



# ND SMART RESTART

North Dakota's plan for a healthy recovery.

**Prepared by the ND Department of Health and the  
Department of Commerce in conjunction with the  
Governor's Office**

This response aims to protect the lives and livelihoods of the citizens of North Dakota. The data and measures that inform this plan will be monitored daily and the recommendations will be updated as required.

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## Economic Reactivation

North Dakota faces the likely reality of significant economic disruption until herd immunity occurs or a vaccine and treatment are discovered. These expected economic “stops and starts” could come in waves as the contagious path of the virus picks its course. Without intervention, these interruptions will do tremendous harm to North Dakota businesses, individuals, and families. For this reason, state leaders agree that the COVID-19 crisis is not a short-term problem, but rather a new risk North Dakota must learn to manage.

Managing the public health risk requires the state to identify, contain, and mitigate the spread of the virus, while simultaneously reactivating the economy step-by-step. Assessment, testing, proactive tracing, and field testing instruct this process. Guided by a carefully developed operational dashboard and a color-coded health guidance system, the state can focus public health measures on specific areas and individuals and avoid blunt, statewide economic disruptions.

### Color-coded Health Guidance System

The state will provide specific direction to North Dakota residents and businesses through a color-coded health guidance system.

The guidance system includes five levels of risk: red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. Each level of guidance after red becomes progressively less restrictive and more economically engaged. Every level protects public health and outlines necessary mitigation strategies.

Each level is guided by a measurement system, based on criteria such as, but not limited to, number of cases reported, positivity rates and testing capacity. This allows community leaders, business leaders, policymakers and the general public to safely determine when a different color of health guidance applies. North Dakotans should think of the guidance system as a dial that can be turned up or down by area based on the health risk.



**Red / Critical Risk** is the area with the highest disease burden and level of significant and uncontrolled community transmission, multiple outbreaks resulting in increased deaths, surge capacity of hospitals are threatened, and there is lack of adequate PPE supplies available for healthcare workers. The most significant mitigation strategies are implemented at the Red / Critical Risk level. Thanks to the quick action and personal responsibility of all North Dakotans, we have never reached this critical stage of risk.

**Orange / High Risk** is the level of significant transmission and high risk for exposure due to widespread community spread of infections. Orange / High Risk is the level of guidance for mitigation strategies that North Dakota functioned under executive orders dating from March 13, 2020, to April 30, 2020. There are significant mitigation strategies emphasizing “Stay Home. Stay Healthy. Stay Connected.”

**Yellow / Moderate Risk** is the level of heightened exposure risk and transmission is controlled in these areas. Cases are reported but contained by rapid testing and robust contact tracing. Social distancing and precautions are needed (maintain 6-foot distancing, avoid shaking hands, work from home when possible, reconsider unnecessary travel, wear a face mask). Increased cleaning on high touch surfaces and cleanings on shared spaces should be routine.

**Green / Low Risk** for exposure or transmission, low case counts are reported, public health and private health care are able to safely diagnose, treat, and isolate COVID-19 cases and their contacts. During this level, businesses can reopen, and much of normal life can begin to resume. However, physical distancing measures and limitations on gatherings will still be recommended to prevent transmission from accelerating again. For older adults (those over age 65), those with underlying health conditions, and other populations at heightened risk from COVID-19, continuing to limit time in the community will be important. State and community leaders should prepare health alerts, communicate risk and symptoms, review plans, prepare for public health capacity if needed for spikes in cases.

**Blue / New Normal** is when most normal activity can resume, with standard precautions and awareness of health guidelines such as routine hand washing, stay home when sick, cover your cough, education, stockpiling, planning, routine health alerts, etc. Monitoring for illness and outbreaks will continue. Even under new normal conditions, those found to be ill will be asked to self-isolate and contacts will be asked to remain at home.

This color-coded guidance can be applied during the levels of ND Smart Restart to protect health, bolster confidence, and provide more economic certainty. It is possible for one area of the state to be under the orange guidance and another under the yellow. Figure 5 provides an explanation of the color-coded health guidance.

The color-coded guidance system was put together utilizing the hard work and framework created by the State of Utah and modified to meet the needs of North Dakota under the leadership of the North Dakota Department of Commerce and the North Dakota Department of Health to provide specific direction to North Dakota residents and businesses.

