

Resolution 2020-A COVID-19 Risk Reduction Guidelines

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the novel Coronavirus 2019 Disease (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, as of November 15, 2020, Knox County was defined as a county in the Red Zone by the White House Coronavirus Task Force, meeting the requirements of “counties during the last week reported both new cases of 10 to 100 per 100,000 population, and a diagnostic test positivity result between 5% and 10%,” further stating “Current mitigation efforts are inadequate and must be increased to flatten the curve to sustain the health system for both COVID and non-COVID emergencies”; and

WHEREAS, as of November 18, 2020, Knox County new case rate, percent positivity, and are all above the Board of Health adopted metrics for escalation; and

WHEREAS, as of November 18, 2020 three of the five of the Knox County Health Department Benchmarks are rated as red and the remaining two are rated as yellow, indicating a worsening situation; and

WHEREAS, a continuing public health emergency exists in Knox County, Tennessee, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and there is need for increased diligence among all citizens to practice the five core actions with fidelity in order to protect the public health and welfare; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Knox County Code § 38-33(a), the Knox County Board of Health has all of the powers and duties as required and provided for by state law; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-2-601(f), the powers and duties of the Knox County Board of Health include adopting rules and regulations as may be necessary or appropriate to protect the general health and safety of the citizens of Knox County and governing the policies of the Knox County Health Department; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-2-603(b) and Knox County Code § 38-32(f), the Knox County Health Director, as head of the Knox County Health Department, shall act in concert with, and meet all applicable policies established by, the Knox County Board of Health; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-2-609, the Knox County Health Officer is empowered to order (1) the quarantine of any place or person, if the county health officer finds that the quarantine is necessary to protect the public from an epidemic, (2) the closure of any public establishment, facility or building if the county health officer finds unsanitary conditions of such a nature and extent to significantly threaten the public health, or (3) the closure of any public establishment, facility or building, if the county health officer is otherwise authorized by law to take that action; and

WHEREAS, by Opinion No. 20-07 issued on April 27, 2020, the Attorney General of Tennessee confirmed that “local health officers confronted with an epidemic [have] the power—

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indeed, the obligation—to ‘[e]stablish appropriate control measures which may include examination, treatment, isolation, quarantine, exclusion, disinfection, immunization, disease surveillance, closure of establishment, education, and other measures considered appropriate by medical experts for the protection of the public’s health’” (quoting Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1200-14-01-.15) (emphasis added); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Order No. 67 issued by the Governor of Tennessee on October 30, 2020, the Knox County Health Department has the authority to issue additional orders or measures related to the containment or management of the spread of COVID-19, which may permit to a greater degree, or restrict to a greater degree, the opening, closure, or operation of businesses, organizations, or venues or the gathering of persons in Knox County, except with respect to certain subjects; and

WHEREAS, as of November 25, 2020, the foregoing authority remains in effect pursuant to Executive Order No. 67 issued by the Governor of Tennessee on October 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Knox County Board of Health finds it necessary and appropriate to limit the spread of COVID-19 spread in order to protect the general health and safety of the citizens of Knox County during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Knox Countians are encouraged to continue to engage in the healthy and essential activities of daily life, including supporting local businesses and their employees while adhering to the health and safety measures set forth in this Order, so that we will safeguard to the greatest extent possible the economic well-being of so many Knox Countians whose lives and work have been disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak and ensure that Knox County is best positioned to recover following this outbreak; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH AS FOLLOWS:

1. This resolution should be cited as the “COVID-19 Risk Reduction Guidelines.”
2. Residents are urged to restrict all non-essential activities to the greatest degree possible.
3. Organizations, businesses, and residents should adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Tennessee Pledge as well as the Governor’s Executive Orders, including staying home when asked to isolate or quarantine by a medical provider or health department.
4. Residents should continue to follow the Five Core Actions, at all times, even when around close associates and friends because these familiar situations are often when community members are their least diligent. The Five Core Actions are:
 - a. Wearing cloth face coverings
 - b. Maintaining physical distancing
 - c. Washing hands
 - d. Cleaning frequently used surfaces

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- e. Staying home when ill
- 5. In addition, residents should:
 - a. Maintain at least six feet (remembering farther is better) of physical distance, whenever possible, when around those not in one's household;
 - b. Avoid all activities that require the removal of a cloth face covering if at least six (6) feet of physical distance cannot be maintained, including eating and drinking, with people not in one's household. This does not include seeking medical care;
 - c. Wear a cloth face covering consistently and correctly when around those not in one's household, whether indoors or out, especially when six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained;
 - d. Refrain from attending/hosting in-person meetings when six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained;
 - e. Follow all guidance from the state of Tennessee regarding nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
 - f. Minimize non-essential travel
 - g. Employers should allow working from home whenever possible;
 - h. Avoid social gatherings of eight (8) or more people;
 - i. Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and distancing oneself from others, especially those who are at higher risk of getting sick, including in particular older adults and persons with serious chronic medical conditions;
 - j. Practice good personal hygiene, including washing hands, especially after touching any frequently used item or surface, avoiding touching the face, and disinfecting frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible; and
 - k. Show compassion to others, especially workers and business owners, even when in disagreement about guidelines or safety precautions.

This Resolution shall be in effect upon its passage the public health and welfare requiring it.

ADOPTED this day of November, 2020.

KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Jack Gotcher, DMD, PhD/Chair

Date

ATTEST:

Martha Buchanan, MD/Secretary Date