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April 29, 2020

Governor Kate Brown  
Office of the Governor  
900 Court Street  
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Wallowa County COVID-19 Reopening Plan Phase 1

Dear Governor Brown,

Thank you for your leadership as Oregon looks to reopen within a public health framework for restarting public life and business. Wallowa County is ready to reopen under the reopening guidelines to begin Phase 1 on May 8, 2020. We seek your support to do so. (Now May 15<sup>th</sup>.)

Wallowa County understands the concerns of an increase in COVID-19 cases once restrictions are eased, and that this is important and unfamiliar territory. With our utmost desire to protect the health of our community, we also seek to lead and support responsible business reopening in order to save our economy.

For small population, frontier rural counties with very low (perhaps even zero) COVID-19 positive cases, a "downward" trajectory is not a realistic expectation. COVID-19 is in our communities already; the level, however, may never be known. Testing guidelines, supply, and other limitations undoubtedly skew baseline numbers. We ask that sound guidelines and flexibility be developed for small population counties where an increase of anywhere from 1-20 cases (a small number by any standard) not be viewed with undue or unreasonable alarm and conclusions.

With our relatively isolated location, wide open spaces, low population, and community resilience, Wallowa County provides you a special opportunity to begin opening rural counties under Oregon's COVID-19 guidelines for reopening business. Our plan mirrors the Harney County plan and reflects the simplicity and unique nature of our mutual communities and circumstances, where our small number of healthcare providers, businesses, and limited staff capacity are best served with a clear and uncomplicated plan. We are able to reopen within the state's public health framework, nimbly adjust our plan as needed, and likely save the small businesses here that have been able to operate in Oregon's most challenged economy.

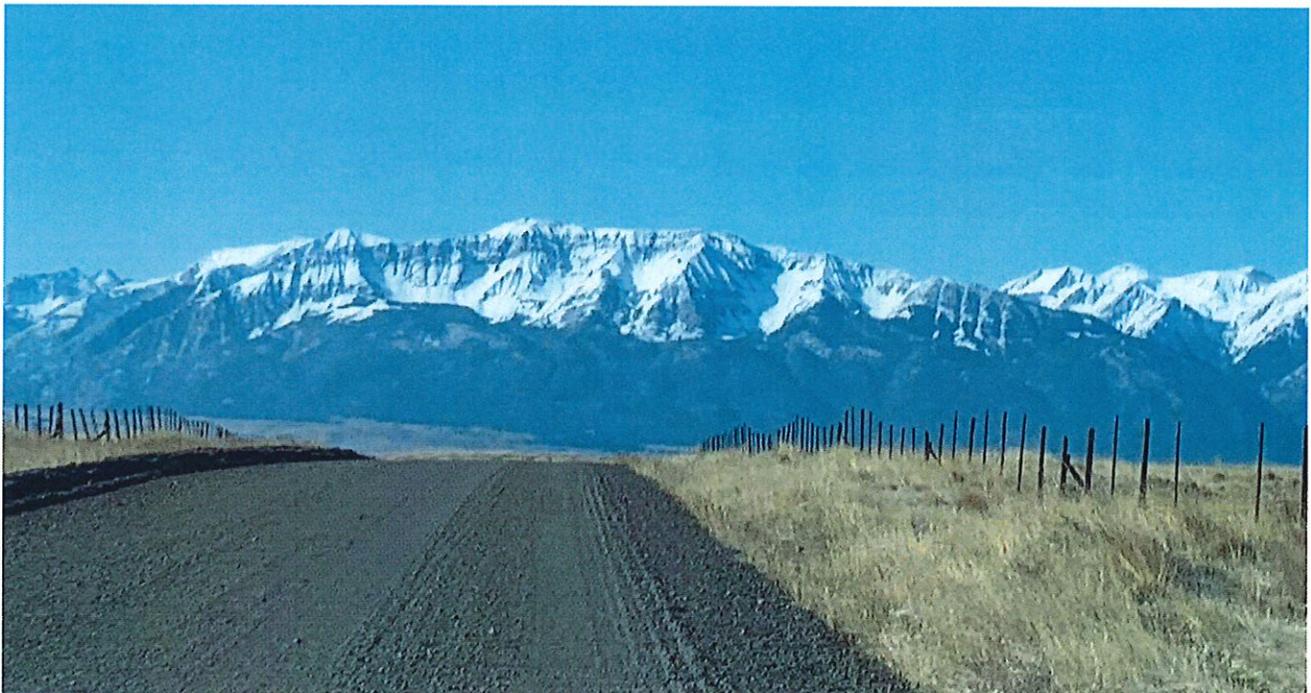
In full accordance with Oregon guidelines, Wallowa County requests a reopen date for Phase 1 of May 15, 2020. Thank you for your consideration and consent to move forward.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Hillock  
Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Roberts  
Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Todd Nash  
Commissioner



The pandemic infectious virus may adversely impact people who live in institutions such as hospitals, assisted living facilities and jails, for example. Additional planning efforts by these institutions will be necessary. The characteristics of an outbreak may also require additional preparedness and response actions for certain segments of the population.

