



**March 24, 2020**

**5:00 p.m. Update Pueblo, CO #PuebloCOVID19**

## **Pueblo Leaders Consider Stay-At-Home**

Pueblo community leaders met today to review local COVID-19 cases, and specifically discuss if it is time to move to a more aggressive approach in Pueblo County's efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19. They agreed delays in test processing at the state and so many test results still pending for Pueblo County, combined with the lack of available local testing, it is very difficult to measure the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Even though we do not have test results in our community, based on state modeling, we know community spread is likely a reality said Randy Evetts, public health director at the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment.

While community leaders are ready to make stringent modifications in the way residence socialize and conduct business, leaders urge every citizen to ensure they are making a difference. Officials confirm reduced exposure does result in less strain on hospitals, quicker economic recovery for our community, shorter duration of this pandemic, and fewer lives lost but we all must do our part.

Mayor Nick Gradisar said, "Although we do not have COVID-19 test results yet for the tests that were administered last week, this virus remains a serious threat to our community. It is critical that we maintain our social distance by staying home. This is especially important for those high-risk individuals who have underlying medical conditions or are over 60 years of age."

For the health and safety of our community, many federal and state orders are already in place and several local entities took steps early on to limit contact and prevent the spread of this illness, in hopes of flattening the COVID-19 disease spread-curve in our community.

"We applaud the diligence of those in our community who are already following these restrictions," said Evetts, public health director at the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment. "We are at a point where we have to ask, is it enough, are enough people stepping up to protect each other or do we enact Stay-at-Home orders?"

Sheriff Kirk M. Taylor, who shares unified command with Evetts, explained, "It is clear there are some individuals still not following social distancing and the Governor's executive orders and

that puts us in a difficult position as decision makers. I ask those who are not taking this seriously to do your part.”

“Currently we are discussing our options as a group, but Pueblo leaders have not enacted Stay-at-Home orders at this time,” Pueblo Board of County Commissioner Chairman Garrison Ortiz said. “We will base our decision on data or lack of action by Pueblo residents, and we are calling our community to act today.”

Stay-at-home orders will likely include closing all non-essential businesses and mandating people stay home unless they are buying groceries, going to the doctor, or providing other critical services for family members. Group gatherings will be banned, while outdoor exercise (in non-group settings) will be allowed.

Everybody has a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in Pueblo by:

- **Do not go to the emergency room unless medically necessary.**
- Wash your hands with soap regularly.
- Cough or sneeze into elbow or tissue.
- Stay home when you’re sick.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Clean surfaces frequently touched.

Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment encourages residents to seek out credible, reliable sources of information on COVID-19:

- [www.puebloemergency.info](http://www.puebloemergency.info)
- Call CO HELP at **1-877-462-2911** or email [COHELP@RMPDC.org](mailto:COHELP@RMPDC.org)
- Pueblo’s COVID-19 Hotline 719-583-4444

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