

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF RIO
BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO ISSUING A TEMPORARY ORDER CLOSING
COUNTY OFFICES TO THE PUBLIC AND SETTING FORTH PROTECTIVE
MEASURES FOR THE PUBLIC AND FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF
RIO BLANCO COUNTY**

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes §§ 25-1-506, 25-1-508, 25-1-509, and other applicable authority, the Rio Blanco County Board of Health and the Rio Blanco County Public Health Director have powers and duties to develop and promote the public policies needed to secure the conditions necessary for a healthy community. In the event of a public health emergency, the Rio Blanco County Public Health Agency issues orders and adopts rules consistent with the laws and rules of the state as the Public Health Director may deem necessary for the proper exercise of the powers and duties vested in or imposed upon the agency or county board.

The Rio Blanco County Public Health Agency has the duty to investigate and control the causes of epidemic or communicable diseases and conditions affecting public health and to establish, maintain, and enforce isolation and quarantine, and in pursuance thereof, and for this purpose only, to exercise physical control over property and over the persons of the people within the jurisdiction of the agency as the agency may find necessary for the protection of the public health.

The Rio Blanco County Board of Health recognizes the escalating threat to residents and employees of Rio Blanco County from the Coronavirus ("COVID-19"), and based on recommendations from the Rio Blanco County Public Health Director and consistent with recommendations from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment ("CDPHE"), this Public Health Order is enacted to protect health and safety in Rio Blanco County.

FINDINGS:

1. Coronavirus Disease ("COVID-19") was first detected in Wuhan, China in late 2019, and since then has spread to almost every country including the United States. As of April 6, 2020, the CDPHE Colorado Case Summary, current through April 5, 2020, there are 4,950 known positive cases of COVID-19 in Colorado. There is an expectation that the virus will spread.
2. While Rio Blanco County has only identified one case of COVID-19, Rio Blanco County medical experts are actively testing for COVID-19 within the county according to specific testing criteria.
3. COVID-19 is a respiratory illness transmitted like other respiratory illness through person-to-person contact or by contact with surfaces contaminated with the virus. Persons infected with COVID-19 may become symptomatic anywhere from two to fourteen days after exposure. Symptoms include fever, cough or shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, and fatigue.
4. Individuals with serious chronic health conditions and older adults are most at risk for becoming ill with this disease.

5. The Rio Blanco County Public Health Director and the Rio Blanco County Medical Officer report that expert, peer-reviewed sources indicate that at this time, an effective way to combat COVID-19 is with significant travel restrictions, social distancing, quarantine and isolation to reduce transmission, in addition to rigorous handwashing and hygiene practice.

6. On March 10, 2020, the Governor of Colorado declared a State of Emergency related to the presence of COVID-19 in the State. CDPHE has confirmed that COVID-19 continues to spread throughout the State of Colorado. On March 25, 2020, the Governor of Colorado executed Executive Order D 2020-17 ordering Coloradans to stay at home through April 11, 2020, due to the presence of COVID-19. On April 6, 2020, the Governor of Colorado executed Executive Order D 2020-24, amending and extending Executive Order D 2020-17 extending the duration of the stay at home order from April 11, 2020 to April 26, 2020.

7. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency due to COVID-19.

8. On March 25, 2020, the Governor of the State of Colorado requested the President of the United States declare a Major Disaster for the State of Colorado, pursuant to the Stafford Act. On March 28, 2020, the President of the United States approved that request.

9. On March 26, 2020, the Board of County Commissioners of Rio Blanco County closed County offices implementing Tier 3 - Full Implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan described below.

10. A significant number of Coloradans are at risk of serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19.

11. Limiting the number of people in Rio Blanco County who may gather together directly to ten people or less and requiring those who meet in such groups to keep six (6) feet away from each other is necessary for the protection of public health. The age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population in Rio Blanco County places it at risk of serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, persons with mild symptoms and asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk. A large surge in the number of persons with serious infections can compromise the ability of the healthcare system, to deliver necessary healthcare to the public. It has been reported that Routt County, an adjacent county, is currently experiencing community transmission of this virus. Residents of Rio Blanco County travel to Routt County frequently and vice versa, so this risk extends to Rio Blanco County, too.

12. Closing Rio Blanco County offices to the public protects both the public and the employees of Rio Blanco County. Decreasing direct contact between people has been shown to decrease the risk of COVID-19 transmission to others, and is especially important for people who are over sixty (60) years old and those with chronic health conditions due to their higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19. This Order will reduce the likelihood that many individuals will be exposed to COVID-19, and will, therefore, slow the spread of COVID-19 in Rio Blanco County.

Based on the foregoing FINDINGS, the Rio Blanco County Public Health Director has determined, in consultation with the Rio Blanco County Medical Officer, that the following Order is necessary for the protection of the public health.

I. ORDER.

1. Virtual Meetings by the Rio Blanco County Board of Health and the Board of County Commissioners of Rio Blanco County. Meetings of the Rio Blanco County Board of Health and the Board of County Commissioners of Rio Blanco County should be conducted as much as possible by telephone, electronically, or by other means of communication so as to provide maximum participation and also protect the public. Any meeting other than an emergency meeting is to be open to the public and will be live streamed via the Rio Blanco County website. The public can view and participate in the meetings by calling the open conference line (970) 878-9432, during previously scheduled duly published meetings or by visiting the following link: <https://www.rbc.us/129/Agendas-Minutes> and scrolling down to the appropriate meeting date.

