



Office of the Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Department of Health county map update:
32 counties operating at Red Level beginning Dec. 30**
Catron County reaches Yellow Level; several counties near Green Level

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Department of Health on Wednesday announced the updated [statewide COVID-19 map](#) for the two-week period beginning Dec. 30, with 32 counties at the Red Level. Twenty-eight counties improved in at least [one of the two health gating criteria metrics](#), and 21 counties improved in both health metrics. More counties are in close range of advancing to a less-restrictive level than at any point since the advent of the state’s color-coding system.

The state’s county-by-county system uses key health metrics -- the per-capita daily incidence of new COVID-19 cases and average COVID-19 test positivity within county borders -- to determine the level of public health risk and requirement for each county. A county that meets one criterion may operate at the Yellow Level; a county that meets both may operate at the Green Level.

Catron County now [meets the criteria to operate](#) at the Yellow Level, with a per-capita new daily case rate of 5.7 per 100,000. No counties meet the criteria to operate at the Green Level at present, though **Catron County**, **Harding County**, **Los Alamos County** and **Quay County** are all near that threshold.

Fourteen counties have now driven their case positivity rate below 10 percent, bordering on the state’s 5 percent threshold for operating at the Yellow Level.

The color-coding of the map, [in accordance with the state’s emergency public health order](#), is updated biweekly on Wednesdays. The next update is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan 13. The map and other associated demographic COVID-19 data are available at cv.nmhealth.org.

IMPROVING PER-CAPITA CASE RATES:

Over the past two weeks, 28 counties saw improvements in their per-capita daily case rates. Those counties are: Bernalillo, Catron, Chaves, Colfax, Curry, De Baca, Dona Ana, Eddy, Guadalupe, Hidalgo, Lea, Lincoln, Los Alamos, Luna, McKinley, Otero, Quay, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Juan, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Sierra, Socorro, Taos, Torrance, Union and Valencia, with **Catron, Quay, Union, Otero** and **Lincoln** making the greatest improvements by percentage.

The counties of **Cibola, Grant, Mora** and **Roosevelt** saw an increase in their daily per-capita case rates over the past two weeks.

Catron County has the lowest average daily per-capita case rates, at 5.7 per 100,000 as of Dec. 30. It is followed by **Harding County** (10.1), **Quay County** (16.7), **Los Alamos County** (20.5) and **Otero County** (23). The state threshold for moving to a less restrictive level is 8 per 100,000.

IMPROVING POSITIVITY RATES:

Over the past two weeks, 21 counties saw improvements in their positivity rates. Those counties are: Bernalillo, Catron, Chaves, Colfax, Curry, De Baca, Dona Ana, Guadalupe, Lea, Lincoln, Los Alamos, Luna, Otero, Quay, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, Santa Fe, Sierra, Torrance, Union and Valencia, with **Catron, Quay, Lincoln, Sierra** and **De Baca** making the greatest improvements by percentage.

The counties of **Cibola, Eddy, Grant, Hidalgo, McKinley, Mora, Roosevelt, San Juan, San Miguel, Socorro** and **Taos** saw an increase in their test positivity rate over the past two weeks.

Los Alamos County has the lowest positivity rate in the state, with 5.22 percent of tests returning positive as of Dec. 30. It is followed by **Sierra County** (6.27 percent), **Otero County** (6.4 percent), **Taos County** (6.7 percent), **Catron County** (6.7), **Quay County** (6.7 percent), **San Miguel County** (6.9 percent), **Santa Fe County** (7.16 percent), **Lincoln County** (7.6 percent) and **Grant County** (7.7 percent). The state threshold for moving to a less restrictive level is 5 percent.

POPULOUS COUNTIES:

The state's five most populous counties -- **Bernalillo, Dona Ana, Santa Fe, Sandoval** and **San Juan** -- each improved in both health metrics over the past two weeks, with the exception of San Juan, which improved its daily per-capita case rate but saw a slight increase in test positivity.

Bernalillo cut its daily case rate from 81.6 per 100,000 to 53.8 per 100,000, a decrease of 34 percent, and its positivity rate from 14.3 percent to 11.32 percent, a decrease of 21 percent.

Dona Ana cut its daily case rate from 56.6 per 100,000 to 43.7 per 100,000, a decrease of 23 percent, and its positivity rate from 12.86 percent to 12.82 percent.

Santa Fe cut its daily case rate from 59 per 100,000 to 34 per 100,000, a decrease of 42 percent, and its positivity rate from 10.1 percent to 7.16 percent, a decrease of 29 percent.

