. to enact this change. Updates include:

- Removal of the targeted age groups and critical infrastructure worker criteria, thereby allowing Retail Pharmacy Program Partners to vaccinate all adults; and
- Removal of the requirement that Retail Pharmacy Program Partners use the state's designated COVID-19 vaccine registration and scheduling system.

March 25, 2021:

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service [announced](#) Nebraska's approval for disbursement of a third round of Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer benefits to be issued between April 15, 2021 and August 15, 2021. Qualifying families with EBT cards will receive benefits automatically, and those without EBT cards will receive cards in the mail. Households will receive \$116 per 100% remote learner per month and \$62 per part-time remote learner per month. Questions regarding eligibility may be directed towards schools or emailed to [dhhs.nebraskapebt@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.nebraskapebt@nebraska.gov).

A new vaccination site is [opening](#) at Metropolitan Community College at North 32nd Street and Sorensen Parkway in Omaha as of April 1, 2021. As of March 24, the entire state has [moved](#) into Phase 2A of vaccination, which includes those aged 50 and older.

The Nebraska Infection Control Assessment and Promotion Program is working with Nebraska DHHS and the CDC on a training initiative titled Project Firstline. The initiative is intended to provide healthcare workers with necessary infection control training. The relevant agencies are asking healthcare workers to participate in a 5-minute [survey](#) before April 5, 2021 to help them determine which types of trainings would be the most beneficial.

Several additional pharmacies have opted into the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program to [offer](#) a limited number of COVID-19 vaccinations to priority individuals, including individuals age 50-64 in phase 2A. The current emphasis is now on teachers and childcare workers, but the following groups are also currently eligible for vaccination:

- Those 65 and older;
- Frontline essential workers in healthcare;
- EMS and first responders;
- Grocery workers;
- Public transit workers;
- Law enforcement and corrections officers/staff; and
- Food and agriculture workers.

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On March 19, 2021, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [announced](#) that it will be issuing additional Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) benefits to households that were mistakenly excluded from prior issuances or previously received an incorrect amount.

On March 19, 2021, Governor Ricketts [announced](#) that the entire state of Nebraska would move into phase 2A of vaccine administration and eligibility as of March 22, 2021, and that the state's income tax filing deadline has been extended to May 17, 2021.

March 15, 2021:

Officials [announced](#) changes to Nebraska's Directed Health Measures taking effect on March 16, 2021 and remaining in effect until April 30, 2021. All COVID-19 vaccine providers, including Federal Retail Pharmacy Participants, must be using the state-designated vaccine registration and administration system by April 1, 2021. Additional Directed Health Measures include:

- Federal Retail Pharmacy participants must coordinate vaccine schedules with local health departments until they are using the state's vaccine registration and administration system.
- Federal Retail Pharmacy participants may vaccinate healthcare workers, critical infrastructure workers, individuals 65 years and older and (in some regions if the state department of health has authorized) individuals 50 years and older.
- The requirement for "re-opening plans" for large outdoor gatherings has been removed, and "re-opening plans" are now required for indoor gatherings only.

March 11, 2021:

On March 10, 2021, officials [announced](#) that many rural vaccine administration sites are nearing the end of Phase 1B. Therefore, Nebraska is moving into Phase 2A—residents aged 50 through 59—in the near future. Although Nebraska's 19 local health departments are prioritizing the elderly after the state's shift to an age-based vaccine plan, up to 10% of weekly vaccine allocations will be allotted to those with high-risk medical conditions, regardless of age. Officials again reiterated that vaccines will not be available to the public at large until late spring. The DHHS COVID-19 information line is staffed and ready to answer questions every day between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. at (531) 249-1873 or (833) 998-2275.

March 2, 2021:

On November 5, 2020, Governor Ricketts [announced](#) that the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services would be filing a request with the USDA Food and Nutritional Services requesting

emergency allotment funds for Nebraska households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).

on March 9, 2021 directly to their EBT cards. Total benefits will differ based on each household's regular allotment for February.

March 1, 2021:

In March of 2020, Governor Ricketts [signed](#) Executive Order 20-10, suspending statutes pertaining to the Uniform Credentialing Act and delaying renewal deadlines for certain licenses until 30 days after the conclusion of the COVID-19 State of Emergency. As of March 1, 2021, persons whose license renewals were [impacted](#) by the Order can begin the license renewal process, despite the ongoing State of Emergency. Licensees who intend to renew will receive notification via postcards with information about renewal dates. Licensees who prefer to defer renewal will be notified ninety days in advance of when renewal is required.

Impacted licenses include:

- Doctors
  - Physicians (MD), Osteopathic Physicians (DO), and Temporary Educational Permits (TEP).
- Nurses
  - Registered Nurses (RN), Certified Nurse Midwives (CNM), Nurse Practitioners (NP), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS), and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA).
- Emergency Medical Services Personnel
  - Emergency Medical Responders (EMR), Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (AEMT), Emergency Medical Technicians – Intermediate (EMT-I), and Paramedics.
- Mental Health Practitioners
  - Psychologists, Licensed Independent Mental Health Practitioners (LIMHP), Licensed Mental Health Practitioners (LMHP), Certified Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT), Certified Professional Counselors (PC), Certified Master Social Workers (CMSW), and Certified Social Workers (CSW).
- Other
  - Physician Assistants (PA)
  - Acupuncturists
  - Pharmacy Technicians
  - Perfusionists
  - Respiratory Care Practitioners
  - Surgical First Assistants

February 21, 2021  
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Vaccine outreach within the state is ongoing. On February 25, 2021, there will be three opportunities for Nebraskans to learn about vaccination:

- [1:15 p.m., Facebook Live \(English\)](#): Dr. Gary Anthone and Sara Morgan from the Division of Public Health will discuss updated vaccine distribution deadlines and the increase in vaccine allocations.
- [3:30 p.m., Bluestem Health \(Spanish\)](#): Health Disparities and Health Equity Administrator Josie Rodriguez will listen to community concerns, and Spanish-speaking doctors will answer questions and share information on the safety and importance of the COVID-19 vaccine. The event password is vaccine.
- [7:00 p.m., New Era Baptist Convention of Nebraska](#): DHHS CEO Dannette Smith, medical experts from CHI Health, and community leaders will host an online town hall to discuss vaccination. The event passcode is 007704.

February 23, 2021:

Nebraska DHHS is [continuing](#) its efforts to reach the African American Community. The latest partnership related to this endeavor is between DHHS, the Douglas County Health Department, the institute for Urban Development, and the Charles Drew Health Center of North Omaha. This partnership, through virtual town halls and program development, is intended to provide “an opportunity for public health agencies and officials to increase trust within the African American community.”

