Thanks to a strong commitment and respect for the principle of personal responsibility, South Dakotans have dramatically changed the trajectory of our initial COVID-19 projections. With our hospitalization capacity currently at a manageable level, South Dakotans are asked to consider the following steps as we look to get back to normal.

- Governor Kristi Noem
South Dakota’s “Back to Normal” Plan

**Individuals:**
- Continue to practice good hygiene
- Continue to stay home when sick
- Continue to practice physical distancing, as appropriate
- **Vulnerable individuals** are at higher risk for this virus. Accordingly, they should:
  - Take extra care to practice good hygiene
  - Avoid those who are sick or those who have been exposed to people who are sick
  - Consider staying home whenever possible

**Employers:**
- Encourage good hygiene and sanitation practices, especially in high-traffic areas
- Encourage employees to stay home when sick
- If previously operating via telework, begin transitioning employees back to the workplace
- Where appropriate, screen employees for symptoms prior to entering the workplace

**Enclosed Retail Businesses**
- Resume operations in a manner that allows for reasonable physical distancing, good hygiene, and appropriate sanitation
- Consider restricting occupancy and continue innovating in this uncertain environment

**Schools:**
- Continue remote learning
- Consider a limited return to in-person instruction to “check in” before school year ends
- Encourage good hygiene and sanitation practices, especially in high-traffic areas

**Health Care Providers:**
- Hospitals treating COVID-19 patients should reserve 30% of their hospital beds and maintain appropriate stores of PPE to meet surge demand
- Other hospitals and surgery centers must have updated transfer protocols and adequate stores of independently-sourced PPE
- Non-hospital healthcare can resume with adequate stores of independently sourced PPE
- Continue to restrict visits to senior care facilities and hospitals

**Local Governments:**
- Consider current and future actions in light of these guidelines

Frequently Asked Questions ([Appendix 2](#)) will be kept up to date with further clarifications.

Note: The Governor and Department of Health may respond to significant clusters with enhanced mitigation on a county-by-county basis.

1 As defined in Executive Order 2020-08, this includes any indoor restaurant, bar, brewery, café, casino, coffee shop, recreational or athletic facility, health club, or entertainment venue.
Criteria to Initiate Plan

### SYMPTOMS
- Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses (ILI) reported within the last 14-day period
- Plan in place so all persons with COVID-19 symptoms can receive a test upon recommendation from their provider

### CASES
- Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period in areas with sustained community spread*
- No clusters that pose a risk to public**

### HOSPITALS
- Treat all patients without crisis care
- Testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing
- Adequate supply of independently procured personal protective equipment is available for all workforce and patients

### STATE
- SD DOH has the capacity to rapidly investigate COVID-19 cases and initiate containment (isolation and quarantine)
- SD EOC maintains a rapid response team to support high-risk businesses with a confirmed COVID-19 case

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*Either minimal/moderate or substantial community spread from the Community Impact Map. Map will be updated to reflect changes:
- Substantial to Minimal/Moderate: No active cases
- Minimal/Moderate to No Community Spread: No new community-acquired cases within 14 days and no active cases

**Clusters that pose a risk to the public: 10 or more cases that are not confined to a single setting OR a large exposure event (>50 people) with currently increasing number of cases
Frequently Asked Questions
FAQs

Q: When can churches and other places of worship resume religious services?
A: Churches were never required to close; as they resume services, they are encouraged to consider the guidelines for “public gatherings” and to consider steps to maintain reasonable physical distancing.

Q: Does this mean schools could resume in-person classes before the end of the school year?
A: Each school district should make its own decisions about the remainder of the school year; school districts are encouraged to take steps to contact all students and assess student learning.

Q: When can daycare centers reopen?
A: Daycares were never explicitly required to close; they can reopen at any time and are encouraged to emphasize appropriate sanitation.

Q: Do I have to keep wearing a mask when I am in public?
A: Masks have never been required, but South Dakotans are encouraged to continue to consider CDC guidance and use.

Q: Does this mean I no longer have to “stay at home”?
A: South Dakota never issued a “stay at home” or “shelter in place” order. South Dakotans are encouraged to use common sense and practice good hygiene and reasonable physical distancing.

Q: Are businesses, including outdoor venues and events, allowed to reopen?
A: No business was ever required to close. Business are encouraged to consider these guidelines as they resume normal operations, and also must adhere to any local restrictions.

Q: Is travel allowed to and from South Dakota, or within South Dakota?
A: South Dakota never prohibited travel to or from other states, or within the state. South Dakotans and visitors from out of state are encouraged to use common sense.

Q: Can doctors resume clinic visits? Can dentists, optometrists, chiropractors, and other healthcare providers resume operation?
A: Non-hospital healthcare, including clinic visits, can resume so long as providers secure adequate supplies of personal protective equipment without relying on the state supply.