



# TOWN OF ESTES PARK

## EMERGENCY ORDER 01-20 TO CLOSE SHORT-TERM LODGING

**WHEREAS**, on March 19, 2020, a local emergency was declared for the Town of Estes Park due to COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, under section 31-15-401(1)(b) of the Colorado Revised Statutes, the Town has the authority to do all acts and make all regulations which may be necessary or expedient for the promotion of health or the suppression of disease; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to section 2.28.030 of the Estes Park Municipal Code, the Town Administrator has the authority, during a declared emergency, to issue rules, regulations and orders as are reasonably necessary for the protection of life and property within the Town; and

**WHEREAS**, that section specifically authorizes the Town Administrator to order the closing or limit operations of any businesses or commercial activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment has now confirmed a case of COVID-19 in Estes Park,

**WHEREAS**, the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population in Estes Park places it at risk of 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 COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk. A large surge in the number of persons with serious infections can compromise the ability of the healthcare system, particularly in the high-country areas such as the Town of Estes Park, to deliver necessary healthcare to the public; and

**WHEREAS**, visitation brings more people to the community, increases the likelihood of the rapid spread of the disease, and increases the risk to life and health in the Town; and

**WHEREAS**, because of these considerations, the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment has encouraged the Town to limit visitor services in the Town and discourage visitation, in the memorandum attached as Exhibit A; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief of Staff of Estes Park Health, the town's hospital, has also urged the Town to shut down hotels, motels, and vacation rentals to limit the number of tourists into the Town, in the letter attached as Exhibit B.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, Travis Machalek, Town Administrator of the Town of Estes Park, pursuant to the authority vested in me by the statutes of the State of Colorado and the Estes Park Municipal Code, order as follows:**

Section 1: All short-term lodging in the Town shall cease operations and vacate the premises of guests.

Section 2: Short-term lodging shall include, but not be limited to, high-intensity and low-intensity accommodations, accommodations units, hotel/motels, vacation homes, hostels, resort lodge/cabins, recreational vehicle park/campgrounds, and bed and breakfast inns. This definition is intended to be interpreted broadly, and the terms listed above shall include but not be limited to their definitions in the Estes Park Municipal Code, Estes Valley Development Code, and Estes Park Development Code.

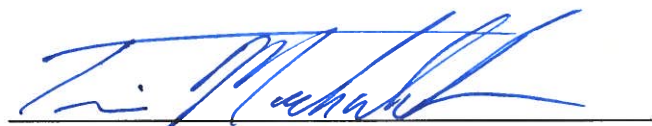
Section 3: Exceptions to this order include: local workers; individuals experiencing symptoms of illness, or under an isolation or quarantine order from the Larimer County Public Health Department; long term residents (more than 30 days) of short-term rental facilities; and those who can demonstrate other good cause or emergency reasons why it is imperative and unavoidable that they must remain at the site for lodging.

Section 4: There shall be no new bookings or reservations at short-term lodging during the pendency of this order. Furthermore, current reservations through April 17, 2020 shall be cancelled.

Section 5: This order will be disseminated by news release and given prompt and general publicity through the Town's established means.


Section 6: This order shall be effective at noon, March 23, 2020, and shall remain in effect until April 17, 2020.

**ADOPTED** this 21<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2020.



Travis Machalek  
Town Administrator

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Attorney

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Travis Machalek  
**FROM:** Tom Gonzales, MPH, Larimer County Public Health Director  
**DATE:** March 19, 2019  
**RE:** COVID-19 Recommendations for Estes Park

We now have a confirmed case in Estes Park. I urge the Town to limit access to visitor services and encourage visitors to not travel through Larimer County and up to Estes Park. The Public Health Order strictly prohibits any gathering of 10 or people, and further urges susceptible people (60 or great underlying health conditions) maintain 6 feet from people.

As COVID-19 moves through the country and across Colorado, we expect to continue to have cases in Larimer County. Testing is limited and results are delayed, so we assume that we have far more positive cases in our community than the data shows.



Tom Gonzales, MPH  
Public Health Director

## EXHIBIT B



# ESTES PARK HEALTH

**To Estes Park Town Administrator Travis Machalek, Mayor Jirsa, and the Town Board of Trustees,**

Although Rocky Mountain National is vast, the Town of Estes Park itself is small and health care resources are limited. We are using our available resources to take care of the health care needs of the Estes Valley Community, 65% of which are over age 65 and are at risk for COVID-19. We're also prioritizing the health care needs of our Estes Park Health staff.

I am urging people not to visit Estes Park. The best thing any of us can do is stay at home. I do not think this is the time to encourage people to take cross-country road trips, even though the National Parks are free right now.

This statement comes in response to the CDC's "15 Days to Slow the Spread" campaign. "The CDC encourages everyone to **AVOID discretionary travel**, shopping trips and social visits."

Similarly, the Center for Disease Control updated its guidelines recently to recommend all events with more than 10 attendees be cancelled or postponed for the next eight weeks. Although visiting national parks like Rocky Mountain National Park doesn't require directly interacting with many people, the people that go there pass through our town in great numbers.

My strong concern is that the encouragement to visit National Parks for free, including Rocky Mountain National Park could significantly increase the uptick of this viral illness in our community. I urge the Federal Government to change their stance and to shut down National Parks, including Rocky Mountain National Park. The downstream effects of flooding this town with tourists is not something that Estes Park Health, or any small hospitals in this country, are prepared to handle at this time.

We need to focus on the citizens of the Estes Park Valley and Estes Park Health, first and foremost. Estes Park Health is currently dealing with the health care needs of our community. Believe me, I am all for getting outside during these times, but the spread of the virus unwittingly by allowing free national park tourism will inevitably lead to the unwanted taxing of Estes Park Health resources.

In addition to urging Rocky Mountain National Park to shut down, I also urge Larimer County and/or the Town of Estes Park to shut down non-essential services including hotels, motels, and vacation rentals to limit the number of tourists into our town.

Estes Park Health has established a COVID-19 Hotline: 970-577-4400 to answer our community's questions and concerns. Eph.org also has a landing page with community information and resources from our trusted resources at the CDC, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment and Larimer County Department of Health & Environment.

Thank You for Listening and Stay Safe,

John Meyer, MD

Chief of Staff at Estes Park Health

Emergency Department Director at Estes Park Health

Urgent Care Director at Estes Park Health