February 22, 2021:

On February 18, 2021, Governor Ricketts and DHHS Leaders [provided](#) Nebraska with an update on vaccine prioritization. Nebraska is currently in Phase 1B, meaning the majority of vaccines are currently being administered to Nebraskans who are 65 or older. After completion of Phase 1B, vaccines will be prioritized for those in the 50-64 age group.

February 18, 2021:

Nebraska is [continuing](#) its efforts to reach the local African American community to share information about COVID-19, as well as testing and vaccination options within the state. On February 18, 2021, Nebraska DHHS and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) attended a meeting of the NAACP's Lincoln Branch to discuss the importance of obtaining a COVID-19 vaccine. Nebraska DHHS and LLCHD provided a space where African American Nebraskans can ask questions about the virus and available vaccines and obtain accurate information from qualified public health and medical officials.

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Numerous COVID-19 testing sites are closed this week due to severe winter weather (wind chills throughout the state are expected to fall below -25 degrees). As of February 12, 2021, all local health departments have entered Phase 1B of the state's vaccination plan. Governor Ricketts has [directed](#) health departments to administer at least 90% of their respective vaccine allocations to Nebraskans age 65+.

February 11, 2021:

This week, Nebraska is [scheduled](#) to receive 31,625 first doses and 23,500 second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. The state's 19 health departments are continuing to coordinate vaccination for Phase 1 priority groups, and community clinics are staggering vaccine appointments in order to observe social distancing during administration and post-vaccine monitoring. In addition to the recently-announce series of online town hall events intended to reach the state's African American residents, DHHS immunization leaders are periodically hosting [Facebook Live](#) sessions to provide vaccine updates and answer questions.

February 10, 2021:

As the state battles extreme winter weather, some Nebraska test sites are [adjusting](#) their hours. Those registered for testing are encouraged to regularly check for updates.

The following facilities will be closed on Friday, February 12, 2021:

- Chadron - Chadron Community Hospital
- Broken Bow - Melham Medical Center

Free testing is still available to any Nebraska resident at over 60 statewide testing sites. The Department of Health and Human Services encourages residents to [register](#), despite the weather-related scheduling changes.

(Lincoln): Nebraska DHHS is taking steps to reach African American residents by [partnering](#) with the Lincoln-Lancaster Health Department and Senior Pastor Tremaine Combs of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, one of the largest and the oldest historically African American churches in the region. The partnership is dedicated to providing accurate information about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines to individuals who are twice as likely to contract, four times as likely to be hospitalized, and three times as likely to die from COVID-19.

In several upcoming online town halls, the partnership hopes to "provide a space where those within the various communities can ask questions, learn more, and receive information from Public Health and Medical Officials regarding the various vaccines" and "an opportunity for Public

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Health Agencies and officials to begin the process of building trust within th[ose] communities.” Nebraskans are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and express concerns. Information on the second town hall will be available on the [DHHS website](#).

February 9, 2021:

As of February 8, 2021, all Nebraska counties are in Phase 1B of the state’s vaccine administration plan. Phase 1B includes Nebraskans 65 and older, those 18 and older who are high-risk, and those working in “critical industries” such as first responders, educators and daycare providers, utilities and transportation workers, corrections staff, food processing personnel, and grocery store employees. There are currently 125 vaccination sites across the state receiving vaccine shipments.

The [COVID-19 Vaccination Dashboard](#) has been [updated](#) to reflect Nebraska’s continued vaccination efforts and progress over time. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services is also working on a Spanish version of COVID-19 and vaccine-related webpages to better reach Spanish-speaking residents.

February 8, 2021:

On February 4, 2021, Nebraska administered over 14,000 COVID-19 vaccines, hitting its highest daily total for vaccinations so far. In the media release detailing the vaccination success, Governor Ricketts [asked](#) Nebraskans to “[p]lease continue to follow the protocols we’ve put out to slow the spread of the virus.” In the same release, and in a recent press conference, the State’s DHHS Incident Commander Angie Ling [announced](#) that the federal retail pharmacy program will begin in Nebraska next week. Nebraskans can register for the vaccine [online](#) or by calling (531) 249-1873.

February 3, 2021:

As of February 2, 2021, hospitalizations within the state have continued to decline. Because the state is still within the early stages of the vaccination effort, Dr. Gary Anthonie, the CMO and Director of Public Health for Nebraska’s DHHS, [reminds](#) Nebraskans to be #BigRedResponsible by wearing a mask, regularly washing hands, and staying home when sick.

February 2, 2021:

As of February 1, 2021, 3.25 percent of Nebraskans age 16 or older have completed vaccination. The state is currently finalizing first doses for individuals in Phase 1A priority groups, and counties are gearing up to begin vaccinating those in Phase 1B. The state recently launched its notification [website](#), which provides information on how to get vaccinated. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).

February 1, 2021:

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [announced](#) plans to issue emergency supplemental allotments to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients receiving January benefits on February 9, 2021. Pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which increased SNAP allotments to 115 percent between January 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021, SNAP recipients can expect increased benefits directly to the EBT cards at the end of this week. The maximum allotments are as follows, based on household size:

- 1 = \$234.00
- 2 = \$430
- 3 = \$616
- 4 = \$782
- 5 = \$929
- 6 = \$1,114
- 7 = \$1,232
- 8 = \$1,408

January 28, 2021:

Nebraska DHHS [indicated](#) on January 28 that the [Directed Health Measures](#) in effect for the entire state could be [relaxed](#) as early as this weekend based on declining rates of hospitalization within the state. Since late December, indoor gatherings have been restricted to 75 percent capacity.

By the end of this week, all healthcare workers within the state will have had the opportunity to be vaccinated. Local health departments continue to coordinate vaccinations for individuals in Phase 1 priority groups.

January 27, 2021:

According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, most counties within the state have [completed](#) the first dose of vaccinations for Phase 1A priority groups, which includes frontline healthcare workers and long-term care facility staff. The state has also announced plans to launch a website to notify Nebraska residents when vaccinations are available in their area and provide up-to-date scheduling information.

To accommodate federal recommendations, Nebraska recently expanded Phase 1B of its vaccination program to include individuals in critical industries who cannot work remotely, such as first responders, teachers, and public health workers. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).  
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The website is not available to the general public until late spring.

Changes to Nebraska's [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) are scheduled to go into effect on January 29 and are [intended](#) to provide more accurate data regarding positive cases at the time of specimen collection. In addition, a new initiative titled TestNebraska is [offering](#) free COVID-19 testing for all Nebraska residents. Nebraska is one of three states that has joined the nationwide [#crushthecurve](#) movement.

January 26, 2021:

As of December 24, all Nebraska counties are to remain under [Directed Health Measures](#) through January 31. In mid-December, Nebraska's DHHS [released](#) updated reopening best practice guidelines for various businesses, such as [restaurants and bars](#), [massage therapy](#) and [tattoo parlors](#), and [barbers and salons](#). Most notably, parties utilizing state-wide dine-in services are limited to eight people. All business owners, however, are directed to review Directed Health Measures for their counties, as there may be additional restrictions on occupancy, party limits, and physical distancing at the local level.

