

WIND RIVER INDIAN RESERVATION COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER

August 12, 2021

In an effort to stop the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Wind River Inter-Tribal Council finds it necessary to implement the following emergency measures to protect the citizens of both the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribes. The Order is effective immediately, and shall remain in effect until further notice.

Findings

1. COVID-19 was first detected in Wuhan, China in 2019, and since then has spread rapidly throughout countries around the globe.
2. The presence of the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant has been confirmed in the state of Wyoming. The Delta variant is considered more contagious than the previous variants of COVID-19 and is now the dominant variant in the United States.
3. The Delta variant is highly contagious, and is contributing to an increase in cases, including those with severe outcomes and those due to vaccine breakthrough infections.
4. Individuals who are fully vaccinated can still develop COVID-19, but are far less likely to get severely sick or die than those that have not been vaccinated.
5. Children eleven (11) and under are still unauthorized to receive the COVID-19 vaccine putting them at risk for exposure and contracting the virus.
6. The spread of the Delta variant has led to a recent increase in COVID-19 cases and an increase in hospitalizations. The current 7-day average for hospitalizations (July 28-August 3, 2021) shows a 40% increase from the prior 7-day average.
7. The new rise in COVID-19 cases put the citizens of the Wind River Indian Reservation at risk of serious health complications, including death. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, people with mild symptoms, and even asymptomatic persons with COVID-19, place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk.
8. The Northern Arapaho Business Council and the Eastern Shoshone Business Council have decided to implement the following emergency guidelines, as the best manner of protecting the health of the citizens of the Wind River Reservation, particularly the children.

9. A large number of persons with serious infections has the ability to compromise the ability of healthcare systems on the Wind River Indian reservation and in Wyoming to deliver the necessary healthcare to the public.
10. Limitations on gatherings, mask mandates, and vaccination requirements are necessary to protect the public health and safety and are actions within the rights and powers of public health authorities and within the inherent powers of sovereign tribal nations acting on behalf of their citizens to protect the public health.
11. In addition to the above findings, stopping the spread of COVID-19 includes washing your hands often, practicing social distancing by avoiding close contact with others, staying at least six feet away from someone who is ill or showing signs of illness, avoid touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth, and covering your cough or sneeze with your elbow or by using a tissue.

ORDER MANDATING THE WEARING OF A MASK

1. The Wind River Inter-Tribal Council (WRITC) requires that all individuals wear a mask covering entirely both the nose and mouth while inside or at outdoor gatherings.
2. Individuals that work in private offices are permitted to work without a mask, provided that the office door is closed or there is six feet of space between the individual's desk and the doorway. If another individual or member of the public enters the private office space, then all parties in the office are required to properly wear a mask.
3. Masks are required in all communal spaces within buildings including but not limited to, breakrooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums, classrooms, and restrooms.
4. Individuals engaging in indoor dining at a restaurant, cafeteria, or other indoor dining space may remove their mask while eating or drinking but shall replace their masks after they are finished eating.

ORDER LIMITING BUILDINGS TO 25% CAPACITY

1. All buildings are limited to 25% of the building's capacity unless a Tribal Health Official has approved a health and safety plan allowing for a larger capacity within the building.
2. All approved health and safety plans are to be submitted to the Wind River Inter-Tribal Council.

3. Failure to comply with an approved health and safety plan will result in the building being restricted to 25% capacity until the time at which the COVID 19 Public Health Order is repealed.
4. All restaurants, casinos, halls, gymnasiums, childcare facilities, educational facilities and non-essential tribal programs that were closed under the previous health orders are allowed to reopen subject to the limitations cited in this order.
5. Additional exceptions to the prohibitions in this Order may be granted, and the discretion of the Eastern Shoshone Tribal Health and authorized Medical Officer under the direction and supervision of the Chief Executive of the Wind River Family and Community Health Care System State Health officer, if demonstrated, in writing, to the Director or Medical Officer that people at a gathering will be maintaining at least six (6) feet of space between one another, and that effective cleaning will be performed before and after the gathering. Examples of activities that may be considered includes funerals, traditional ceremonies, General Councils, and worship services.

ORDER REQUIRING VACCINES FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

1. Children are the future of the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribes and the WRITC wants to do everything its power to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among children.
2. All individuals within the external boundaries of the Wind River Indian Reservation working with or in buildings containing children seventeen and under are required to be vaccinated and supply proof of vaccinated status to their employer.
3. Employers are required to submit proof of employee vaccination status to the WRITC upon request.
4. All Tribal programs and businesses that work with children are required to supply proof of employee vaccinations to their respective business council within 14 days. Tribal employees that refuse to comply with this requirement shall face suspension without pay or termination.
5. Individuals who are medically unable to receive a COVID-19 vaccine may receive an exemption from this requirement but the burden is on the individual to supply the WRITC with proof that they are unable to receive the vaccine. Once proof is accepted the WRITC shall issue a written exemption to the individual.

**ORDER MANDATING THAT ALL SCHOOLS LOCATED ON THE WIND RIVER
INDIAN RESERVATION OFFER STUDENTS THE OPTION OF ATTENDING
ONLINE**

1. All schools operating within the external boundaries of the Wind River Indian Reservation are required to offer virtual learning as an alternative to in-person attendance.
2. All schools shall provide the option for virtual learning to any student at the request of the student's parents.
3. No student shall be penalized for choosing to participate in virtual learning instead of in-person attendance.

The Northern Arapaho Business Council and the Eastern Shoshone Business Council specifically deem this order necessary to protect the public health. The Medical Officers of the Tribes will continue to reassess the necessity to this Order as appropriate according to the accepted epidemiological and medical standards and report to the respective Tribal Business Councils the need to continue all or parts of this Order, as deemed necessary. Any person or legal entity that violates this Order shall be subject to any and all penalties afforded under Tribal and/or Federal laws pertaining to public health emergencies that can include administrative sanctions, including but not limited to, the loss of right to operate a business on the Wind River Indian Reservation and other penalties permitted by the Shoshone and Arapaho Law and Order Code (SALOC), or codes duly enacted by the Northern Arapaho or Eastern Shoshone Tribes.