Each level recommends North Dakotans to adhere to [ND Smart Restart Standards Across All Industries](#) and **these universal standards**:

- 1. Common Sense and Personal Accountability** – Public health guidance cannot anticipate every unique situation. Residents and businesses must take personal accountability to be informed and take actions based on common sense and wise judgment that will protect health and support economic reactivation.
- 2. Protective Hygiene and Cleaning** – North Dakotans must continue to practice good hygiene and cleaning regimens to minimize the risk of the virus. These include but are not limited to the following:
  - Stay home when sick
  - Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as feasible
  - Use hand sanitizer after interactions with people or objects
  - Cough or sneeze into the sleeve or elbow, not hands
  - Clean high-touch surfaces (buttons, door handles, counters, etc.) regularly
  - Avoid touching your face
  - Use a mask in public places where social distancing cannot be maintained
  - Refrain from hand shaking
- 3. Follow Guidance** – Public health and economic opportunity are intrinsically linked. North Dakotans must strictly follow the health guidance of each color or risk backtracking and causing greater harm.
- 4. High-risk / Vulnerable Populations** – High-risk populations and those around them must follow a specific set of instructions issued by the Governor, the North Dakota Department of Health and the North Dakota Department of Human Services.

With these universal standards in place, Figure 6 provides the general characteristics of each color of guidance. Refinements to this guidance can, and most likely will, be made by the Governor with input from the North Dakota Department of Commerce and the North Dakota Department of Health.

For greater detail on the protocols created for industries directly impacted by the Executive orders, please visit [BeLegendary.link/NDSmartRestart](#).

## Guidance for Decision Making: North Dakota Health Criteria and Health Indicator Measures

The ND Health Criteria and health indicator measures will be used to guide decisions regarding county risk levels. The Department of Health and the Governor’s Office, in conjunction with other state agencies, will use these measures to provide a framework for decision making. Additional factors will be taken into consideration to determine the county risk level on a recurring basis. Additional factors may include, but are not limited to, population density, hospitalization rates, current active cases within a county, etc.

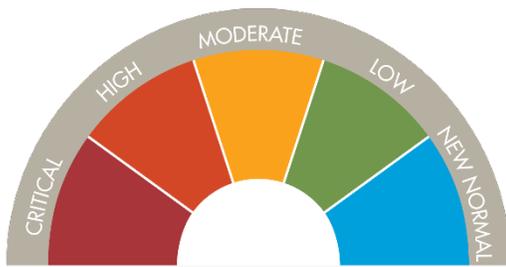
Gating Criteria 14 Day	Critical	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk	New Normal
Active Cases/10K (14 Day Rolling Average)	Over 40	30-39	20-29	10-19	10 or less
Tests/10K (14 Day Rolling Average)	Under 20	21-30	31-40	41-45	46 or more
14 Day Rolling Average Percent Positive Tests	Over 15%	10-14.99%	5-9.99%	2-4.99%	Under 2%

## Figure 5: Risk Levels and Health Guidance

The color-coded health guidance system is designated by the State Health Officer and the Statewide Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) with input from the North Dakota Economic Resiliency Team, North Dakota Department of Commerce and the North Dakota Department of Health. The SEOC has access to a detailed dashboard of monitoring, testing, and hospital utilization data. This data includes health, social, and economic measures. The guidance can be applied anytime and anywhere to address virus flareups or hotspots.

This versatile system will help North Dakota manage the health and economic risk or until a medical solution is discovered. It is possible and even likely that multiple guidance colors will be designated by region, county, city, or community at the same time. It is also possible that areas within the state will move through this spectrum of orange to yellow to green to blue and back again based on the characteristics of the virus and our actions. North Dakota has not reached the red level and through monitoring and mitigation measures, does not plan to hit the critical stage.

The maps below show hypothetical examples of how the public health guidance colors could be applied.

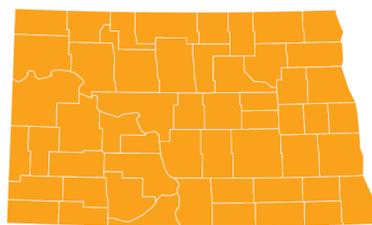


### Figure 5. KEY

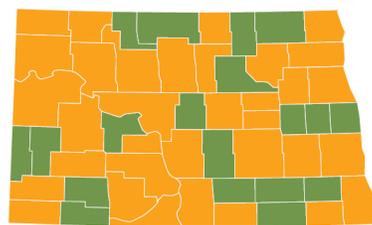
- Red** means critical risk and severe threat to public health.
- Orange** means high risk for everyone as well as high-risk individuals.
- Yellow** means moderate risk for everyone but high-risk individuals.
- Green** means low risk for everyone, but high-risk individuals.
- Blue** means a new normal baseline for everyone but high-risk individuals.