On December 7, Governor Pete Ricketts [extended Executive Order 20-37](#). The initial Order, issued on June 17, provided certain waivers and deferrals for specific health professionals through December 31 so that persons directly responding to the COVID-19 state of emergency could obtain or retain the necessary credentials. The extension takes into account that, due to COVID-19, many licensing/credentialing examinations have been postponed, in-person testing capacity has been reduced, online testing options are limited, and exam results are delayed. Under the extension, therefore, provisional credentials will remain active until thirty days after the lifting of the COVID-19 state of emergency or until examination results are obtained, whichever is sooner, provided the eligible healthcare professional has applied for examination and completed the required education and/or training program(s). Along with provisional credentialing, the extension temporarily deferred in-person clinical training, field experiences, and client-contact hours for certain subsets of the healthcare population.

On January 7, Governor Ricketts issued [Executive Order 21-01](#) pertaining to the supervision of pharmacy technicians and pharmacist interns. The Order temporarily suspended provisions of [Nebraska law](#) that limit the total number of pharmacy technicians and interns that a single pharmacist can supervise at one time. Under normal circumstances, pharmacists are limited to supervision of three technicians/interns. The temporary suspension is intended to increase the number of individuals qualified to administer the COVID-19 vaccine pursuant to [PREP Act](#) guidance [issued](#) by the U.S. DHHS in October.

Nebraska currently has a program in place titled the Nebraska Accommodation Project (NAP) that [provides](#) residents with a ten-day quarantine stay at a hotel, free of charge, provided that they meet the following criteria:

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- They have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual;

- They lack resources to find or obtain temporary alternate housing; and
- They have a full-time household member who has been diagnosed with a high-risk medical condition by a medical professional.

To be COVID-19 positive within the meaning of NAP, an individual must have obtained a positive lab result or clinical diagnosis. Exposure is defined as being in an enclosed space with a COVID-19 positive person, less than six feet apart, for more than ten minutes. NAP guests must be able to independently care for themselves, self-monitor by taking their temperature twice daily, and remain in their rooms during the entire stay.

There is an ongoing Facebook LIVE Series that [addresses](#) Nebraska's Department of Health and Human Services vaccination plans. The latest draft of the State of Nebraska COVID-19 Vaccination Plan (NCVP) was [published](#) on January 15. The NCVP's purported purpose is to "assist partners in a shared understanding of pandemic response that includes planning assumptions, roles and responsibilities, ordering and reporting, and mass vaccination tools for local providers to substantially reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID19." The NCVP further identifies critical populations and prioritizes vaccine recipients as follows:

#### Phase 1 A

- Healthcare personnel (hospitals, home health care, pharmacies, EMS, outpatient, public health);

Long-term care facility residents and staff;

#### Phase 1 B

- Persons 65 years and older
- Persons 18 years and older who have certain high-risk medical conditions;
- First responders;
- Education sector;
- Critical Infrastructure;

#### Phase 1 C

- Vulnerable populations (for example, those who are disabled or reside in congregate settings).

With regard to [Phase 1 A](#), the NCVP notes that early stages of vaccine supply should go "ONLY to those staff providing direct patient care AND/OR are exposed to infectious materials" and not to the following groups:

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- Administrative staff;
- Staff working remotely; or
- Staff not in direct contact with COVID patients or infectious materials.

**Phase 1 B** is the subset of workers at highest risk for work-related exposure to COVID-19 because their work-related duties must be performed on-site and involve being within six feet of members of the or coworkers.

During Phase 2, it is anticipated that a large number of vaccine doses will be available to meet the demand of the general population. The number of COVID-19 vaccinations administered in the state of Nebraska are tracked via an online [dashboard](#).

November 24, 2020:

On November 23 Governor Ricketts held a press conference to provide updates on the work of Nebraska to slow the spread of the virus. The Governor reminded Nebraskans that the State will move to the most restrictive “red” phase of its pandemic response when coronavirus hospitalizations reach 25% of staffed hospital beds in Nebraska. Currently, the State is in the “orange” phase, which is the second most restrictive (hospitalization data available [here](#)).

November 17, 2020:

On November 14, Governor Ricketts [announced](#) that Nebraska will take a phased approach to public health restrictions based on the percentage of staffed hospital beds occupied by coronavirus patients. As soon as the percentage of coronavirus-related hospitalizations increases above certain thresholds, restrictions will be tightened. If the percentage of coronavirus-related hospitalizations declines below the thresholds (on average, over a seven-day period) restrictions will be relaxed. A document outlining each of the five, color-coded phases is available [here](#). Currently, Nebraska is in the “orange” phase, which is the second most restrictive. The State issued a new Directed Health Measure (DHM) effective statewide as of Monday, November 16. It temporarily halts elective surgeries that can wait four weeks or longer without substantially changing a patient’s outcome. In addition to the restriction on elective surgeries, the new DHM includes all of the health measures that took effect on November 11, 2020 (see an outline of these changes [here](#)).

Governor Ricketts also gave an update on the State’s Coronavirus Relief Fund grant programs. On October 19, Governor Ricketts had announced the opening of grant programs to assist businesses, non-

profits, and care providers affected by the pandemic. Some of these programs have now stopped accounting applications, but others, such as stabilization grants for hotels and convention centers remain open for applications. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#). Nebraska, \$1.084 billion of CARES Act funds came directly to the State of Nebraska for allocation.

Grant applications remain open for the following programs:

- Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) Programs:
  - Hotel & Convention Centers Stabilization Program
  - Event Centers & Sports Arenas Stabilization Program
  - Movie Theatre Stabilization Program
- DHHS Programs
  - Stabilization Grant for Charitable Organizations & Licensed Providers

The following grant programs have now closed and are no longer accepting applications:

- DED Programs
  - Small Business Stabilization Program
  - Livestock Producers Stabilization Program
  - Restaurants & Bars Stabilization Program
  - Licensed Personal Service Business Stabilization Program
- DHHS Program
  - Healthy Places Grant for Centers of Worship

To apply for open grant programs, go to [coronavirus.nebraska.gov](https://coronavirus.nebraska.gov). For application assistance, call 1-833-500-8810 between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. CT (Monday through Friday).

On November 9, Governor Ricketts [announced](#) new Directed Health Measures (DHMs) that took effect statewide on Wednesday, November 11. The measures are being implemented in response to rising hospitalizations across the state in an effort to slow the spread of the coronavirus. The new DHMs, which took effect statewide on Wednesday, November 11 and are scheduled to remain in effect through at least November 30, include:

- Six (6) feet of separation between parties is required in all instances for the following: gyms/fitness centers, health spas, restaurants, bars, gentlemen and bottle clubs, weddings, funerals, indoor gatherings, and churches/places of worship.
- Masks are required for staff and patrons at salons, barbershops, massage therapy, bowling alleys, pool halls, body art establishments, and any other indoor businesses where staff and patrons are within six (6) feet of each other for 15 consecutive minutes or more.
  - An exception will be made for all services performed on faces. Patrons will be permitted to remove their mask while receiving services directly. The mask must be worn by the patron at all other times while on the premise.

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COVID-19 DHMS are available [here](#).

On November 2, Governor Ricketts [announced](#) additional financial assistance for long-term care (LTC) facilities as they serve Nebraskans during the coronavirus pandemic. The State of Nebraska is allocating another \$15 million to help nursing homes and assisted living facilities cover additional costs they've incurred during the pandemic. The State is applying to the federal government to match these funds with \$25 million, to provide a total of \$40 million of new financial assistance for LTC facilities in Nebraska.

September 22, 2020:

On September 22, Governor Ricketts [held](#) a press briefing to provide updates on Nebraska's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Topics of the [press briefing](#) included Governor Ricketts updating on testing measures; Tim Meyers (President of WellCare of Nebraska) updating on Medicaid health plans; Angie Ling (Incident Commander for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services) updating on state-sponsored, no-charge housing programs to accommodate certain individuals required to quarantine; Gina Uhing (Health Director for the Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department) updating on school quarantine and isolation guidelines; and Commissioner Blomstedt updating on school systems generally.

September 9, 2020:

On September 9, 2020, Governor Ricketts [announced](#) that most of the state will move into [Phase 4](#) of Nebraska's reopening plan, starting Monday September 14, 2020. All counties except Lancaster County will move into Phase 4, which loosens restrictions to allow outdoor venues to have 100% occupancy and indoor venues to have 75% capacity. Events of 500 or more individuals still must check with local public health directors to ensure precautions are in place. All other restrictions regarding bars and restaurants, childcare facilities, churches, gyms, salons/barber shops, sports, and wedding and funeral reception venues will be removed.

September 8, 2020:

(Omaha): On September 3, 2020, Mayor Stothert [announced](#) that she has directed the Finance Department to forgive late fees on restaurant tax payments due from March through the end of 2020. Owners currently delinquent will no longer be charged these fees, and those who have already paid penalties will be credited for the amount paid. To be eligible for this waiver, all restaurant taxes must be paid by December 31, 2020.

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(Omaha): On September 1, 2020, the Omaha City Council [voted](#) to extend Omaha's Mask Mandate to October 20, 2020. The mandate had been set to expire on September 15, 2020. The renewed [Mandate](#) is identical to the Mandate that has been in effect, with only three differences:

1. the signs required to be posted by public premises regarding masks are now required to be on a poster or paper with a minimum size of 8.5 inches by 11 inches, and to be written or typed in a legible font or typeface no smaller than 12 points;
2. an exemption has been added for individuals actively participating in a team sports activity, while the level of exertion makes it difficult to wear a face covering; and
3. the Mandate clarifies that the various exemptions to the Mandate do not forbid the owner of a public premises from implementing a more restrictive face covering policy.

August 31, 2020:

(Douglas County): Free cloth masks are available to [pick up](#) at the Douglas County Health Department, weekdays, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

August 26, 2020:

(Omaha – Douglas County): On August 25, 2020, the State of Nebraska, Douglas County Commissioners, and Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert [announced](#) an agreement which will distribute CARES Act funds to Omaha and Douglas County, preventing layoffs of police officers and firefighters, and allowing for the reopening of libraries and community centers. The first branches will open in about four weeks, with all branches expected to reopen by October 1.

August 24, 2020:

On August 21, 2020, Governor Ricketts [signed](#) Executive Order 20-33, which waives the 30-hour professional development requirement for Nebraska Land Surveyor certificate holders through December 31, 2020. The 30-hour requirement is based on a two-year period, and the Order directs the State Board of Examiners to designate the "appropriate" credential requirements in light of the Order, meaning the two-year period including 2020 will only require 15 hours.

August 11, 2020:

(Omaha): On August 11, 2020, the Omaha City Council passed an [emergency mask mandate](#) by a 7-0 vote. The mandate, which is effective immediately, requires all individuals 5 years old and older to wear a mask while indoors in public locations.

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The mandate does not require masks to be worn when:

- seeking government services;
- exercising;
- consuming food or beverages or seated at a bar or restaurant;
- engaged in an occupation that prevents wearing a mask;
- verifying identity for legal purposes;
- speaking, lecturing, or broadcasting from a 6-foot distance from others; or
- a disability or medical condition prevents it.

August 3, 2020:

Eighteen counties in three health districts (North Central, Southwest, and Loup Basin) moved into Phase 4 [Directed Health Measures](#), effective August 1, 2020, but Phase 3 measures have been extended until August 31, 2020 for Nebraska's remaining sixty-six counties.

(Omaha-Douglas County): On July 31, 2020, Douglas County Health Director Dr. Adi Pour [declined](#) to issue the mandatory mask order passed by the County Board of Health earlier in the week. Dr. Pour cited conflicting legal authority as the reason for not pursuing the mandate, but she asks that citizens continue to wear masks voluntarily.

July 27, 2020:

(Douglas County): On July 27, the Douglas County Board of Health [passed](#) a resolution which would support a mask mandate requiring all individuals over the age of five (5) to wear a mask indoors unless the individual maintains a least six (6) feet of separation from anyone who is not in their household. The resolution does not yet mandate a mask, but grants Douglas County Health Director Dr. Adi Pour authority to implement a mask mandate, which could go into effect as soon as August 3rd. A copy of the resolution will be linked here when it is available.

July 21, 2020:

(Lincoln-Lancaster County): On July 20, Lincoln-Lancaster County's [Directed Health Measure](#) requiring face coverings went into effect. All individuals aged five (5) and over are required to wear a face covering while in an indoor public space, unless six (6) feet of separation can be achieved at all times. Exceptions from this mandate include:

- Individuals seated at a bar or restaurant, while consuming food or beverages;
- Individuals exercising;
- Individuals engaged in an occupation which prevents the wearing of a face covering;
- for analytics, personalization, and targeted advertising. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#);
- individuals who cannot wear a mask because of a medical condition; and

- Anyone seeking state or county government services.

Law enforcement has stated it will not issue tickets for non-compliance and will focus on education rather than enforcement. The mandate continues through August 31, at which time it will be re-evaluated.

July 20, 2020:

On July 17th, Governor Ricketts, along with the Department of Education Commissioner and Department of Health and Human Services CEO, [discussed](#) the return-to-school plan for Nebraska. As of now, it is intended that all in-person classes will resume this fall, with [safety measures](#) developed by the Department of Education, utilizing Centers for Disease Control recommendations. These measures include:

- Limiting group sizes to 20 or less;
- Establishing curbside drop-off and pick-up processes for parents;
- Having students refrain from contact sports, unless restricted within 20-person “static groups”;
- Requiring symptom monitoring;
- Following cleaning processes; and
- Implementing isolation measures for sick students.