2. Closing Rio Blanco County Offices to the Public. The Rio Blanco County offices located in the Rio Blanco County Courthouse and all other County facilities shall be temporarily closed to the public. Some Critical Business functions, related to health and wellbeing, will continue from a county building and some from home. Example of offices remaining open with limited public access are: Law enforcement, Human Services, Public Health, IT, payroll, finance, snow plowing/emergency R&B, Landfill. Most County office staff can be reached by telephone or email, but many county employees have been encouraged to work remotely. A directory of employees and departments is located on the Rio Blanco County website at: <https://www.rbc.us/35/Departments>.

3. Documents for the Clerk and Recorder can be mailed to Rio Blanco County Clerk and Recorder, P O Box 1067, Meeker, CO 81641, or via email at clerk@rbc.us. To speak to an employee at the Clerk and Recorder's office, the public may call: (970) 878-9460. The Rio Blanco County Assessor may be reached by telephone at (970) 878-9410 or by emailing renae.neilson@rbc.us. The Rio Blanco County Treasurer may be reached by telephone at (970) 878-9660 or by emailing treasurer@rbc.us. Voice Messages and Emails will be returned as soon as possible.

4. Quarantine Plan. In the event of the need to implement quarantine procedures, the Rio Blanco County Board of Health will follow the direction of State officials and the Rio Blanco County Public Health Director and the Rio Blanco County Medical Officer, who will provide specific information and directions relative to cancellation of public events, quarantine processes and procedures. Both the Rio Blanco County Public Health Director and the Rio Blanco County Medical Officer shall be authorized to sign Isolation Orders and Termination of Isolation Orders regarding individuals located in Rio Blanco County.

5. Phasing of Responses to COVID-19.

Tier 1 - Heightened Awareness. The CDPHE and local health authorities have indicated that COVID-19 is in Colorado and are encouraging citizens to be aware and to focus on sanitization and hygiene.

- Instruct employees to stay home if sick or to go home if exhibiting symptoms while at work.
- Identify work spaces where employees can temporarily isolate if they are awaiting transportation to their home or medical care.
- Wash hands often and thoroughly with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Cover mouth with arm/elbow or tissue if coughing.
- Heightened amount of environmental sanitation with products approved by Centers for Disease Control.
- Employees should refrain from traveling to conferences and/or meetings in other parts of the country where cases of COVID-19 are expanding.
- Acquire/inspect/issue Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to select Rio Blanco County staff (gloves, masks, etc.)

Tier 2 - State and Local Concern. The CDPHE have indicated multiple cases of COVID-19 within the State of Colorado. When directed by the Rio Blanco County Board of Health, Rio Blanco County will move its response to Tier 2, which in addition to Phase 1 steps, includes:

- Trial Teleworking and staggered shifts authorized.
- Employees should refrain from physical contact with each other and with members of the public (i.e. handshakes, hugging, etc.) The Centers for Disease Control recommends a 6' separation between people.
- Employees should limit or eliminate any outside agency meeting attendance, unless able to be done remotely.
- All public and internal meetings should be limited by all Departments and Elected Officials.
- Rio Blanco County will follow direction from State authorities.
- Employees will be directed to stay home (or go home) if they or any family member they live with is exhibiting any symptoms or if they are at high risk.
- Teleworking and staggered shifts authorized. Additional measures or plans to allow employees to work remotely, when feasible.
- Departments must take additional steps they have identified to limit exposure between employees and between employees and the general public.
- County buildings authorized to have reduced staffing and to limit public spaces. Heightened level of sanitization processes.
- Other steps as directed by State and Rio Blanco County Public Health Director and Rio Blanco County Medical Officer.

Tier 3 - Full implementation of Response Plan. Tier 3 may occur at such time as the Rio Blanco County Public Health Agency or the State of Colorado recommends region wide social distancing, or schools are shut down, or at such other time as the Rio Blanco County Board of Health deems it to be in the best interests of Rio Blanco County residents. When directed by the Rio Blanco County Board of Health, Rio Blanco County will move its response to Tier 3, which in addition to Phase 2 steps, includes:

- County buildings will be minimally staffed or closed. The public will be directed to conduct business online, if feasible, or by phone.
- Departments will fully enact their Continuity of Operations Plans. Teleworking options and staggered shift work maximized. Only essential services ongoing, unless able to be provided through employees working remotely.
- Other steps as directed by State and the Rio Blanco County Public Health Agency and its Medical Officer, including support of their efforts.

6. General Information for All Persons Affected By This Order. The Rio Blanco County Public Health Agency is tasked with protecting the health and welfare of the citizens of Rio Blanco County, Colorado, by investigating and controlling the causes of epidemic and communicable disease. This Order is necessary to control transmission of disease to others. See C.R.S. §25-1-508, Colorado Revised Statutes. Immediate issuance of this Order is necessary for the preservation of public health, safety, or welfare.

Any person aggrieved and affected by this Order has the right to request judicial review by filing an action with the Rio Blanco County District Court within ninety (90) days of the date of this Order, pursuant to C.R.S. §25-1-515, Colorado Revised Statutes. However, you must continue to obey the terms of this Order while your request for review is pending.

This Order is in effect until midnight Mountain Standard Time, April 26, 2020, and is subject to continuing review by the Rio Blanco County Public Health Director, consistent with recommendations from the Rio Blanco County Medical Officer, and the CDPHE.

DULY MOVED, SECONDED, AND PASSED ON A VOTE OF 3 FOR AND 0 AGAINST, THIS 8th DAY OF April, 2020.

ATTEST:

 Clerk & Recorder



The Board of County Commissioners of
 Rio Blanco County, Colorado


 Jeff Rector, Chairman


 Si Woodruff


 Gary Moyer