## RISK LEVEL

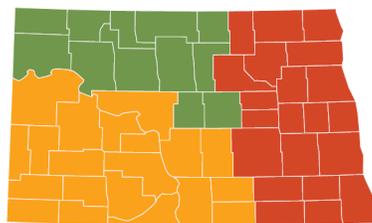
### Hypothetical Example Of How Public Health Guidelines Could Be Applied



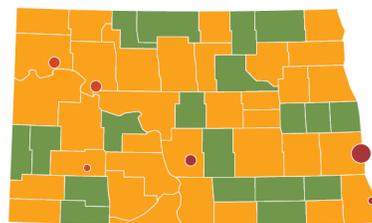
State Example



County Example



Regional Example



Community Example



In every color of guidance, high-risk individuals operate under specific instructions issued by the Governor and the North Dakota Department of Health.

**Figure 6: Industry Summary of Color-Coded Health Guidance**

Select Industry	Critical	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk	New Normal
<b>Essential* Workplaces/ Manufacturing</b>	<p align="center"><b>See DOH <a href="#">Essential Workers Fact Sheet*</a></b></p> <p>Employers of functioning <a href="#">critical infrastructure sectors</a> exercise extreme caution, with employees working remotely when possible, evaluating workforce concerns, implementing policies informed by industry best practices, and enacting strategies to minimize economic impact. Businesses that necessitate on-site work should pre-screen and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; ensure workers use masks in accordance with <a href="#">CDC and OSHA guidance</a> and <a href="#">Smart Restart protocols</a>; and follow <a href="#">cleaning guidelines</a>. Restrict unnecessary visitors from entering the workplace. Encourage <a href="#">testing</a> for symptomatic employees and close contacts identified in the workplace.</p>			<p>Employers are encouraged to allow flexible working arrangements (rotating shifts, remote, etc.). Pre-screen and monitor employees for symptoms. Follow social distancing guidelines. Ensure workers use masks in accordance with <a href="#">CDC and OSHA guidance</a> and <a href="#">Smart Restart protocols</a>. Follow cleaning guidelines. Encourage testing for symptomatic employees and close contacts identified in the workplace.</p>	<p>Operate under heightened hygiene and cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms.</p>
<p><b>General Employer Standards for All Industries</b></p> <p><b>Specific Types of Employers expanded below</b></p>	<p>Only Essential Services Open</p> <p>Shelter in Place</p> <p>~~~~~</p> <p>This is due to the level of significant and uncontrolled widespread COVID-19 disease across the state that resulted in increased deaths, surge capacity of hospitals being threatened and a lack of adequate PPE supplies available for healthcare workers.</p> <p>~~~~~</p>	<p>Only essential services are open. Employers exercise extreme caution, with employees working remotely when possible, evaluating workforce concerns, implementing policies informed by industry best practices, and enacting strategies to minimize economic impact. Businesses that necessitate on-site, essential work <a href="#">pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Restrict unnecessary visitors from entering the workplace. Encourage testing for symptomatic employees and close contacts identified in the workplace. Cancel work-related gatherings (staff meetings, after-work functions).</p>	<p>Non-essential services may reopen. Employers exercise extreme caution, with employees working remotely, evaluating workforce concerns, and enacting strategies to minimize economic impact. Businesses that necessitate on-site work <a href="#">pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Restrict unnecessary visitors from entering the workplace. Encourage testing for symptomatic employees and close contacts identified in the workplace. Cancel work-related gatherings (staff meetings, after-work functions).</p>	<p>Employers are encouraged to allow flexible working arrangements (rotating shifts, remote, etc.). <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms. Follow social distancing guidelines. Strongly recommend or require use of masks. Follow cleaning guidelines. Encourage testing for symptomatic employees and close contacts identified in the workplace.</p>	<p>Operate under heightened hygiene and cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms.</p>
<b>Restaurants, Bars &amp; Food Service</b>	<p>~~~~~</p> <p>Only Essential Services Open</p>	<p>Curbside pickup, takeout, and delivery only. No dine-in service, no customer self-service and extreme caution taken in food prep. No customer self-service of food or beverage (salad bars, buffets, fountain drinks, coffee). <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms, comply with guidelines for social distancing, require use of masks, follow cleaning guidelines. Contactless payment encouraged. Create a safe environment for staff. No blackjack, gaming tables, or gaming machines. No use of handheld entertainment or reservation notification devices. Dance floors are closed.</p>	<p>Curbside pickup, takeout, and delivery options preferable. Dine-in service limited to 50% of normal seating capacity with extreme caution. No standing room options; dine-in seating only. Customer self-service of food and beverage (salad bars, buffets, fountain drinks, coffee) is restricted following Smart Restart protocols. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Strongly recommend dine-in seating customers follow CDC's guidance for wearing masks before and after meal service. Contactless payment encouraged. Blackjack and gaming tables are closed. Limited use of gaming machines may be considered following distancing guidance and Smart Restart protocols. No use of handheld entertainment or reservation notification devices. Dance floors are closed.</p>	<p>Employers are encouraged to allow flexible working arrangements (rotating shifts, remote, etc.). Dine-in service is limited to 75% of normal seating capacity with extreme caution. Standing room options may be considered with extreme caution while maintaining social distancing. Limited customer self-service of food and beverage (salad bars, buffets, fountain drinks, coffee) may be considered following Smart Restart protocols. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; strongly recommend or require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Blackjack and gaming tables can resume with precautions taken for social distancing while minimizing transmissible moments.</p>	<p>Operate under heightened hygiene and cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms. Resume to normal capacity and operations (dance floors, standing, blackjack) while continuing to follow new protocols.</p>

