



MEDIA RELEASE

San Juan County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 24, 2020

San Juan County Requests Phase 3 Approval

June 24, 2020: Following a recommendation from San Juan County Health Officer Dr. Frank James, both the County Board of Health and the San Juan County Council approved submitting an application to the WA State Secretary of Health to enter a modified version of Phase 3 of the [Governor's four-phased Safe Start Washington plan](#).

The timing of submission of the application and potential approval is uncertain, but businesses and others impacted by this decision should prepare for a potential move to Phase 3 as soon as Thursday June 25th, but to be clear, exact timing and approval are both unknown at this time.

This modified form of Phase 3 would newly allow the following activities:

- The Governor's non-essential travel ban is lifted.
- Outdoor group activities, including youth and adult sports with no more than 50 participants.
- Recreation facilities (including pools and gyms) may open at no more than 50% capacity.
- Restaurants/taverns may operate at no more than 75% capacity; table size remains limited to no more than 5.
- Libraries and museums may reopen.

The San Juan County specific modifications recommended are as follows:

1. No indoor gatherings are allowed of more than 5 people unless part of activities allowed in Phase 1, 2, or 3. Outdoor gatherings of no more than 50 are allowed.
2. Restaurant table seating is limited at no more than 5 per table.
3. Theaters are not allowed to reopen at any capacity.
4. Bar-style seating in any tavern, restaurant, or bar may not open. Table seating is allowed.

If approved by the WA State Secretary of Health, San Juan County's move to Phase 3 will trigger a lifting of the San Juan County Health Officer's 50% limit on all transient lodging, camping and transient moorage in San Juan County. Transient lodging will be allowed to operate at 100% capacity.

Playgrounds will be allowed to open as well.

Rick Hughes, Chair of the San Juan County Council said, "This is a big step for the islands. We need to move forward safely and thoughtfully, and we're confident San Juan County is in a strong position to do so."

Face coverings in all public indoor spaces will continue to be required, per [San Juan County Health Officer order 2020-4](#). In addition, as per the Governor's June 23rd mandate, face coverings are required outdoors when social distancing cannot be maintained. Face coverings are not required in the home or when household groups are together and maintaining social distancing from others.

Dr. James explained the thinking that went into the move, "While nothing is 100% guaranteed, I am confident that we have systems in place to help protect San Juan County. When coupled with ongoing thoughtfulness and attention from our residents and visitors, we hope to continue moving forward and avoid any situations that would require further restrictions."

High risk populations will continue to be strongly encouraged to stay home to the full extent possible.

The Governor's office continues to release and post guidance for businesses and other activities for all Phases of the Safe Start plan online at: <https://www.governor.wa.gov/issues/issues/covid-19-resources/covid-19-reopening-guidance-businesses-and-workers>

For more information about COVID-19 and the ongoing San Juan County response, visit www.sjccovid.com