July 8, 2020:

On July 7 Governor Ricketts [rescinded](#) Executive Order 20-02 which banned travel of state executive branch employees. Starting July 8th state executive branch employees are no longer restricted from traveling out of state.

July 7, 2020:

On July 6 Governor Ricketts issued an [Executive Order](#) which rescinds previous executive orders waiving work-search requirements for unemployment benefits. Starting July 12 people seeking or receiving unemployment benefits will have to show that they are actively searching for work in order to be eligible.

July 6, 2020:

On July 2nd, Governor Ricketts [rescinded](#) the [Executive Order](#) extending the deadline for driver’s license and vehicle registration renewal.

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In a [press conference](#) June 25, Governor Ricketts gave [an update](#) on the State of Nebraska Community CARES program which provides \$85 million to the Department of Health and Human Services. This amount is an allocation from the \$1.25 billion which [was allocated](#) to the State of Nebraska by the CARES Act. It will go towards funding grants for charities and provider organizations that have experienced losses or increased expenses due to Covid-19. There are three grants that have been created within this \$85 million.

- Stabilization Grant (\$40 million)
  - Available to 501(c)(3) organizations and select provider organizations
  - One-time payment of \$12,000
  - The application for the [Stabilization Grant](#) is now available. The [application](#) closes July 6 and awards are expected to be announced on July 15
- Response and Recovery Grant (\$43 million)
  - A competitive grant which is available to 501(c)(3) organizations and select provider organizations
  - Award between \$50,000 and \$2 million
  - This is a more traditional grant and it's expected that program plans will be provided which outline a detailed budget for how the money will be spent and expected outcomes once the money has been spent
  - The application for the [Response and Recovery Grant](#) will be available July 1. The closing date is July 8. The award notifications will begin around July 15
- Healthy Places Grant (\$2 million)
  - Available to licensed child care providers and centers of worship
  - One-time payments which provide:
    - \$250 to childcare homes
    - \$500 to childcare centers
    - \$500 to centers of worship
  - Money should be used for PPE and disinfectant/cleaning supplies
  - The application for the [Healthy Places Grant](#) will open July 6. The closing date is July 12. The award notifications will begin July 20.

June 22, 2020:

The majority of Nebraska is set to move into [Phase 3](#) of Governor Rickett's reopening plan as of June 22. Under Phase 3:

- Fan attendance at youth and school games change to the same limits as for gatherings;
- All restrictions on elective surgeries are removed;
- for analytics, personalization, and targeted advertising. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).

- Food may be consumed at bar seating; buffets and salad bars are still prohibited;
- Childcare facilities may open with capacity limited to the following numbers:
  - Infants to 3 years old: 15 children per room/space;
  - 3 years old: 20 children per room/space;
  - 4-5 years old: 24 children per room/space; and
  - K-12 children: 30 children per room/space;
- Indoor gatherings will be limited to 50% of occupancy (not to exceed 10,000);
- Outdoor gatherings will be limited to 75% of occupancy (not to exceed 10,000);
- Six feet of separation between groups in gatherings moves to being a recommendation only;
- Parades, carnivals, dances, and beer gardens remain prohibited;
- Gyms, fitness centers, health clubs and health spaces will be limited to 75% of occupancy;
- Salons, barber shops, massage therapy services and tattoo parlors will be limited to 75% of occupancy; workers and patrons must still wear masks at all times; and
- Wedding and funeral reception venues will be limited to eight individuals per party, self-serve buffets and salad bars are still prohibited.

June 17, 2020:

On June 17, Governor Ricketts signed [Executive Order No. 20-27](#), which waived various state statutes and regulations related to health care professionals. This Order applies to 27 different healthcare-related professions, including nursing, dentistry, chiropractic, and pharmacy. Some of the Order's key changes include:

- Allowance of provisional credentials pending credential examination results, through December 31, 2020;
- Deferment of in-person training courses or examinations through December 31, 2020; and
- The ability of current credential holders to request waivers of continuing competency as part of their renewal process.

June 16, 2020:

On June 12, Governor Ricketts announced new [directed health measures](#) to go into effect June 22nd. Under these measures, most Nebraska counties (89 out of 93) will move into "[Phase 3](#)" of Nebraska's reopening plan. Under Phase 3:

- Fan attendance at youth and school games change to the same limits as for gatherings;
- All restrictions on elective surgeries are removed;
- [Puro, racetracks, bottle clubs and gentlemen's clubs may open to 100% of occupancy, with a maximum of 100 people per party.](#)
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- Food may be consumed at bar seating; buffets and salad bars are still prohibited;

- Childcare facilities may open with capacity limited to the following numbers:
  - Infants to 3 year olds, 15 children per room/space;
  - 3 year olds, 20 children per room/space;
  - 4-5 year old, 24 children per room/space; and
  - K-12 children, 30 children per room/space;
- Indoor gatherings will be limited to 50% of occupancy (not to exceed 10,000);
- Outdoor gatherings will be limited to 75% of occupancy (not to exceed 10,000);
- Six feet of separation between groups in gatherings moves to being a recommendation only;
- Parades, carnivals, dances, and beer gardens remain prohibited;
- Gyms, fitness centers, health clubs and health spaces will be limited to 75% of occupancy;
- Salons, barber shops, massage therapy services and tattoo parlors will be limited to 75% of occupancy; workers and patrons must still wear masks at all times; and
- Wedding and funeral reception venues will be limited to eight individuals per party, self-serve buffets and salad bars are still prohibited.

June 15, 2020:

On June 12, Governor Ricketts hosted a [press conference](#) to provide updates on several new grant programs, which will utilize federal coronavirus relief dollars. The programs will be administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development along with the Department of Labor and Agriculture. Each addresses a specific need, as follows:

- The Small Business Stabilization Grant Program will provide grants to small businesses with 5-49 employees who were impacted by the coronavirus and meet certain eligibility requirements.
- The Livestock Producer Stabilization Grant Program will provide grants to eligible livestock producers with 1-10 employees who have endured revenue or employment loss due to the pandemic.
- The Workforce Retraining Initiative will provide funds to all of the State's community colleges for scholarships and workforce training enhancements.
- The Nebraska Broadband Grant Program will result in new internet connectivity in communities where work-from-home, tele-education, and telehealth opportunities have been limited due to inadequate or non-existent high-speed internet service.
- The Gallup Back to Business Learning Journey will fund admission to a Gallup-led leadership training course for a total of 75-100 leaders from eligible small businesses.

A [website](#) has been created which provides more detail, including application instructions.