The Wallowa HPO Coordinator has established the Wallowa County Preparedness Committee that meets at least twice yearly to discuss the needs of Vulnerable Populations. The committee includes but is not limited to local clinics, the hospital, representatives from assisted living facilities, mental health, County Emergency Management, and Adult Protective Services

Wallowa County has two assisted living facilities and at least three mental health group homes. All of these facilities are part of the Wallowa County Preparedness Committee and have participated in discussions with community members, providers and hospital personnel regarding controlling an outbreak if it were to occur.

If these facilities were to have positive cases, that did not require hospitalization they will shelter in place and isolate the infectious individuals from the rest of the population. The primary care providers and hospitals will provide support in terms of home visits and PPE supplies. These facilities have been in discussion with other agencies within the county who could supply care extenders to help staff. All positive patients requiring hospitalization will be treated at Wallowa Memorial Hospital.

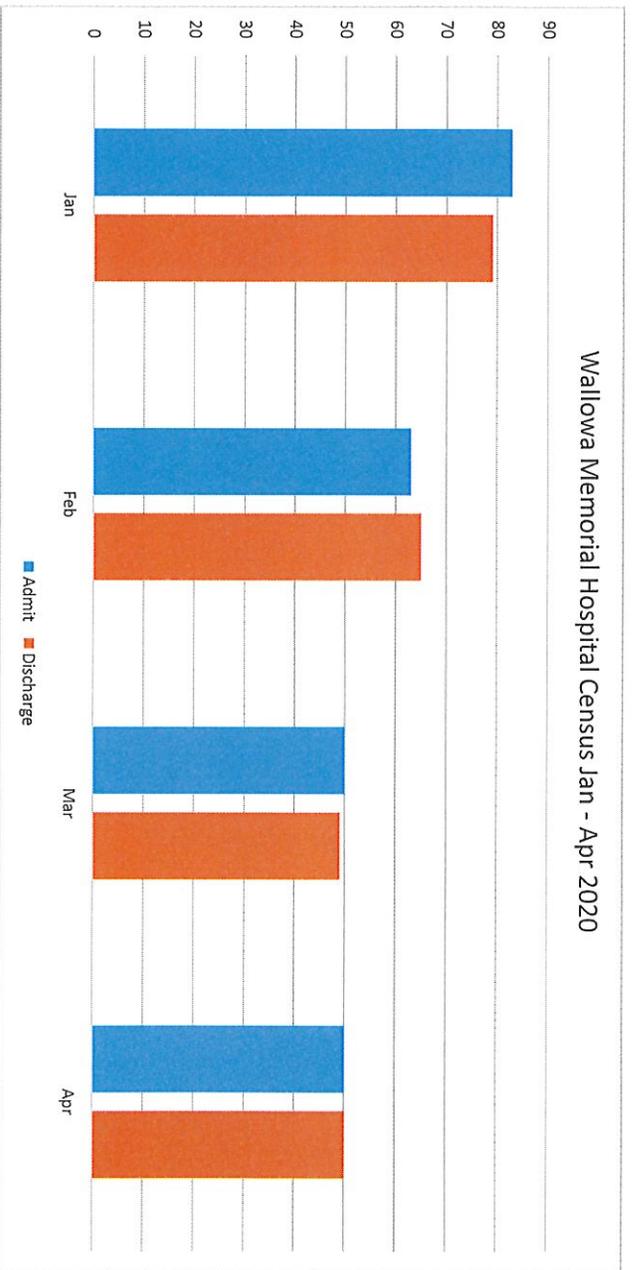
Should there be a mass outbreak in the facilities. One facility could be designated as an infectious facility and resident's positive for COVID 19 would be housed there. All non-infectious patients would be distributed to the other facilities. All would shelter in place for the 14 day period.

Wallowa Memorial Hospital has a surge plan in place and the ability to surge to a maximum of 50 patients. All positive COVID 19 patients will be treated in the hospital and all non-infectious patients would be surged to our Medical Office Building on the hospital campus.

