

HEALTH OFFICER'S ORDER NO. 20-061

EFFECTIVE MIDNIGHT, March 31, 2020

RE: Order of the Health Officer on Events during Declaration of Public Health Emergency

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2020, the Snohomish Health District activated its District Operations Center to manage their response to the nation's first case of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee proclaimed a state of emergency within the State of Washington due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers proclaimed a state of emergency within Snohomish County due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Snohomish County Health Officer's Order 20-059 declared a public health emergency in the county due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, the Snohomish Health District Board of Health adopted Resolution No. 20-06 declaring a public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, Snohomish County Health Officer's Order 20-059 declared a public health emergency in the county due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued interim guidance recommending the cancellation or postponement of in-person events consisting of 50 or more people due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, Governor Jay Inslee issued proclamations (1) prohibiting any gathering of greater than 50 people, (2) reinforcing previously declared requirements for smaller gatherings, and (3) prohibiting any number of people from gathering in any public venue in which people congregate for purposes of public entertainment, recreation, food and beverage service, theater, bowling, fitness, and other similar activities, to include all public venues in which the serving, provision, or consumption of prepared food or beverages occurs at a table, bar, or for consumption within; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, pursuant to Order No. 20-060 the Local Health Officer ordered additional more restrictive measures to address the spread of the COVID-19 virus; and

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WHEREAS, state law, RCW 70.05.070(2),(3), requires and empowers the local health officer to take such action as is necessary to maintain health and to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, state regulation, WAC 246-100-036, requires the local health officer, when necessary, to institute disease control and containment control measures, including social distancing measures he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment; and

WHEREAS, there continues to be evidence of increasing transmission of COVID-19 within Snohomish County, scientific evidence, and national public health guidance regarding strategies to slow the transmission of COVID-19, including the need to continue to protect vulnerable members of the public from avoidable risk of serious illness or death resulting from exposure to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of Snohomish County places it at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, persons with mild symptoms and asymptomatic persons with COVID19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk; and

WHEREAS, a large surge in the number of persons with serious infections can compromise the ability of the regional healthcare system to deliver necessary healthcare to the public; and

WHEREAS, the continuation of limitations on large gatherings and use of social distancing decreases the risk of COVID-19 transmission to our most vulnerable populations and is especially important for people who are over 60 years old and those with chronic health conditions due to the higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the continuation of the measures set forth in prior Health Officer Order No. 20-060 and Order No.20-059 as amended by Order No. 20-060 are deemed to be necessary and appropriate measures to maintain health and to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the extension of previous Order No. 20-060 and Order No. 20-059 as amended, will continue to reduce the likelihood that many individuals will be exposed to COVID-19 at community events and gatherings and at certain retail establishments, and will thereby slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community; and

WHEREAS, this Order will help preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in the county by reducing the spread of COVID-19; and

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WHEREAS, this Order is issued in light of the existence of 1,286 confirmed cases of COVID-19 (including 33 deaths) in Snohomish County as of March 31, 2020, and a significant and increasing number of assumed cases of community transmission occurring at a time when implementation of large-scale community mitigation measures are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

WHEREAS, because social distancing measures can reduce COVID-19 transmission by decreasing the frequency and duration of social contact among persons of all ages; and

WHEREAS, this Order is issued to continue to prevent circumstances often present in bars, dance clubs, movie theatres, and other social and recreational venues that may exacerbate the spread of COVID-19, such as: (a) a physical environment in which people are in close proximity and have multiple opportunities for close contact with one another that facilitates the spread of COVID-19 and; (b) the difficulty in tracing exposure and implementing traditional public health containment measures; and

WHEREAS, although many residents and businesses followed the voluntary retail guidance issued by the Snohomish Health District on March 11, 2020, confirmed COVID-19 cases have continued to increase, reflecting the need to extend prior orders to reduce transmission of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, this Order comes after the release of substantial guidance from the Washington State Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other public health officials throughout the United States and around the world. The Local Health Officer will continue to assess this quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this Order or issue additional Orders related to COVID-19; and

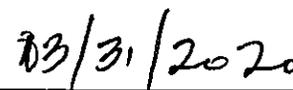
WHEREAS, the Local Health Officer hereby finds it is necessary to continue to institute social distancing measures within Snohomish County.

NOW, THEREFORE, effective midnight March 31, 2020, it is hereby DECLARED and ORDERED as follows:

Health Officer Order No. 20-060 and Order No. 20-059 as amended by Order 20-061 are hereby extended effective midnight March 31, 2020 and shall continue in effect until modified or terminated by subsequent order.



Christopher Spitters, MD, MPH
Health Officer



Date