Select Industry	Critical	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk	New Normal
<b>Retail* (Including grocery stores, C-stores &amp; pharmacies)</b>	Only Essential Services Open	Employers exercise extreme caution, with employees working remotely when possible, evaluating workforce concerns, managing risk, implementing policies informed by industry best practices, and enacting strategies to minimize economic impact. Businesses that necessitate on-site work <a href="#">pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Restrict unnecessary visitors from entering. Retail stores with foodservice must follow Smart Restart protocols for restaurants and bars (above).	Employers exercise extreme caution, with employees working remotely when possible. Businesses that necessitate on-site work <a href="#">pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms. Non-essential services may consider opening following Smart Restart protocols with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Restrict unnecessary visitors from entering the workplace. Encourage testing for symptomatic employees and close contacts identified in the workplace. Cancel work-related gatherings (staff meetings, after-work functions). Retail stores with foodservice must follow Smart Restart protocols for restaurants and bars (above).	Employers are encouraged to allow flexible working arrangements (rotating shifts, remote, etc.). <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; strongly recommend or require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Retail stores with foodservice must follow Smart Restart protocols for restaurants and bars (above).	Operate under heightened hygiene & cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms. Resume to normal capacity of foodservice operations while continuing to follow new protocols.
<b>Hotel, Tourism, &amp; Accommodations</b>	Only Essential Services Open	Limited operations. Take extreme precaution for staff & guests. No customer self-service of food or beverage (continental breakfast, coffee). <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms, comply with guidelines for social distancing, require use of masks, follow cleaning guidelines. Gatherings of 10 or fewer are allowed when social distancing precautions can be met. Cancel gatherings of any size where distancing cannot be maintained. Dance floors are closed Hotels with amenities of foodservice must follow guidelines for restaurants and bars. Amenities such as fitness rooms, and recreational pool facilities are closed.	Hotels with amenities such as foodservice, fitness rooms, and recreational pool facilities may resume following Smart Restart protocols. Gatherings of 50% room capacity but no more than 250 people are allowed provided health criteria is met and Smart Restart protocols are followed. Businesses that necessitate on-site work <a href="#">pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Cancel gatherings of any size where distancing cannot be maintained. Dance floors are closed. Pools may open following social distancing guidelines, CDC recommendations, aquatic health codes, and pool operator protocols.	Hotels with amenities such as foodservice, fitness rooms, and recreational pool facilities follow Smart Restart protocols. Gatherings of up to 75% room capacity but no more than 500 people are allowed provided health criteria is met, and Smart Restart protocols are followed. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; strongly recommend or require use of masks; follow cleaning guidelines. Limit occupancy of gatherings where distancing cannot be maintained. Pools may open following social distancing, CDC recommendations, aquatic health codes, and pool operator protocols.	Operate under heightened hygiene & cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms. Conventions and large events are permitted with safety guidance and procedures. Resume to normal capacity of foodservice operations while continuing to follow proper safety guidance and procedures.
<b>Events &amp; Gatherings</b>	Only Essential Services Open	Gatherings of 10 or fewer are allowed when social distancing precautions can be met. Cancel gatherings of any size where distancing cannot be maintained. Catering and foodservice must follow Smart Restart protocols for restaurants and bars (see above).	Limited operations. Take extreme precaution for staff & guests. Gatherings in facilities can be up to 50% certificate of occupancy for that room but no more than 250 people provided that health criteria is met and Smart Restart protocols are followed. Businesses that necessitate on-site work <a href="#">pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Cancel gatherings of any size where distancing cannot be maintained. Catering and foodservice must comply with restaurant and Smart Restart protocols (see above).	Expanded operations. Take precaution for staff & guests. Gatherings in facilities can be up to 75% certificate of occupancy for that room but no more than 500 people provided that health criteria is met, and Smart Restart protocols are followed. Strongly recommended or require masks for all workers and attendees. Limit occupancy where social distancing cannot be maintained. Catering and foodservice must comply with restaurant Smart Restart protocols (see above).	Operate under heightened hygiene & cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms. Large groups allowed such as festivals and sporting events. Mass gatherings are permitted when following proper safety guidance and procedures.