Wallowa County does not have a food processing facility, farm working housing, nor a jail that houses prisoners overnight.

Wallowa Memorial Hospital Census Jan-Apr 2020

	Admit	Discharge
Jan	83	79
Feb	63	65
Mar	50	49
Apr	50	50



**Goal is a minimum of 30 tests per week per 10,000 people for regular diagnostic (non- monitoring) purposes. There is sufficient lab capacity in the state overall to achieve this, and improved allocation of capacity will ensure coverage in each region.**

County Wallowa

1. What types of tests are being administered in your region? (Nasopharyngeal, Serology, Abbot Rapid Test, etc.?)

Abbot Rapid Test, Nasopharyngeal

2. What is your DAILY collection/testing capacity?

6

3. How many DAYS per WEEK do you collect/test?  
(this will allow us to calculate your weekly average)

7

4. Does your region have reliable courier service in place with current testing laboratories that can accommodate increased testing to meet the **required** 30 weekly tests per 10,000 people?

Yes

5. What resources are you planning to share with nearby regions and which regions are you working with to support needs your region might have?

We are working within our region to share tests as needed

6. The state is planning to have additional specimen collection sites (Walmart, Walgreens) and additional courier routes and test processing (Quest, LabCorp) to support regions throughout the state that may run out of capacity. What resources will you need from the state or other counties to help you achieve your objectives?

Specimen collection swabs, additional Abbot test kits, test cartridges for the GeneXpert

7. What efforts are being made to make testing available to low income and underserved communities?

All residents are being tested at provider discretion.



# Wallowa County COVID-19 Reopening Plan Phase 1 May 2020

Oregon Governor Kate Brown developed *Reopening Oregon: A Public Health Framework for Restarting Public Life and Business* as a frame work to responsibly reopen business in Oregon, in a phased approach with criteria and guidelines, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Within that framework, *Wallowa County, Oregon hereby submits its plan for a Phase 1 reopening of Wallowa County effective May 15, 2020.* This plan has been designed in collaboration with our public health, hospital, emergency management, business, and regional partners.

Wallowa County understands the concerns of an increase in COVID-19 cases once restrictions are eased, and that this is important and unfamiliar territory. With our utmost desire to protect the health of our community, we also seek to lead and support responsible business operations to save our economy.

Wallowa County, with its relatively isolated location, wide open spaces, low population, and community resilience provides a favorable COVID-19 scenario for reopening of business. We are able to do this within the state's public health framework, nimbly adjust the plan as needed, and likely save the small businesses that have been able to operate in Oregon's most challenged economy.

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to reflect the readiness, criteria, and guidance for Wallowa County to move forward with reopening our local nonessential businesses and service providers amid the COVID-19 pandemic environment. This plan has been prepared based on Governor Kate Brown's *Public Health Framework/or Reopening Oregon* guidelines, but only reflects a Phase 1 plan. Phase 2 and Phase 3 guidance and planning will be issued at the appropriate time in the near future.

## ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Due to frequently changing and updated COVID-19 information and guidelines from both the federal and state levels, these local guidelines will be handled as *an adaptive management plan*, or living document. This means that as information, standards, protocols or changes are made available, that appropriate discussions will take place among Wallowa County government, public health, emergency management, business community and others in order to address and reflect updates to this plan as soon as possible.

Wallowa County has met all gating and core preparedness criteria for the start of Phase 1, *Reopening Oregon: A Public Health Framework for Restarting Public Life and Business.*

## WALLOWA COUNTY PHASE 1 CRITERIA MET

### GATING CRITERIA- as of April 24, 2020

Component	Criteria	Notes
SYMPTOMS	Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses (ILI) reported within a 14-day period	<b>Yes</b> - Wallowa County's rate of decline in reported ILI cases has declined at least 50% in the last 14 days; the downward rate decline began even earlier than that.
SYMPTOMS	Downward trajectory of COVID-like syndromic cases reported within a 14-day period	<b>Yes</b> - Wallowa County's rate of decline in reported COVID-like syndromic cases (symptom reporting) has declined at least 50% in the last 14 days; the downward rate decline began even earlier.
CASES	Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period	<b>Yes</b> - Wallowa County has an official OHA COVID-19 case count of one (-1-) as of 4/24/20. Please note: For small population counties with a zero or even one case baseline, we recommend that the expectation for this gating criteria take into account that it may be unreasonable to count even up to three (3) new cases as an upward trajectory.
HOSPITALS	Treat all patients without crisis care	<b>Yes</b> - Wallowa Memorial Hospital (WMH) is the only hospital in Wallowa County. WMH is prepared to, but has not needed to work under crisis care conditions.
HOSPITALS	Robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing	<b>Yes</b> - Wallowa County has a testing program in place. Wallowa County Health Providers and WMH work seamlessly together, and with the state, so that testing for at risk healthcare workers and patients is adequate for those exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Wallowa Memorial Hospital has adequate testing units on hand;

