



MEDIA RELEASE

San Juan County

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New Health Officer Order Lifts Limits on Lodging/Camping & Playgrounds

Effective September 10, San Juan County Health Officer Dr. Frank James has signed [Order No. 2020-9](#), lifting the 50% capacity restrictions on transient lodging. Operating at 100% capacity is allowed immediately.

This order also immediately lifts the closure of all public playgrounds and playground equipment.

Dr. James explains, "Island residents and visitors have done an outstanding job this summer of limiting COVID transmission in our community. I know that the limits on lodging and other restrictions placed on our local businesses have had enormous economic impacts for many islanders, but I firmly believe that our collective actions have helped to keep the islands safe and healthy."

In addition to lifting limits on lodging capacity, the new order also lowers the turn around time between bookings from 24 hours to 6 hours, with a requirement that no cleaning happen less than 2 hours after guest departure, and that room windows are open for ventilation for a minimum of 6 hours between guest stays.

San Juan County Health & Community Services Director Mark Tompkins expresses his gratitude to the islands, "This has been an extremely difficult time for so many, but by covering our faces and being thoughtful about our interactions with those outside our household, the islands have done an incredible job of staying safe. I want to thank the entire community, and also express sincere appreciation to our business owners and employees who have sacrificed so much."

However, Dr. James highlights the need for ongoing caution, "We're past Labor Day, and thanks to our collective efforts, the impacts of our peak tourist season have been minimal. But we must remember that our biggest risk is ourselves. Socializing indoors with family and friends or islanders traveling and visiting others have been the source of nearly all our cases. We need to stay cautious and vigilant, especially if we want our schools to begin operating in-person. If we cover our faces, limit our interactions, and continue washing our hands, we can continue to effectively seal the islands off from widespread community transmission."

As with all public health orders issued to help prevent the spread of COVID, they are flexible depending on the situation, and can be reinstated in the event of increased case activity.