



Columbia County Board of Supervisors

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CHAIRMAN'S PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES RESTRICTIONS AMID SURGE

On Wednesday, Governor Cuomo issued new COVID-19 restrictions on bars, restaurants, gyms and residential gatherings in New York State.

Meanwhile, in Columbia County, "COVID-19 positive cases in the County continue to mount at a steady rate," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Murell.

On Thursday morning, County Health Department Director Jack Mabb reported 10 new positive cases, with 225 in mandatory quarantine. There are currently 109 active cases in the county, with 27 hospitalized and two individuals in ICU. Eighteen new cases were reported on Wednesday.

Under the governor's directive, effective Friday at 10 p.m., bars, restaurants, and gyms or fitness centers, as well as any State Liquor Authority-licensed establishment, will be required to close from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. daily. Restaurants will still be allowed to provide curbside, food-only pick-up or delivery after 10 p.m., but will not be permitted to serve alcohol to go. The State Liquor Authority will issue further guidance for licensees as to what sales are continued to be permitted.

Further, indoor and outdoor gatherings at private residences will be limited to no more than 10 people. The limit will be implemented due to the recent prevalence of COVID spread resulting from small indoor gatherings including Halloween parties. These gatherings have become a major cause of cluster activity across the state. Further, this public health measure brings New York State in line with neighboring states including Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. This new rule is also effective Friday at 10 p.m.

"We are now definitely in the beginning stages of the surge that health officials have predicted for months," said Chairman Murell. "We can only hope that this most recent action by New York State is as restrictive as it gets. It is up to all of us to wear our face masks, wash our hands, and social distance in an effort to keep the number of positive cases from rising."

In response to the new state-mandated limit on gatherings in private residences, Chairman Murell added, "Columbia County officials have no intention of randomly monitoring people's homes."

Earlier this week, the county Emergency Operations Center was activated in response to the increase in positive cases. "We're now in a situation that equals or exceeds that of this past spring. We're setting records on active cases and mandatory quarantines and I don't see an end to it anytime soon. We can only do whatever we possibly can to slow things down," said county Emergency Management Director David Harrison, Jr.