June 8, 2020:  
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On June 2, Governor Ricketts signed [Executive Order 20-26](#), amending [Executive Order 20-22](#). Under this amended Order:

- The Department of Labor will only adjudicate the last separation from employment which resulted in a claimant's unemployment;
- The provisions of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 48-626, requiring adjudication of separations from employment with other base period employers and reductions in benefits, are waived for all claims filed between March 15, 2020, and 30 days after the lifting of the Covid-19 state of emergency.

As of June 1, numerous Covid-19 restrictions are lapsing, and all Nebraska counties (except for Dakota, Hall, Hamilton and Merrick) will enter "[Phase Two](#)" of Nebraska's reopening plan. Phase Two includes:

- Gatherings
  - Gatherings will be limited to the greater of 25 persons (excluding staff) or 25% of rated occupancy (not to exceed 3,000).
- Bars and restaurants
  - Restaurants remain open for dine-in, and bars can reopen.
  - Bars and restaurants are limited to 50% of the rated occupancy, with a maximum of six persons per table.
  - All patrons in a bar must be seated.
- Gyms
  - Will be limited to the greater of 25 people (excluding staff) or 50% of rated occupancy.
- Salons, barber shops, massage therapy services, and tattoo parlors
  - Will be limited to the greater of 25 people (excluding staff) or 50% of rated occupancy.
  - Both workers and patrons are still required in the DHM to wear masks at all times.
- Wedding and funeral reception venues
  - Will be limited to the greater of 25 people (excluding staff) or 50% of rated occupancy.
  - Self-serve buffets and salad bars are prohibited.
  - No dances or other social events that require guests to gather outside of their respective tables are permitted.

May 29, 2020:

Governor Ricketts announced the Get Nebraska Growing program, unveiling how the state will use and distribute \$1.25 billion in federal coronavirus relief funds. Preliminary guidance is now available regarding the program and which entities are eligible.

Husker Blackwell's in-depth update and analysis of the Get Nebraska Growing program is available [here](#). This website utilizes technologies such as cookies to enable essential site functionality, as well as for analytics, personalization, and targeted advertising. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).

May 21, 2020:

Governor Ricketts announced his intention to further ease restrictions in most Nebraska counties, effective June 1. Most travelers who leave the state will not be required to quarantine upon their return to Nebraska, unless they traveled internationally. Bars will be allowed to reopen under the same rules that apply to restaurants, including 6 feet of space between tables and no more than 6 people per table. Gathering restrictions will be expanded to 25 people or, in the case of large venues, to 25% of the venue's capacity up to 3,000 people. Revised directed health measures are available [here](#).

May 14, 2020:

Governor Ricketts has announced the phased relaxation of Directed Health Measures on a region-by-region across Nebraska. These less-restrictive DHMs allow for the limited reopening of dine-in services at restaurants and of salons, barber shops, tattoo parlors, and massage therapy services. They also increase the per room/space childcare limits from 10-15 children.

Husch Blackwell's in-depth update and analysis of the Nebraska reopening orders is available [here](#).

April 30, 2020:

Governor Ricketts [announced](#) the extension of the state's existing Directed Health Measures (DHM) for the following areas until May 11:

- Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Dept.
- West Central District Health Dept.
- Three Rivers Public Health Dept.

Each of these districts will move to a less restrictive DHM on May 11th. This will allow for the limited reopening of dine-in services at restaurants and of salons, barber shops, tattoo parlors, and massage therapy services.

The less restrictive DHM will take effect on May 4th in many other health department regions. These include:

- Douglas County Health Dept.
- Sarpy/Cass Dept. of Health
- East Central District Health Dept.
- Four Corners Health Dept.

- Loup Basin Public Health Dept.

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- Southeast District Health Dept.
- Southwest Nebraska Public Health District

April 26, 2020:

Governor Ricketts announced upcoming changes and extensions to the [statewide Directed Health Measure](#) (DHM), which expires on staggered dates on a county-by-county basis:

- The current State DHM for Douglas County will be extended through May 3, 2020. The local DHMs from the Sarpy/Cass Health Department and the Douglas County Health Department will also be extended through May 3rd.
- The statewide closure until April 30 of all beauty/nail salons, barber shops, massage therapy services, gentleman's clubs, bottle clubs, indoor movie theatres, indoor theatres, and tattoo parlors/studios is extended to May 3rd. That date will be extended further for some areas.
- As of May 4, 2020 the State will have 19 separate DHMs, one for each local health department (LHD). They will be effective through May 31, 2020.

Statewide DHM changes:

- Places of worship (churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, etc.)
  - Places of worship will have relaxed DHM requirements statewide beginning on May 4th.
  - They will need to ensure six feet of separation between different household units.
  - It will not be permissible to pass items among worshippers.
  - A guidance document will be provided with the new DHMs to give instructions to faith communities on how to comply with the updated health measures.

Regional DHM changes:

- Regional updates will apply to all of the following LHDs as of May 4, 2020:

- Douglas County Health Dept

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- East Central District Health Dept.
- Four Corners Health Dept.
- Loup Basin Public Health Dept.
- North Central District Health Dept.
- Northeast Nebraska Public Health Dept.
- Panhandle Public Health District
- Southeast District Health Dept.
- Southwest Nebraska Public Health District
- Salons
  - As of May 4th, beauty/nail salons, barber shops, massage therapy services, and tattoo parlors/studios in the above LHDs will be permitted to open. These establishments will be added to the list of gatherings subject to the 10-person rule.
  - The new DHM will require both workers and patrons of these establishments to wear masks.
  - For districts other than those listed above, these establishments will remain closed past May 3rd.
- Restaurants
  - As of May 4th, restaurants will be allowed to serve dine-in customers if all of the following conditions are met:
    - The restaurant limits seating to 50% of the rated occupancy maximum at all times.
    - The restaurant seats parties at least six feet apart.
    - All dining parties are restricted to no more than six persons (groups larger than six will need to sit at non-private tables).

- Self-serve buffets and salad bars are prohibited. Restaurant staff must serve food directly to customers or implement buffet orders from the customer table. No customer self-service will be allowed.
- Bar seating is not permitted.
- Patrons may only consume alcohol on the premises if also consuming a meal.
- Bars that do not serve food will remain limited to carry-out sales and delivery only.
- For districts other than those listed above, restaurants will remain limited to delivery, drive-thru, or carryout past May 3.
- Childcare Facilities
  - As of May 4th, childcare facilities will be permitted to have up to 15 kids per room/space.
  - All other state provisions, statutes, and regulations (including child-to-staff ratios) still apply.
  - For districts other than those listed above, childcares will remain restricted to 10 children per room/space.
- Other Establishments
  - Bars, gentlemen's clubs, bottle clubs, indoor movie theaters, indoor theaters/playhouses will remain closed statewide until May 31st, though the State may revise the DHM prior to that date.

