

Many of you have seen the Kearny County Public Risk Level Guidelines and have provided positive feedback and also concerns, all of which is appreciated. I just wanted to offer a brief explanation of these guidelines. These guidelines are based on published risk level guidelines and modified to fit our county. They are based on Kearny County resident statistics only, with the exception of the KCH Bed Capacity and ICU Bed Occupancy indicators.

Purpose: These guidelines are not intended to instill fear, but to provide an objective way to measure CoVID-19 viral activity in our county and risk of community transmission. We hope that businesses, schools, and other entities can make decisions within the individual organization based on the county risk level in order to prevent further viral spread. Our goal is to avoid the highest level (level 4), which will only be met if we are overloading our local and regional healthcare systems to care for moderate to severe illness.

Goals: The county health entities (health department, emergency management, county hospital) have 3 overriding goals:

1. Keep our community as healthy as possible
2. Keep businesses open and thriving
3. Keep schools open and children learning

So how do we merge our purpose and our goals? It comes back to the 3 recommendations that you are all likely tired of hearing by now:

1. **Wash your hands:** washing hands with soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer kills all coronavirus, including CoVID-19.
2. **Wear a mask:** this is a polarizing topic, but medical evidence continues to reinforce the fact that wearing a mask cuts down on transmission of CoVID-19.
3. **Watch your distance:** limit large group gatherings and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) whenever possible, whether in a business or with extended family or with friends.

A final statement is just an encouragement. We live in a wonderful county and community. No person can go far in our community without running into family, friends, or neighbors. This small community is made up of a diverse group of people, which includes those at higher risk for severe CoVID-19 illness and complications resulting from infection. We can achieve our goals and help to keep our county safe for our entire community by following these guidelines. We ask that you show respect and preference to your family, friends, and neighbors in this.

Thanks and stay healthy.



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