Sandoval cut its daily case rate from 73.2 per 100,000 to 56.7 per 100,000, a decrease of 23 percent, and its positivity rate from 12.1 percent to 10.5 percent, a decrease of 14 percent.

San Juan cut its daily case rate from 108.6 per 100,000 to 94 per 100,000, a decrease of 13 percent; meanwhile, its positivity rate rose from 19.3 percent to 19.46 percent.

The color-coded tier system -- Red Level, Yellow Level and Green Level -- enables counties to shed burdensome restrictions and provide local communities the flexibility to operate more day-to-day activities as soon as public health data show the virus is retreating within their borders.

The public health order, the red-to-green framework and frequently asked questions are all available at cv.nmhealth.org/redtogreen, where New Mexicans can also view the test positivity rate and new case incidence for each county as of Dec. 2.

The requirements for each level are available below and at cv.nmhealth.org/redtogreen.

GREEN LEVEL:

Counties at the Green Level have **both** a new COVID-19 case incidence rate of no greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent two-week period, **and** an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent 14-day period less than or equal to 5%.

Essential businesses (non-retail): No capacity restrictions but operations must be limited to only those absolutely necessary to carry out essential functions

Essential retail spaces: 50% of maximum capacity

Food and drink establishments: 50% of maximum capacity for indoor dining; 75% of maximum capacity for outdoor dining

Close-contact businesses: 50% of maximum capacity

Outdoor recreational facilities: 50% of maximum capacity (unless required to have less capacity under the state's COVID-Safe Practices)

Close-contact recreational facilities: Remain closed

****All other businesses:** 50% of maximum capacity

Houses of worship: May hold religious services, indoors or outdoors, or provide services through audiovisual means, but may not exceed 50% of the maximum capacity of any enclosed space on the premises

Places of lodging: 75% of maximum occupancy for those that have completed NM Safe Certified training; 40% of maximum occupancy for all others; 10 guests maximum for vacation rentals

Mass gatherings limit: 20 persons, 100 vehicles

YELLOW LEVEL:

Counties at the Yellow Level have **either** a new COVID-19 case incidence rate of no greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent two-week period, **or** an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent 14-day period less than or equal to 5%.

Essential businesses (non-retail): No capacity restrictions but operations must be limited to only those absolutely necessary to carry out essential functions

Essential retail spaces: 33% of maximum capacity

Food and drink establishments: 25% of maximum capacity for indoor dining; 75% of maximum capacity for outdoors dining; any establishment serving alcohol must close by 10 p.m. each night

Close-contact businesses: 25% of maximum capacity or 20 customers at one time, whichever is smaller

Outdoor recreational facilities: 25% of maximum capacity (unless required to have less capacity under the state's COVID-Safe Practices)

Close-contact recreational facilities: Remain closed

****All other businesses:** 25% of maximum capacity or 125 customers at one time, whichever is smaller

Houses of worship: May hold religious services, indoors or outdoors, or provide services through audiovisual means, but may not exceed 33% of the maximum capacity of any enclosed space on the premises

Places of lodging: 60% of maximum occupancy for those that have completed NM Safe Certified training; 25% of maximum occupancy for all others; 5 guests maximum for vacation rentals

Mass gatherings limit: 10 persons; 25 vehicles

RED LEVEL:

Counties at the Red Level are those with a new COVID-19 case incident rate of greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent two-week period **and** an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent 14-day period greater than 5%.

Essential businesses (non-retail): No capacity restrictions but must limit operations to only those absolutely necessary to carry out essential functions

Essential retail spaces: 25% of maximum capacity

Food and drink establishments: No indoor dining permitted; 25% of maximum capacity for outdoor dining; any establishment serving alcohol must close by 9 p.m. each night

Close-contact businesses: 25% of maximum capacity or 10 customers at one time, whichever is smaller

Outdoor recreational facilities: 25% of maximum capacity (unless required to have less capacity under the state's COVID-Safe Practices)

Close-contact recreational facilities: Remain closed

****All other businesses:** 25% of maximum capacity or 75 customers at one time, whichever is smaller

Houses of worship: May hold religious services, indoors or outdoors, or provide services through audiovisual means, but may not exceed 25% of the maximum capacity of any enclosed space on the premises

Places of lodging: 40% of maximum occupancy for those that have completed NM Safe Certified training; 25% of maximum occupancy for all others; 5 guests maximum for vacation rentals

Mass gatherings limit: 5 persons, 10 vehicles

Categories and definitions within the public health order:

Essential businesses (non-retail): These are any business or nonprofit entity falling within one or more of the following categories:

