



Southeastern Idaho Public Health

For Immediate Release
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Butte County Commissioners Raise COVID-19 Risk Level to High

In July, SIPH's Board of Health adopted the COVID-19 Regional Response Plan for the eight-county region (Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Butte, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida & Power). The plan outlines risk levels starting with Minimal Risk/green and escalates toward Critical Risk/red. Each level has its own metrics and mitigation strategies to reduce the impact of COVID-19. Different parts of SIPH's region may be at different risk levels at any one time.

In a meeting held by the Butte County Commissioners on Thursday, August 27th, a decision was made to utilize SIPH's Response Plan metrics and mitigation strategies and increase their COVID-19 risk level from minimal to high risk based on the active case rate, number of new cases and the impact COVID is having on their health care system. This decision will be reviewed in two weeks.

Under the high-risk category the following should be implemented:

- Face coverings are strongly recommended when in public
- Limit gatherings to no more than 50 people
- Encourage vulnerable populations (elderly, individuals with underlying health conditions) to self-isolate
- Strongly encourage telework for those that are able
- Congregate living facilities close to visitors and extra precautions implemented for employees
- Businesses implement delivery/curb-side services as much as possible
- Places of worship implement virtual services where possible
- Discontinue youth and adult sports/activities in which physical distancing is not possible
- Consider industry-specific measures/restrictions
- Schools should implement plans in response to these guidelines and those of Idaho Back to School Framework 2020

"We support Butte County's decision to act rapidly, based upon data, to enact measures intended to protect the health of their community," said Maggie Mann, Southeastern Idaho Public Health District Director.

"No matter the risk category, we urge all residents to take precautions to slow the spread of COVID-19. This includes practicing physical distancing of at least 6 feet, wearing a mask when interacting with others outside your household, washing hands frequently, sanitizing commonly touched surfaces regularly, and isolating immediately if you begin showing symptoms of any virus," said Mann.

Risk category definitions, recommended mitigation strategies, and basic metric information for each county is available at siphidaho.org.

For southeast Idaho specific information about the novel coronavirus, please visit <https://siphidaho.org/coronavirus.php>.

For Idaho-specific information about the novel coronavirus, please visit <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/>.

Join us Monday-Friday at 11 am for Facebook Live at <https://facebook.com/siphidaho>.

SIPH has a call center to field questions from the community and is open Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can reach the hotline at (208) 234-5875.

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