

[NNPH.ORG](https://nnph.org)[English](#) | [Español](#)

NORTHERN NEVADA

Public Health

N E W S R O O M

HEALTH DISTRICT WON'T ALLOW LARGE EVENTS OF OVER 250 DUE TO LACK OF ADEQUATE HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Oct 8, 2020

Reno/Sparks, Nev. Oct. 8, 2020 – The Washoe County Health District will not allow large gatherings or events with more than 250 people in Washoe County for 30 days due to the lack of adequate health infrastructure as a result of elevated community-wide COVID-19 disease transmission.

The Health District lacks capacity to review COVID-19 Large Gathering Safety & Preparedness Plans per the Governor's Directive 033 as well as maintain rapid COVID-19 disease investigation and contact tracing.

All public gatherings of up to 250 people remain allowable under directive 033.

The Health District will assess COVID-19 transmission levels 30 days after gatherings of up to 250 individuals have occurred and re-evaluate the health infrastructure capacity. However, recognizing that outdoor venues with fixed seating pose lower risks of COVID-19 transmission if properly enforced by the organization, the Health District may consider allowing events with 10 percent of capacity on a case-by-case basis sooner than 30 days.

Washoe County is leading the state in new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population and this places significant burden on our health infrastructure. The County Assessment report provided to the State Task Force shows that the large increase in new cases that has occurred since September 15 has impacted the Health District's ability to conduct

disease investigations and contact tracing in a timely manner.

"I cannot in good conscience allow gatherings of more than 250 to take place until we have been able to assess how the newly-allowed gatherings of up to 250 people affect disease transmission rates and contact tracing efforts in Washoe County," District Health Officer Kevin Dick said. "I understand the desire to get back to normal, but we're clearly not there yet and our health infrastructure is strained. I feel it is incumbent on me to make this decision to fulfill my responsibilities to the community under State statute."

Pursuant to Governor's Directive 033, plans for large gatherings and events must be reviewed by the local health authority for confirmation that they comply with all applicable health and safety standards and will not place an unacceptable burden on the local health infrastructure. Further concerns for the burden that large events and gatherings may place on the health infrastructure in Washoe County include:

Washoe County is one of only two counties flagged for elevated disease transmission in Nevada

As of Oct.5, the COVID-19 case rate per 100,000 over the last 30 days is at 412.2 in Washoe County, highest in the state (second highest as of 10/5 was Clark County with 314.9)

Test positivity (14 day with 7-day lag) is at 8.4 percent in Washoe County (Tied with Humboldt County for highest in the State)

Current delays in contact tracing due to continual large influx of cases of near or above 100 per day

The Governor's Road to Recovery calls for increasing mitigation due to transmission levels currently occurring in Washoe County

The Truckee Meadows COVID-19 Risk Meter is at "high" and recommends gatherings be limited to fewer than 10 people

The White House COVID-19 Task Force has Washoe County in the orange ranking, which recommends that gatherings be limited to 25

For public gatherings, the current Governor's Directive allows for up to 250 people. While 250 is the legal limit, the Health District recommends that people avoid public gatherings of more than 25 people to help control disease transmission in Washoe County.

For private gatherings, the Governor's mandate limits those to 10 or fewer people indoors, and 25 or fewer people outdoors.

For more information on COVID-19 in Washoe County, please visit www.COVID19Washoe.com.

The Washoe County Health District is nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board and has jurisdiction over all public health matters in Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County through the policy-making Washoe County District Board of Health. The District consists of five divisions: Administrative Health Services, Air Quality

Management, Community and Clinical Health Services, Environmental Health Services and Epidemiology & Public Health Preparedness. More info can be found here.

Copyright [WashoeLife](#)

[Terms of Use](#)