April 20, 2020:

Governor Ricketts announced the State's first step to relax the health measures implemented to slow the spread of COVID-19. Starting on May 4th, elective surgeries may resume as long as hospitals and healthcare facilities meet requirements for available bed capacity and have adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE). An amendment to the statewide Directed Health Measure, which remains in effect, is to follow.

April 16, 2020:

Governor Ricketts issued an executive order to expand childcare options and to provide relief for children's support services in the State through May 31st. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).

The order suspends two regulations governing the State's Child Care Subsidy Program. First, the Governor's order allows licensed child care providers within the program to bill the State for days when a child is absent from care. Second, the order enables families participating in the subsidy program to obtain in-home child care when other options are unavailable.

Additionally, the Governor announced the launch of a business response survey to gauge how Nebraska businesses are navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey was developed by the State's Department of Economic Development in partnership with the University of Nebraska System; the Lincoln, Greater Omaha, and state chambers of commerce; the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska Omaha; and the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

April 10, 2020:

the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) a superseding Directed Health Measure (DHM), No. 2020-010, expanding previous statewide restrictions.

The following additions are made to the DHM:

- All beauty/nail salons, barber shops, massage therapy services, gentlemen's clubs, bottle clubs, indoor theatres, and tattoo parlors/studios are closed until April 30, 2020.
- All organized team sports, youth and adult, including but not limited to club sports are suspended until May 31, 2020.
- Auto racing is now specifically listed in the social gathering section.
  - Drivers and their crews are considered patrons/invitees not staff.

All Nebraska counties remain subject to the DHM, with differing expiration dates based on county. It is effective immediately through:

- April 30 for Cass, Douglas, and Sarpy counties.
- May 6 for Butler, Burt, Cuming, Dodge, Hall, Hamilton, Lancaster, Madison, Merrick, Polk, Saunders, Seward, Stanton, Washington, and York counties.
- May 11 for all other Nebraska counties.

This DHM imposes a mandatory home-quarantine requirement for any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has any two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or above, cough, runny nose,

sore throat, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, or having resided with individuals who have met either of these requirements. There are no exceptions to this conditional quarantine requirement except for analytics, personalization, and targeted advertising. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#) attached to the order itself.

The DHM also prohibits all elective surgeries and elective procedures, except for those involving a medical emergency or which must be done to preserve the patient's life or physical health. The DHM expands to all of the above-listed counties the geographic application of the previous prohibitions on gatherings of more than 10 people. Gathering does not include transportation facilities, health care facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

The DHM additionally orders all elementary and secondary schools statewide, public and private, to cease in-person instruction and all extra-curricular activities through May 31, 2020. This does not apply to remote learning, child care services, meal distribution, supply distribution, physical plant operations, or residential services.

April 5, 2020:

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) a superseding Directed Health Measure (DHM), No. 2020-009, expanding previous state-ordered restrictions to additional counties. All Nebraska counties are now subject to the DHM, with differing expiration dates based on county. It is effective immediately through:

- April 30 for Cass, Douglas, and Sarpy counties.
- May 6 for Butler, Burt, Cuming, Dodge, Hall, Hamilton, Lancaster, Madison, Merrick, Polk, Saunders, Seward, Stanton, Washington, and York counties.
- May 11 for all other Nebraska counties.

This DHM imposes a mandatory home-quarantine requirement for any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has any two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or above, cough, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, or having resided with individuals who have met either of these requirements. There are no exceptions to this conditional quarantine requirement, except to get medical care as provided in the incorporated [quarantine directions](#), which are also attached to the order itself.

The DHM also prohibits all elective surgeries and elective procedures, except for those involving a medical emergency or which must be done to preserve the patient's life or physical health. The DHM expands to all of the above-listed counties the geographic application of the previous prohibitions on gatherings of more than 10 people. Gathering does not include transportation facilities, health care facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

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The DHM additionally orders all elementary and secondary schools statewide, public and private, to cease in-person instruction and all extra-curricular activities through May 31, 2020. This does not apply

to remote learning, child care services, meal distribution, supply distribution, physical plant operations, or residential services.

April 2, 2020:

Governor Ricketts [issued](#) an executive order to allow online notary services to take place immediately and to provide regulatory flexibility to banks. The banking order provides:

- The Department of Banking and Finance requires banks and credit unions to file reports within 90 days of their formal financial examinations.
  - To help financial institutions adhere to social distancing requirements, these deadlines are being waived until 30 days after the lifting of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) emergency.
- Companies licensed under the Installment Loan Act must have their books and records examined annually by the Department of Banking and Finance.
  - The executive order waives the requirements for these examinations to take place within one calendar year.
  - It directs the Department of Banking and Finance to accomplish the examination as soon as is practicable to maintain the integrity of the annual calendar year requirement.
- The Department of Banking and Finance requires some applications to be filed at its main office.
  - The executive order authorizes electronic versions of these documents to be submitted and allows associated payments to be made via check or electronic ACH debit transactions. These changes are effective until 30 days after the lifting of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

Additionally, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) a superseding Directed Health Measure (DHM), No. 2020-008, expanding previous state-ordered restrictions to additional counties. It is effective immediately through:

- April 30 (for Douglas, Sarpy, and Cass counties)
- May 6 (for Dodge, Lancaster, Saunders, Washington, Butler, Hall, Hamilton, Merrick, Polk, Seward, York, Burt, Cuming, Madison, and Stanton counties)
- May 11 (for Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Grant, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, Sioux counties, Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, Webster, Buffalo, Dawson, Franklin, Gosper,

Harlan, Kearney, Phelps, Antelope, Arthur, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Hooker, Kearney, Paha, Knox, Lincoln, Nemaha, and York counties).

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This DHM imposes a mandatory home-quarantine requirement for any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has any two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or above, cough, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, or having resided with individuals who have met either of these requirements. There are no exceptions to this conditional quarantine requirement, except to get medical care as provided in the incorporated [quarantine directions](#), which are also attached to the order itself.

56 of Nebraska's 93 counties are now subject to the state-ordered DHM.

The DHM also prohibits all elective surgeries and elective procedures, except for those involving a medical emergency or which must be done to preserve the patient's life or physical health. The DHM expands to all of the above-listed counties the geographic application of the previous prohibitions on gatherings of more than 10 people. Gathering does not include transportation facilities, health care facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

The DHM additionally orders all elementary and secondary schools statewide, public and private, to cease in-person instruction and all extra-curricular activities through May 31, 2020. This does not apply to remote learning, child care services, meal distribution, supply distribution, physical plant operations, or residential services.

