



Sangamon County Department of Public Health Announces Metrics for Adjusting Mitigations

Our community has made substantial progress from early November to now. In mid-November, cases averaged over 300 new cases per day. Currently, we are averaging fewer than 80 per day and the 7 day rolling average of positivity has fallen from 16.8% on 11/14/20 to 5.7% on 12/26/20.

The critical reopening metric to allow relaxation of the level of mitigation for our community is achieving a 7-day rolling average positivity of 6.5% for seven consecutive days. This metric is based on guidelines from IDPH and the CDC.

The other critical metrics for ensuring that our community can effectively respond to the pandemic are ICU bed availability and hospital medical/surgical bed availability. Hospital bed availability has been over the 20% threshold suggested by IDPH. There are many reasons for this, but it is important to note that this year our flu infections and hospitalizations have been very low.

ICU capacity is a vital metric and a drop below 20% is a matter of serious concern. The currently reported ICU capacity remains critical at below the 20% threshold suggested by IDPH. We have reviewed the ICU metric carefully in the context of recent modifications made by IDPH. We believe that the metric as currently reported does not accurately reflect our hospitals' quick adaptability under standard operating procedures. We continue to monitor this metric by communicating daily with our local hospitals.

Sangamon County has achieved a 7 day rolling average of 6.5% or less positivity for 7 consecutive days, and reached the other necessary metrics. New orders will be released soon that allow indoor operations at 25% capacity for bars and restaurants. The new mitigation orders will take effect at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, January 3rd. Significant indoor mitigations will still be necessary.

Continued Social Distancing

For those customers being served indoors, a reservation name and phone number for one person in the group must be kept for 30 days and available to the County upon request.

Establishments must ensure that all customers only consume food or drink while seated at a table (not a bar or countertop). The number of customers seated at one table shall be limited to ten persons, and unrelated groups of customers (i.e., those not from the same household/party) shall not be seated at the same table. All seated customers must be seated at their table so that they are at least six feet away from: (a) any other customer seated at any other table; and (b) any other patron service area. In lieu of compliance with this six-foot rule, the establishment may use physical barriers to separate a customer seated at their table from customers seated at other tables and from other patron service areas.

Establishments shall not allow customers to sit at bars or countertops.

Orders for food and drink may be taken and fulfilled at a counter or bar and payment for the food and drink accepted, but only if 6-foot social distancing guidelines are followed with the use of recommended face coverings.

Establishments shall not allow customers to consume food or drink while they are standing.

To the extent possible, patrons must wait for services off-premises, either outdoors and maintaining a social distance of 6-ft with the use of recommended face coverings or in their vehicles. Patrons can remain in the waiting area but should adhere to 6-ft distancing guidelines.

Hours of Operation

Establishments may not begin serving the public until 6:00 a.m. Establishments must cease indoor service by 9:00 p.m., and no customers shall remain in the indoor serving areas after 9:30 p.m. Previous orders and guidelines related to outdoor dining will remain in effect.

Face Coverings

Establishments must have an adequate supply of face coverings for staff, as well as a policy and training for staff to wear their face coverings. Employees must wear face coverings over their nose and mouth. Establishments shall ensure that all customers wear face coverings over their nose and mouth while they are in the indoor public areas but not seated indoors with their own household/party.

Hand Washing and Sanitizing Stations

Hand-washing sinks must be accessible, functional with hot and cold running water, and fully stocked with soap, hand drying devices, and waste cans. Hand sanitizing stations must be provided, as appropriate, in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene by both patrons and employees to supplement hand washing. Train and remind employees of effective hand hygiene practices, including washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Live Music/Dancing

Indoor live music is prohibited. Further, irrespective of the source of the accompanying music, neither Karaoke nor dancing is permitted.

Circulation

If existing windows in the areas tables are provided for customers use are operable, they must each be opened one inch to increase the volume of fresh air entering the building while the area is open for use by the public. The establishments' existing HVAC equipment shall be operated at maximum capacity for the purpose of exchanging the air in the indoor public areas tables are provided for customers use.

Further explanation of the requirements and guidelines can be found at [SCDPH.org](https://www.scdph.org) in the Updates, Information & Resource links.

If we see a spike in community transmission again, as reflected by the percentage positivity, similar to what we experienced in early November, we resume more strict mitigations. Our metrics for measuring a return to increased danger are as follows:

1. 7 day rolling average of 8% or greater positivity for 7 consecutive days
2. Hospital bed availability (ICU as well as Medical/Surgical) with 3 day rolling average of less than 20%
3. 7 day rolling average of COVID-19 patients in the hospital showing an increasing trend.

We are extremely hopeful that with the arrival of the vaccines we will continue to see a steady reduction in our community's suffering from the virus. However, it is important to note that this virus has a tendency for resurgence, as seen in our community three times in the last 10 months. We should not let our guard down even as we relax some of our mitigations to assist our struggling businesses. The community must continue to wear masks, wash hands, and practice social distancing.