



## Public Health Brief

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## Health Officer Guidance for Reopening in Alpine County

Alpine County has only identified one laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 infection, back in March 2020. Extensive laboratory testing has begun in the last week, with sites in Woodfords, Bear Valley, and Kirkwood testing a total of over 200 persons so far. No positives have been identified. We have trained staff capable of performing case investigation and contact tracing when we do identify any subsequent cases. We have filed attestation documents with the state that we are ready to move ahead in reopening.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Alpine%20Attestation.pdf>

We are acutely aware that cases continue to accumulate in surrounding jurisdictions, with 9 counties now being monitored closely as cases and hospitalizations and deaths climb as steps are taken to reopen. We perform surveillance activities 7 days per week in order to maintain up-to-date awareness of various indicators that might indicate the need to alter our plans as we reopen.

The Governor and the State Health Officer still have stay-at-home orders in place (May 7<sup>th</sup>) and encourage people not to travel significant distances as much as possible. In addition, mass gatherings are prohibited, with the exception of faith-based services, cultural ceremonies, and protests. Gatherings are defined as "meetings or other events that bring together persons from multiple households at the same time for a shared or group experience in a single room, space, or place such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, or other indoor or outdoor space". Note that there is no group size mentioned – it is all about people mixing from different households and different geographic areas.



**Public Health**

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Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120

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District 1: Donald M. Jardine, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Katherine Rakow,

District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Governor released guidance from the California Department of Public Health and Cal/OSHA on opening various sectors with modifications, with the final decision on timing left up to the local Health Officer. Opening does not mean that the risk of COVID-19 is gone. We need to continue to keep physically distanced, wash our hands, avoid touching our faces, and we are encouraged to wear face coverings when we cannot maintain social distancing, especially indoors. These behaviors are up to the individual and are more important than any Health Officer policy in limiting the spread of disease in our community.

Given the current situation in Alpine County, I am authorizing all sectors for which the Governor has released guidance to reopen as soon as this Friday June 12<sup>th</sup>. Here is the link to the guidance documents: <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap-counties/#track-data>

Although we do not plan to inspect facilities for compliance or certify such, we are happy to review any of your plans with you. We encourage you to implement these modifications to increase the confidence of your staff and guests that you are working to decrease the risk of exposure as much as possible.

We have already been in touch with many of you. Most campgrounds are open or opening soon once the usual seasonal preparation is complete. Hotels, motels and short-term rentals may operate. Short-term rentals, pools and spas are included in the guidance document for hotels and lodging. Outdoor activities are included in the guidance for campgrounds. Note that group sports activities involving multiple households, especially from out of the county, are prohibited. County offices and facilities are closed except for campground, tennis courts, disc golf, and outdoor area of the museum. Fishing season is open, restaurants can offer dine-in service, and lodging is available. We are concerned that large numbers of people have been dispersed camping throughout the county. Be aware that campfires are only permitted in developed hosted campgrounds with fire rings. This is fire season!!

There is much to learn about COVID-19, and our plans are based on the information at hand on any given day. We expect as things open up that there will be more cases. We hope that individual behavior will limit and spread out any increase so that our healthcare system will be able to handle the expected surge. Our goal is to try to balance the science with the need for the economy to recover, and to limit the ultimate impact of this pandemic on us as individuals and as a society.

Please direct any questions to me at:

[rjohnson@alpinecountyca.gov](mailto:rjohnson@alpinecountyca.gov), or the Warm Line at 530-694-1011



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