March 31, 2020:

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) a superseding Directed Health Measure (DHM), No. 2020-005, expanding previous state-ordered restrictions to additional counties in the Panhandle. It is effective immediately through April 30 (for Douglas, Sarpy, and Cass counties) and May 6 (for Lancaster, Dodge, Saunders, Washington, Hall, Hamilton, York, Seward, Butler, Polk, Merrick, Madison, Stanton, Cuming, and Burt counties) and May 11 (for Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Grant, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, and Sioux counties). This DHM imposes a mandatory home-quarantine requirement for any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has any two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or above, cough, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, or having resided with individuals who have met either of these requirements. There are no exceptions to this conditional quarantine requirement, except to get medical care as provided in the incorporated [quarantine directions](#), which are also attached to the order itself.

The DHM also prohibits all elective surgeries and elective procedures, except for those involving a medical emergency or which must be done to preserve the patient's life or physical health. The DHM expands to all of the above-listed counties the geographic application of the previous prohibitions on gatherings of more than 10 people. Gathering does not include transportation facilities, health care facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

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facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

Governor Ricketts [issued](#) a new executive order to give healthcare facilities greater flexibility to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The purpose of the order is to enable healthcare facilities to expand capacity as the need arises. Among other changes, the Governor's order accomplishes the following:

- Waives time limits for how long Critical Access Hospitals and Ambulatory Surgical Centers may keep patients.
- Waives the time limit on complex nursing interventions in assisted living facilities.
- Modifies the training and testing requirements for nurse aides, medication aides, and dining assistants to allow individuals with sufficient training and appropriate supervision to serve temporarily in these capacities.
- Defers requirements for the renewal and implementation dates of facility licenses and extends the licenses so that they do not need to be renewed during this emergency.
- Waives the Certificate of Need Act to allow hospitals to add or convert any beds into long-term care beds or rehabilitation beds in appropriate locations to care for COVID-19 patients who no longer require acute care support.
- Waives the licensed bed limit if additional unlicensed beds are available or could be added for use in treating COVID-19 cases or to meet the needs of non-COVID-19 patients.
- Directs the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to establish guidance for payment of Medicaid services via telehealth.

March 30, 2020:

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) a superseding Directed Health Measure (DHM) expanding previous state-ordered restrictions to additional counties. It is effective immediately through April 30 (for Douglas, Sarpy, and Cass counties) and May 6 (for Lancaster, Dodge, Saunders, Washington, Hall, Hamilton, York, Seward, Butler, Polk, Merrick, Madison, Stanton, Cuming, and Burt counties). This DHM is the farthest-reaching and most geographically expansive order issued by Nebraska officials to date. It imposes a mandatory home-quarantine requirement for any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has any two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or above, cough, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, or having resided with individuals who have met either of these requirements. There are no exceptions to this conditional quarantine requirement, except to get medical care as provided in the incorporated [quarantine directions](#), which are also attached to the order itself.

The DHM also prohibits all elective surgeries and elective procedures, except for those involving medical emergencies, in the above-listed counties. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#). The DHM expands to all of the above-listed counties the geographic application of the previous prohibitions on

gatherings of more than 10 people. Gathering does not include transportation facilities, health care facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

March 26, 2020:

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) its second Directed Health Measure (DHM), effective immediately through April 30 (for Douglas, Sarpy, and Cass counties) and May 6 (for Lancaster, Dodge, Saunders, and Washington counties). This DHM is the farthest-reaching order issued by Nebraska officials to date. It imposes a mandatory home-quarantine requirement for any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has any two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or above, cough, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, or having resided with individuals who have met either of these requirements. There are no exceptions to this conditional quarantine requirement, except to get medical care as provided in the incorporated [quarantine directions](#).

The DHM also prohibits all elective surgeries and elective procedures, except for those involving a medical emergency or which must be done to preserve the patient's life or physical health. The DHM expands to all of the above-listed counties the geographic application of the previous prohibitions on gatherings of more than 10 people. Gathering does not include transportation facilities, health care facilities, shopping malls and centers, typical offices, factories, or retail or grocery stores, logistics/distribution centers, courts, or public utilities.

March 25, 2020:

(Douglas County): The Douglas County (Omaha) Health Department issued an [order](#) to clarify that beauty salons, nail salons, tattoo parlors, massage parlors, and other businesses in the beauty service industry must cease operations. The order clarifies a [previous order](#) issued on March 20th, which prohibited gatherings of more than ten people. The March 20th order provided that even for gatherings below ten people, if a minimum social distance of six feet between attendees cannot be maintained, the gathering is prohibited.

March 19, 2020:

(Omaha Metro): Governor Ricketts [issued](#) an executive order relaxing beer, wine, and liquor sale and payment requirements under the Liquor Control Act for bars and restaurants subject to the March 19th

DHM. The order allows certain licensees to conduct otherwise prohibited carry-out and delivery sales,

extends temporary operating permits, and extends payment deadlines for wine and spirit deliveries. This website utilizes technologies such as cookies to enable essential site functionality, as well as for analytics, personalization, and targeted advertising. To learn more, please see our [Cookie Policy](#).

(Omaha Metro): The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services [issued](#) the state's first Directed Health Measure ("DHM"). This DHM is in effect through April 30, 2020 and applies in the Omaha metropolitan area (Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, and Cass Counties). The DHM imposes an enforceable limit on public gatherings of ten (10) persons in certain areas.

Areas subject to the DHM include, but are not limited to, theaters, churches, houses of worship, gyms, social clubs, salons, and social gatherings, including weddings, funerals, concerts, and athletic events. The DHM does not apply to places such as office buildings, grocery stores, pharmacies, hospitals, nursing homes, correctional facilities, court houses, court rooms, banks, car dealerships, auto repair shops, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, small shops, golf courses, big box stores, gas stations, convenience stores, shopping malls, manufacturing facilities, packing facilities, construction jobs, and other traditional office settings.

Additionally, it requires restaurants and bars in these areas to close their dining areas immediately and move to takeout service, delivery, and/or curbside service only. Liquor, beer, and wine sales are restricted to carry-out sales and delivery only. For bars and restaurants, the DHM applies to patrons only, not to workers.

Persons subject to the DHM may contest its application through an administrative appeal.

March 17, 2020:

Governor Ricketts [issued](#) an executive order suspending certain unemployment insurance requirements. In addition to waiving work search requirements for workers, the order directs the Department of Labor to temporarily waive charges incurred by employers whose team members are filing claims related to COVID-19.

Governor Ricketts [issued](#) an executive order suspending certain Open Meetings Act requirements to allow state, county, and local governments to conduct "virtual" meetings by video or teleconference. Virtual meetings must be accessible by members of the public and media. Meeting notice and agenda publication requirements remain in effect.

March 13, 2020:

Governor Ricketts [declared](#) a state of emergency. Under the Nebraska Emergency Management Act, the Governor's declaration provided him the authority to assume control over emergency management functions within the state and to issue follow-on orders to respond to the emergency.

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