Select Industry	Critical	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk	New Normal
<b>Personal Care Services (Salons, Barbers, Tanning, Tattoo/Body Art, Massage Therapists)</b>	Only Essential Services Open	Personal care services are closed.	Personal care services may consider opening following Smart Restart protocols. Operate under strict hygiene protocols. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines.	Operate under strict hygiene protocols. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines.	Operate under heightened hygiene & cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms.
<b>Fitness Centers / Gyms and Sporting Events</b>	Only Essential Services Open	Fitness centers & gyms are closed. Indoor/outdoor sporting events are closed. Pools are closed.	<p>Fitness centers, gyms and indoor/outdoor sporting events may consider opening following Smart Restart protocols. See <a href="#">DOH COVID-19 Recommendations for Sports</a>. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Coaches, players not in play, and fans must comply with guidelines for social distancing. Require masks for coaches, staff and fans. Require masks for players not in play. Enhanced cleaning protocols.</p> <p>Outdoor playgrounds and sporting events may open following <a href="#">CDC guidelines</a>. Cancel gatherings of any size where social distancing cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Hot tubs and saunas may operate following protocols. Pools may open following social distancing, <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>, aquatic health codes, and pool operator protocols. Close off gathering areas.</p>	<p>Fitness centers, gyms and indoor/outdoor sporting events may open with social distancing protocols &amp; cleaning guidance. See <a href="#">DOH COVID-19 Recommendations for Sports</a>. <a href="#">Pre-screen</a> and monitor employees for symptoms; comply with social distancing guidelines; require use of masks; and follow cleaning guidelines. Coaches, players not in play, and fans must comply with guidelines for social distancing. Strongly recommend or require use of masks for coaches, staff, and fans. Strongly recommend or require masks for players not in play. Enhanced cleaning protocols. Outdoor playgrounds and sporting events may open following <a href="#">CDC guidelines</a>.</p> <p>Limit occupancy where social distancing cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Hot tubs, pools, and saunas may open following social distancing, <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>, aquatic health codes, and pool operator protocols.</p>	Operate under heightened hygiene & cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms.
<b>Parks and Recreational facilities</b>	Only Essential Services Open	Nonessential services are closed except for walking and biking paths. Monitor symptoms of staff.	<p>See <a href="#">DOH COVID-19 Recommendations for Sports</a>. Strict hygiene &amp; reduced group interactions. Monitor symptoms of staff. May open with modifications to ensure visitors can maintain social distancing, and practice proper hand hygiene. Require use of masks. Enhance cleaning of public restrooms. Cancel or postpone events and gatherings where social distancing cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Outdoor playgrounds and sports may open following <a href="#">CDC guidelines</a>. Pools may open following social distancing, <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>, aquatic health codes, and pool operator protocols.</p>	<p>See <a href="#">DOH COVID-19 Recommendations for Sports</a>. Strict hygiene. Monitor symptoms of staff. Strongly recommend or require masks, follow social distancing guidance. Indoor/outdoor playgrounds and sports may operate following <a href="#">CDC guidelines</a>. Limit occupancy where social distancing cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Pools may open following social distancing, <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>, aquatic health codes, and pool operator protocols.</p>	See <a href="#">DOH COVID-19 Recommendations for Sports</a> . Operate under heightened hygiene & cleaning standards. Monitor employees for symptoms.

