



SANGAMON COUNTY COVID-19 POLICY UPDATE

7/23/20

We remain in the midst of an unprecedented and extremely dangerous outbreak of disease. It has affected all ages, all occupations, races, and sexes. Sangamon County has already suffered greatly. To date, we have seen more than 700 documented cases and 34 deaths, with the rate of infection increasing.

The Sangamon County Department of Public Health recognizes the danger to our citizens and has worked tirelessly to identify, control, and prevent the disease. We believe that the control measures adopted have reduced the number of cases that would have occurred. However, we are concerned by the recent increasing number of illnesses.

Throughout the pandemic, data and advice from medical professionals have guided every move made by Sangamon County. The recent uptick in cases and surging COVID-19 activity in states around the country are cause for concern. In fourteen of the past sixteen days, Sangamon County has reported double-digit new positive cases.

The demographics of new positive cases have shifted drastically in recent weeks. In May, our biggest concern was our older population and congregated settings. While that concern has not disappeared, current data suggest that our focus needs to shift to our younger population in social settings.

In an effort to continue focusing our limited resources where we can be the most effective in preventing spread, we must address outbreaks at restaurants and bars.

For Sangamon County Establishments

After discussions with our medical advisors and as a consequence of the increase of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in local establishments which hold food permits and/or liquor licenses, Sangamon County shall enforce new health and safety requirements. Our medical advisory group has determined these requirements are necessary to abate conditions which constitute immediate substantial endangerment of public health and safety under the Sangamon County Code of Ordinances given the current upward trend of cases in restaurant and bar settings. Penalties for violation of these requirements include monetary fines, suspension or revocation of permit or license and potential closure of a business pursuant to existing County ordinances.

This decision was not made lightly, but it's necessary as we work to prevent a resurgence of COVID-19 and the hospital surge that we are beginning to see, similar to what we see in many states around the country.

We must take every precaution to prevent Sangamon County from reverting back to Phase 3, or worse, a second lockdown. It is our hope that compliance from business owners, along with compliance from the patrons, will reduce the spread of disease, keep our hospital capacity stable and keep our local economy open.

Beginning this weekend, Sangamon County Officials will monitor compliance at local establishments. Requirements that will be monitored include:

Occupancy and Social Distancing: Establishments must operate at nor more than 50% of overall space capacity, which shall be calculated and enforced separately for each establishment's indoor and outdoor public areas. For example, if the capacity of an establishment is thirty guests inside and forty guests outside, the maximum number of guests allowed will be fifteen inside and twenty outside. In seated areas, spacing must allow for at least 6-ft. of distance between tables or other designated patron service areas; if tables/ booths cannot be moved, employers must only use every other table/ booth to allow for separation between patrons of unrelated parties. In standing areas, the maximum occupancy is 25% of standing area capacity. 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. The Springfield Fire Department will assist Sangamon County Liquor and Health Inspectors in determining occupancy limits.

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. Patrons should be encouraged to wear face coverings over their nose and mouth anytime they are not seated with their own household/party or not adhering to 6-ft distancing guidelines.

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: Live music is permitted, but employees and performers must follow social distancing guidelines, keeping the maximum distance possible from each other and customers. Performers must wear face coverings where possible, and the use of barriers between singers and customers and employees during the performance is strongly encouraged. Patrons should wear face coverings over their nose and mouth, except while seated or adhering to 6-ft distancing guidelines. At this time, Karaoke is not permitted in Sangamon County.

County Health has been very pleased with the compliance from the majority of business owners during this pandemic. We hope that will continue in the days and weeks to come. We believe the vast majority of establishments are currently following these guidelines. For the few that may not adhere to the guidelines, Sangamon County is committed to taking the necessary steps to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community by improving the adherence to guidelines by all our businesses.

For Sangamon County Residents

Medical advisors strongly encourage that residents adhere to the guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and local health departments. Our medical advisors agree that to help curb community spread residents should take these precautions:

Wear Face Coverings: Everyone over the age of 2 who can medically tolerate a face covering over their nose and mouth should wear one in a public place when unable to maintain a safe distance (6 feet) from others. The mask should fit snugly around your mouth and nose. By following this guidance when you leave your home, you help protect others in case you're infected but don't have symptoms.

Practice Social Distancing: Social distancing means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household. To practice social distancing, stay at least 6 feet from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay at least 6 feet away from others when possible, even if neither of you have any symptoms.

Practice Good Hand Hygiene: Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If you don't have soap or water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.

Cooperate with Contact Tracers: It is becoming increasingly important that those who do test positive cooperate with Contact Tracers. Contact tracers are part of the health department that work with the person who tested positive to identify others they have had contact with and let them know they may have been exposed to the virus. If you get a call from county health, please answer the phone or call back. Cooperating helps slow the spread of the virus in our community.

The community should understand that at the current time there is no guaranteed safe way to gather. The virus is widespread, and it could get worse if we are not cautious. Please follow the guidelines, especially when you are in public. If our local metrics worsen, we will not hesitate to take further action.

It is critical for our community to follow recommended safety measures to help reverse the recent uptick in COVID-19 cases. Everyone must do their part to protect themselves and each other.

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Daily Positives in Sangamon County and Seven Day Moving Average

