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Initial Guidance: Re-Opening Schoharie County

Schoharie, NY May 11, 2020

Being a part of the Mohawk Valley economic and geographic region, Schoharie County may be part of the first wave of counties allowed to start the business re-opening process for county businesses and public facilities as set forth by New York State. Specifically, state guidance will allow geographic regions, if they meet specific health-related benchmarks and criteria to begin re-opening in stages as early as May 16, 2020 and has identified the following industries to re-open with a phased-in approach:

Phase 1: Construction, Manufacturing/wholesale supply chain, and select retail (curbside pickup)

Phase 2: Professional services, Finance and Insurance, Retail, Administrative Support, Real Estate/Rental Leasing

Phase 3: Restaurants/Food Service, Hotels/Accommodations

Phase 4: Arts/Entertainment/Recreation, Education

A region will be allowed to proceed to the next phase after a two-week time period where COVID-19 related cases continue to stay “under control” based on a specific set of metrics. During and after implementing a phased-in reopening process, it will be critical that governments, businesses, and organizations do the following as applicable:

- Adjust workplace hours and shift operational designs
- Implement social distancing policies during more normal operations
- Enhanced hand hygiene
- Continued restriction of non-essential travel
- Require masks in frequent contact situations
- Strict cleaning and sanitation standards
- Continuous screenings to enter workplaces and public buildings
- Continuous tracing, tracking, and reporting

Businesses and organizations that qualify to re-open based on the phase-in schedule above will be required to develop and publicly post a written re-open safety plan that addresses the concerns listed above. Failure to do so will put public health in jeopardy and could result in the closing of that business. The county plans to provide guidance to businesses and organizations on this.

The re-opening of county buildings and facilities fall in Phase 2, and the earliest the county could open to the public would be around the June 1, 2020 date. At that time, county buildings and facilities will need to operate under “new normal” conditions with a limited amount of public access that lessens in stages as time passes and health parameters permit. These guidelines will be developed in the near future and disseminated at the appropriate time.

Schoharie County Department of Health urges caution during the re-opening process. Understanding the urgency for the need to restart the local economy, it will be critical to remain vigilant, avoid a second outbreak, and mitigate loss of life. It will be the responsibility of every Schoharie County resident and visitor to follow the guidelines set forth by public officials to combat the pandemic and get back to the American “way of life.”

Schoharie County Health officials continue to recommend those with COVID-19 related symptoms, including fever, cough, or shortness of breath, contact their healthcare provider. Residents are also advised to take extreme caution by limiting public exposure as much as possible to help stop the spread of the virus and “flatten the curve.”

For all Bassett patients, the Bassett Triage Line for COVID-19 can be reached at 607-547-5555. For general questions about COVID-19, please call the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) 24/7 Hotline at 1-888-364-3065.

For COVID-19 related matters, Schoharie County has created a new email address dedicated to providing an additional method of communication for residents and employees. Email comments, questions, and other inquires to covid-19@co.schoharie.ny.us

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