**CORE PREPAREDNESS** as of April 24, 2020

Component	Criteria	Notes
TESTING	Screening and testing for symptomatic individuals	<u>Yes</u>
TESTING	Test syndromic/influenza-like illness-indicated persons	<u>Yes</u>
TESTING	Sentinel surveillance sites are screened for asymptomatic cases	<i>N/A</i>
CONTACT TRACING	Wallowa County does not have a Public Health Department therefore, all contact tracing of all COVID+ cases will be conducted by the Oregon Health Authority. Wallowa Memorial Hospital will assist the State with contract tracing as able.	<u>Yes</u>
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM	Sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<u>Yes</u>
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM	Ability to surge hospital capacity	<u>Yes</u>
PLANS for HEALTH and SAFETY	Protect the health and safety of workers in critical industries	<u>Yes</u>
PLANS for HEALTH and SAFETY	Protect the health and safety of those living and working in high-risk facilities	<u>Yes</u>
PLANS for HEALTH and SAFETY	Protect employees and users of mass transit	<u>Yes</u>
PLANS for HEALTH and SAFETY	Advise citizens regarding protocols for social distancing and face coverings	<u>Yes</u>

PLANS for HEALTH and SAFETY	Monitor conditions and immediately take steps to limit and mitigate any rebounds or outbreaks by restarting a phase or returning to an earlier phase, depending on severity	<u>Yes</u>
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### **Core Preparedness Comments:**

- Sentinel surveillance site screening is not an Oregon Health Authority (OHA) expectation that applies to Wallowa County's specific frontier situation at this time.
- Wallowa County's PPE is sufficient at this immediate juncture, and ongoing work toward obtaining greater quantities is moving forward.
- WMH's surge plan is in place.
- Contact tracing capacity is sufficient at this time; contingency plans are described further in this document.
- Mass transit - Wallowa County has only one provider, with excellent health precaution protocols and appropriate, reduced service levels.
- Congregate care planning - Isolation and recovery protocols are in place. The high risk, congregate facilities in Wallowa County include three long term care facilities, one group mental health home. Wallowa County has no food processing plants or warehouses.
- We know of no identified homeless members of the community.
- Wallowa County will monitor conditions through its Emergency Manager.

## **WALLOWA COUNTY PHASE 1 REOPENING PLAN**

This is Wallowa County's plan for Phase 1 Reopening. Updated plans will be prepared prior to entering Phase 2 and Phase 3. Wallowa County will follow Oregon's Phase 1 guidelines for individuals and for employers. School, child care, and public lands reopening will follow state and agency guidelines.

### **Community-Wide Protocols**

During Phase 1, residents of Wallowa County voluntarily continue to follow State guidelines concerning the following:

- Shelter in place - For people considered especially vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus- those 60 or older or with health issues, such as asthma, chronic lung disease or heart disease
- Follow social distancing guidelines - Including avoiding social settings of more than 25 people unless they can either maintain physical spacing of at least 6 feet or wear cloth face masks.
- Minimize nonessential travel and continue to telework when possible.

**This section removed**

## **Mass Transit**

This section removed.

### **Central Coordination, Monitoring and Oversight**

Wallowa County will continue to utilize its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with its Incident Command (IC) framework to provide a local center for monitoring conditions, implementation, coordination, and support to our healthcare providers, businesses, and community as reopening unfolds and refinements are made. The Wallowa County EOC will be the focal point for overall monitoring of reopening efforts. The County EOC is working with Wallowa Memorial Hospital's Incident Command Team.

The local Public Information Officers (PIOs) that operate within Wallowa County's Joint Information Center (JIC) have expanded their communication protocols to include the local business community. PIO operations will include Public Service Announcements (PSAs) across radio, newspaper, websites, social media, and mailings to our remote areas. Messaging will emphasize the need to keep personal and community precautions at a high level, especially during reopening phases.

The Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce Director will function as the community liaison to assist local businesses. The Wallowa County Economic Development office will work closely with the Chamber and assist, as well.

The Wallowa County Board of Commissioners will stay involved and ensure communication, reporting, and collaboration remain effective and that we work with state agency and county leaders moving forward.

