

ORDER NO. 2020-8

**SAN JUAN COUNTY LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER ORDER
REGARDING COVID-19; AMENDING REQUIREMENTS FOR PLAYGROUNDS AND
PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT; AUTHORIZING SENTINEL TESTING OF
ESSENTIAL WORKERS; AND REPEALING AND AMENDING
PORTIONS OF ORDERS 2020-3 AND 2020-5**

WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by a virus that spreads easily from person to person which may result in serious illness or death and has been classified by the World Health Organization as a worldwide pandemic;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has spread throughout Washington State, including San Juan County, significantly threatening the life and health of persons in San Juan County;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 can spread from people without symptoms, including persons who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic, to others;

WHEREAS, in the absence of interventions to limit the spread of the disease, for every case of COVID-19 in the community we can expect 2.5 more cases in the community, leading to a dramatic increase in the number of cases over a short period of time;

WHEREAS, there are currently no known medications or vaccinations that are effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as social distancing and the wearing of cloth face coverings, are presently the only effective measures to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Inslee issued Proclamation 20-05, proclaiming a State of Emergency for all counties throughout the state of Washington as a result of COVID-19 outbreak in the United States and confirmed person-to-person spread of COVID-19 in Washington State;

WHEREAS, the Governor's Proclamations 20-05 et seq. and accompanying guidance provide a statewide framework for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, Governor Proclamation 20-25, "Stay Home -Stay Healthy," adopted on March 23, 2020, placed statewide limitations on gatherings, business and leisure activity, and travel;

WHEREAS, the Governor established a phased approach known as "Safe Start Washington" beginning on May 5, 2020, which provides for gradual increases over time in allowable business and leisure activity, travel, and gatherings with an emphasis on simultaneously minimizing the health impacts of COVID-19, reducing the risk of COVID-19 to Washington's most vulnerable populations, and preserving capacity in the health care system;

WHEREAS, the “Stay Home –Stay Healthy” approach was replaced effective June 1, 2020 with the “Safe Start –Stay Healthy” adopted in Governor Proclamation 20-25.4 and which may be amended in the future from time to time (the plan as it now exists or may later be amended is referred to as the “Safe Start Plan”);

WHEREAS, San Juan County moved from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the Safe Start Plan on May 23, 2020, and may apply to move to Phase 3 of the Safe Start Plan;

WHEREAS, the two primary sources of transmission of COVID-19 are surface contact and respiratory transmission from infected individuals;

WHEREAS, a lack of social distancing was observed at playgrounds and parks throughout San Juan County prior to the issuance San Juan County Health Officer Order No. 2020-1;

WHEREAS, playgrounds and playground equipment are intended to be used and touched by children, often in close proximity to one another, in an environment that is not conducive to frequent hand washing by users nor cleaning and disinfecting of equipment between uses, and thus their use poses a risk of transmission through both surface contact and respiratory transmission;

WHEREAS, San Juan County Health Officer Order 2020-3 as amended by Order 2020-5 adopted local restrictions regarding playgrounds and playground equipment which are to phase out when the County moves to Phase 3 of the Safe Start Plan, at which time further opening of recreational facilities and the resumption of non-essential travel for all but high-risk individuals will be allowed;

WHEREAS, health measures now in place and capacity improvements made within San Juan County and around the region have improved the ability of the County and its partners to respond to new cases of COVID-19 in the County;

WHEREAS, increasing the number of individuals being tested for COVID-19 is vital to identify the incidence of disease in our community and to facilitate prompt case identification, contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine to prevent additional cases;

WHEREAS, ongoing sentinel testing of asymptomatic essential workers for COVID-19 is paramount to San Juan County’s case identification and case prevention efforts;

WHEREAS, the provisions of Health Officer Order 2020-3 regarding playgrounds and playground equipment should be modified to reflect that they will be effective during any time that San Juan County is in Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the Safe Start Plan;

WHEREAS, the provisions of Health Officer Order 2020-3 should be modified to clarify that playgrounds and playground equipment that are not open and available to the public, such as those at day care facilities, are not subject to the order;

WHEREAS, the expiration provisions of Health Officer Order 2020-5 Section 1 are no longer relevant because the regulations it describes have been repealed or replaced with references to the phases of the Safe Start Plan, and thus Section 1 should be repealed;

WHEREAS, RCW 70.05.070 requires and empowers the local health officer to take such action as is necessary to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, WAC 246-100-036, requires the local health officer, when necessary, to institute disease control measures as he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment, current standards of practice, and the best available medical and scientific information; and

WHEREAS, in order to control and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in San Juan County and protect our most vulnerable populations, in my professional judgment, based on the current standards of practice and the best available medical and scientific information, the measures described in this order are necessary;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Frank James, Local Health Officer for San Juan County, under the authority of RCW 70.05.070, RCW 43.20.050, and WAC 246-100-036, and on the basis of the foregoing recitals, make the following ORDER:

1. San Juan County Health Officer Order No. 2020-3 Section 1, Playgrounds, is amended to read as follows:

During any time that San Juan County is subject to Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the Safe Start Plan, all All-playgrounds and playground equipment located in San Juan County that is accessible to the public or to groups of persons is closed. No person shall use, or permit a minor child for whom they are the parent or guardian to use, any publicly accessible playground or playground equipment in San Juan County while San Juan County is subject to Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the Safe Start Plan.

2. San Juan County Health Officer Order No. 2020-3 Section 2, Playgrounds Notice, is amended to read as follows:

During any time that San Juan County is subject to Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the Safe Start Plan, owners Owners and operators of any (1) public playground or public playground equipment or (2) playground or playground equipment open to the public shall maintain posted notice indicating that the playgrounds and playground equipment are closed. Those portions of public parks or privately owned areas open to the public that are outside of playgrounds or play equipment are not closed by this order; however, owners of parks or similar outdoor facilities open to the public shall maintain posted notice that group activities are not allowed and that users must engage in social distancing by maintaining separation of at least six feet from other persons who are not members of their household or residential living unit.

3. San Juan County Health Officer Order No. 2020-5 Section 1 is repealed.

4. Ongoing sentinel testing of asymptomatic essential workers in San Juan County for COVID-19 is authorized and encouraged to assist in case identification and prevention.

This order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until the conclusion of the state of emergency declared by San Juan County Resolution No. 08-2020.

DATED this 16 day of JUNE, 2020 at 3:05 am/pm.)



FRANK JAMES, M.D.
SAN JUAN COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER