



Leadership

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Layla P. Suleiman Gonzalez, PhD, JD
Sidney A. Thomas, MSW

June 24, 2020

Dear Community and Business Leaders,

Cook County Department of Public Health is grateful for the work you have done to keep those you serve and work with safe as suburban Cook County prepares to move into Phase 4 of the [Restore Illinois](#) plan this Friday, June 26.

The Restore Illinois metrics for the Northeast Region, which includes Cook County, monitor case positivity rates, hospitalizations, and ventilator use rates for the region. Positivity rates and hospital admissions continue to decline, and the supply of available ventilators is squarely in the zone that allows us to advance to the next phase in re-opening.

Suburban Cook County data, which can be found on our website's [Shiny App](#), reinforces these positive trends. Reported cases of COVID-19 in suburban Cook have been declining since early May, and numbers of hospitalizations due to COVID-19 are also trending down. We are optimistic about these data, even as we continue to address inequities by race and ethnicity in infection rates and outcomes. There continues to be work to do— both to address the immediate needs for those at risk of infection, and to correct years of historically racist policies and disinvestment from which these [inequities result](#).

[Phase 4](#) continues the movement to re-open our state safely. New guidance was released on June 22 and 23. For sectors not linked below, guidance can be found [here](#). Key changes include the following with capacity limits and safety guidance:

- Gatherings of 50 or fewer are allowed, including meetings, conferences, weddings and funerals
- Indoor recreation, like bowling alleys and skating rinks
- All outdoor recreation is allowed, including competitive youth and recreational sports
- Health and fitness clubs can open for indoor classes
- Restaurants and bars can open for indoor dining
- Cinema and theaters can open
- Zoos and museums can open
- Film production can resume
- [P-12 schools](#), [higher education](#), and [child care](#) can open

While we begin to enjoy the increased openness that Phase 4 brings, we must remain vigilant. Please continue to encourage others in your workplace, agency, or community to practice the following mitigation strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially to those at higher risk for severe illness.

- **Clean** your hands regularly with soap and water. Use an alcohol-based sanitizer when hand-washing is not available.
- **Cover** your face to protect others by wearing a mask in public when physical distancing is difficult. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your arm.
- **Contain** germs by maintaining a physical distance of at least 6 feet from others. Stay home when feeling sick. [Symptoms](#) of COVID-19 include fever, cough, difficulty breathing and shortness of breath.

For more information:

- CCDPH COVID-19 Website: [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- COVID-19 Hotline: 708-633-3319, Monday-Friday, 9am – 4pm
- COVID-19 Email: ccdph.covid19@cookcountyhhs.org

Sincerely,



Rachel Rubin, MD, MPH, FACP
Senior Medical Officer



Kiran Joshi, MD, MPH
Senior Medical Officer