Local leaders of Wallowa and Union County have agreed to work together as a team on prioritizing and extending the reach of scarce supply lines and addressing supply interruption issues through planning and agreements. These counties will share and transport testing, PPE, and communicable disease (CD) contact tracing resources as needs arise and change.

Wallowa Memorial Hospital and local health care providers continue to work with the Oregon Health Authority to refine a robust CD contact tracing. As Wallowa County does not have a Public Health Department, contact tracing will be done by the Oregon Health Authority. Wallowa Memorial Hospital will assist with this as needed or requested.

Hospital surge capacity and congregate care planning will include a regional approach. WMH has a close working relationship with Union County's Grande Ronde Hospital. They will continue to cooperate with, aid and assist other regional hospitals, especially for hospital surge planning and PPE/ventilator supply challenges.

All this work is encouraging and ongoing at the local and regional levels. From the state, Wallowa County will be asking for funding, supplies and expertise to address our particular areas of challenge.

### **Logistics and Supply**

The Wallowa County EOC will continually monitor the situation and identify, track, and facilitate obtaining both medical and non-medical materials and supplies that require partner support or creative and unconventional solutions.

Regionalized courier service plans to provide surge testing and PPE capacity when and where needed is being developed for Wallowa and Union Counties. Wallowa County EOC will closely monitor and evaluate its PPE supply after nonessential medical / dental / vision appointments resume.

Communicable disease contact tracing, PPE, and testing capacity will remain our challenges over time until sufficient levels nation-wide, state-wide, and locally are fully achieved.

## **Action Points and Decisions**

Wallowa Memorial Hospital and the local medical teams, reached a consensus that an initial threshold number of three (3) syndromic COVID-19 + cases requiring hospital care in Wallowa County will be set as the initial decision point during Phase 1. Should this threshold event occur, a hold will be placed on moving forward with any other business sectors reopening until contact tracing by the Oregon Health Authority occurs. At that time, based on advice of local medical professionals, the EOC, and OHA, the Wallowa County Commissioners will make local guided decisions around the need to consider halting moving forward with reopening and/or consider re-instating more restrictive measures in the community.

## **PHASE 2 and PHASE 3 REOPENING PLANS**

Wallowa County's plans for the subsequent phases of reopening life and business will be developed and issued separately, following Oregon guidelines.

## **SUBMISSION**

This plan was crafted with involvement from Wallowa Memorial Hospital, Wallowa County Emergency Management, the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners, and local businesses working together to support a safe reopening for Wallowa County.

In full accordance with Oregon guidelines, Wallowa County requests a reopen date for Phase 1 effective May 15, 2020. Wallowa County is preparing its initial request for release of federal and state funding to support our plan and to cope with COVID-19 financial impacts, such as loss of revenue and increased expenses. Development of additional requests will be ongoing.

**PREREQUISITES FOR PHASED REOPENING OF OREGON:**

**Region 9 Healthcare Coalition Prerequisites Checklist**

Metric	Metric Met In Region?	Validation Sources	Challenges of Maintaining Compliance
<b>2. Minimum Testing Regimen</b>			
Regions able to administer testing at a rate of 30 per 10k per week	YES	OHA County testing questionnaire completed by counties week of May 4, 2020.  ORPHEUS records of testing conducted.	National supply chain issues result in inadequate distribution of testing materials to frontier counties, which constricts them from expanding capacity and creates future uncertainties about ability to maintain capacity.
Sufficient testing sites accessible to underserved communities	YES	OHA County testing questionnaire completed by counties week of May 4, 2020.  Database of testing sites across region (in progress).	
<b>Sufficient Health Care Capacity</b>			
Region must be able to accommodate a 20% increase in suspected or confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations	YES	HOSCAP daily reports  Existing hospital surge agreements  1135 hospital waivers  Hospital reopening attestation forms	None identified
<b>7. Sufficient PPE Supply</b>			
Hospitals in region are reporting PPE supply daily through HOSCAP	YES	HOSCAP daily reports	None identified
Hospitals in region must have a 14 or 30 day supply of PPE, depending on their size and whether they are a rural hospital.	YES	Regional health system daily metric reporting.  Hospital Reopening Attestation Forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pioneer Memorial Hospital</li> <li>• Good Shepherd Health Care System</li> <li>• CHI St. Anthony Hospital</li> <li>• Grande Ronde Hospital</li> <li>• Wallowa Memorial Hospital</li> <li>• Saint Alphonsus Medical Center- Baker City</li> <li>• Saint Alphonsus Medical Center - Ontario</li> </ul>	National supply chain is stabilizing but could destabilize with another nationwide surge.