- Health care operations including hospitals, walk-in-care health facilities, pharmacies, medical wholesale and distribution, home health care workers or aides for the elderly, emergency dental facilities, nursing homes, residential health care facilities, research facilities, congregate care facilities, intermediate care facilities for those with intellectual or developmental disabilities, supportive living homes, home health care providers, drug and alcohol recovery support services, and medical supplies and equipment manufacturers and providers;
- Homeless shelters, food banks, and other services providing care to indigent or needy populations;
- Childcare facilities;
- Farms, ranches, and other food cultivation, processing, or packaging operations;
- Infrastructure operations including, but not limited to, public works construction, commercial and residential construction and maintenance, self-storage facilities, airport operations, public transportation, airlines, taxis, private transportation providers, transportation network companies, water, gas, electrical, oil drilling, oil refining, natural resources extraction or mining operations, nuclear material research and enrichment, those attendant to the repair and construction of roads and highways, gas stations, solid waste collection and removal, trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal, sewer, data and internet providers, data centers, technology support operations, and telecommunications systems;
- Manufacturing operations involved in food processing, manufacturing agents, chemicals, fertilizer, pharmaceuticals, sanitary products, household paper products, microelectronics/semiconductor, primary metals manufacturers, electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturers, and transportation equipment manufacturers;
- Services necessary to maintain the safety and sanitation of residences or essential businesses including security services, towing services, custodial services, plumbers, electricians, and other skilled trades;
- Veterinary and livestock services, animal shelters and facilities providing pet adoption, daycare, or boarding services;
- Media services;

- Utilities, including their contractors, suppliers, and supportive operations, engaged in power generation, fuel supply and transmission, water and wastewater supply;
- Crematoriums, funeral homes and cemeteries;
- Banks, credit unions, insurance providers, payroll services, brokerage services, and investment management firms;
- Businesses providing mailing and shipping services;
- Laboratories and defense and national security-related operations supporting the United States government, a contractor to the United States government, or any federal entity;
- Professional services, such as legal or accounting services, but only where necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities; and
- Logistics, and also businesses that store, transport, or deliver groceries, food, materials, goods or services directly to residences, retailers, government institutions, or essential businesses.

Essential retail spaces: These include grocery stores, supermarkets, food banks, farmers' markets and vendors who sell food, convenience stores, and other businesses that generate more than one-third of their revenue from the sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet food, animal feed or supplies, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other consumable food and drink products; automobile repair facilities, bike repair facilities, and retailers who generate the majority of their revenue from the sale of automobile or bike repair products; hardware stores; laundromats; and dry cleaner services.

Food and drink establishments: These are restaurants, breweries, wineries, distillers, cafes, coffee shops, or other similar establishments that offer food or drink.

Close-contact businesses: These are barbershops, hair salons, tattoo parlors, nail salons, spas, massage therapy services, esthetician clinics, tanning salons, guided raft tours, guided balloon tours.

Outdoor recreational facilities: These are outdoor golf courses, public swimming pools, ski basins, youth programs, youth livestock shows, horseracing tracks, botanical gardens, outdoor zoos and outdoor skating rinks.

Close-contact recreational facilities: These are indoor movie theaters, indoor museums with interactive displays or exhibits and other similar venues, miniature golf, arcades, amusement parks, aquariums, casinos, concert venues, professional sports venues, event venues, bars, dance clubs, performance venues, go-kart courses, automobile racetracks, adult entertainment venues, bowling alleys, indoor ice skating rinks and other places of recreation or entertainment. For purposes of the public health order, a bar is defined as any business that generated more than half of its revenue from the sale of alcohol during the preceding fiscal year.

Houses of worship: These are any church, synagogue, mosque, or other gathering space where persons congregate to exercise their religious beliefs.

Places of lodging: These are hotels, motels, RV parks, and short-term vacation rentals.

Mass gatherings: These are any public gathering, private gathering, organized event, ceremony, parade, funeral, or any other grouping that brings together a specified number of individuals in a single room or connected space, confined outdoor space, or open outdoor space. “Mass gatherings” also include coordinated events in which individuals gather in vehicles. “Mass gatherings” do not include the presence of any number of individuals where those individuals regularly reside. “Mass gathering” does not include individuals who are public officials or public employees in the course and scope of their employment.

****All other businesses:** These are any entities that are not identified explicitly as an “essential business,” “house of worship,” “outdoor recreational facility,” “food and drink establishment,” “place of lodging” or “close-contact recreational facility.” Examples would include non-essential retail spaces like a clothing store, a gym, a group fitness class or a personal training service, among others.

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