



MCHENRY COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

May 12th, 2020

Dear Governor J. B. Pritzker,

McHenry County supports your approach to safely reopen our businesses, open spaces and institutions while protecting the public from COVID-19. That being said, we, the County and municipal leaders who have signed this document, believe that McHenry County has more than met the criteria to enter Phase 3 (Recovery) of the Restore Illinois plan, and furthermore, does not belong in the Northeast Health Region that includes Cook County and the other collar counties.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot enacted modifications to the Restore Illinois Plan to address her city’s unique circumstances. Similarly, McHenry County has unique circumstances that make it no less unique, and no less deserving of further review.

Please accept this formal proposal on behalf of McHenry County, its municipalities and the McHenry County Council of Governments to refine your plan to re-open County businesses and prudently restart the economy while ensuring public safety.

Overview of McHenry County:

McHenry County has taken an aggressive and proactive stance in combating the spread of COVID-19. We enacted and followed strict guidelines early on so we could overcome this pandemic sooner rather than later. We were the first County to declare a State of Emergency. It is because of support of Governor Pritzker’s public health measures that we are doing well as compared to surrounding counties.

The McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) and the State of Illinois has recorded and published the following data as of May 12th, 2020.

County	Population	Positive Cases to Date 5/12	% of total population that have tested Positive
Boone	53,544	244	.456%
McHenry	308,570	1026	.333%
Kane	532,403	3,593	.675%
Lake	695,535	5,662	.814%
Cook	5,150,000	55,465	1.077%

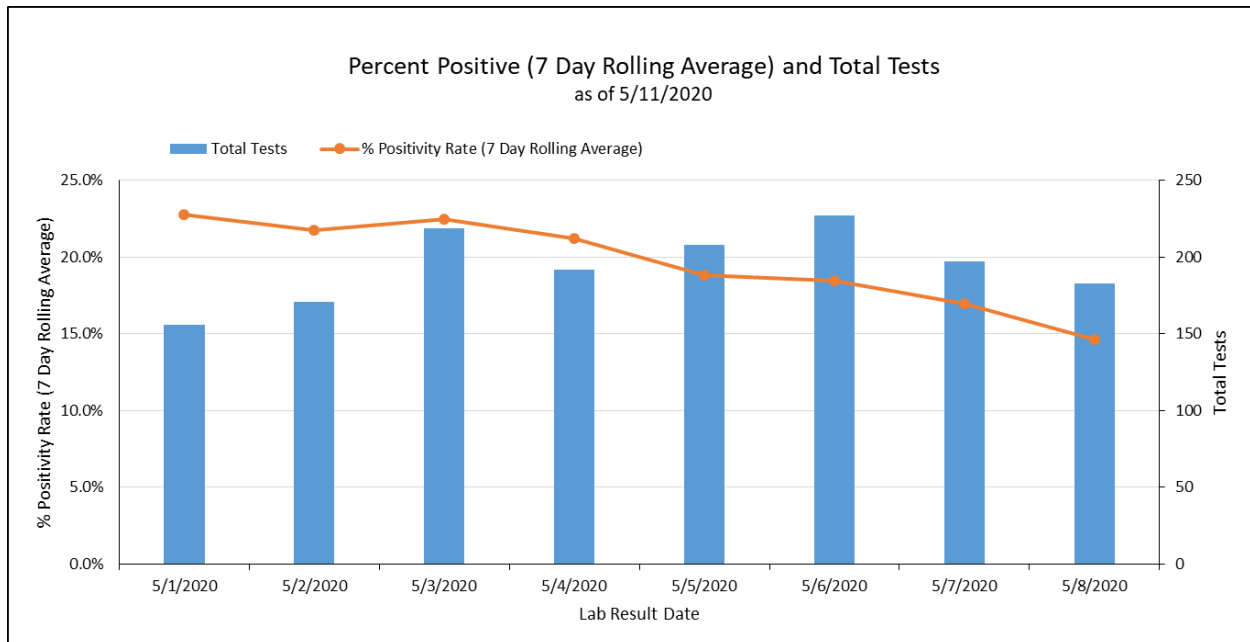
(The data is available on the McHenry County COVID-19 dashboard at <https://mchenry-county-coronavirus-response-mchenrycountygis.hub.arcgis.com/>, and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) COVID-19 data page at <http://dph.illinois.gov/covid19>.)

Positive Test Rate of Total County Population:

McHenry County’s positive test rate based on total population is the lowest of all of our collar counties at .333 percent of our estimated population. In addition, of the seventeen nursing homes and assisted care facilities reporting to the state, 151 residents and 70 staffers have tested positive for COVID-19. Moreover, if we factor in the 151 resident cases within our County that have been isolated inside congregate settings, our positive cases are reduced to 875, which represents approximately .284 percent of our population.

Positive Test Rate of Residents Tested:

We have tested over 5,558 people to date which represents an 18.46 percent positive test rate for McHenry County. If you remove the congregate setting cases (residents only) that would be 5,407 people tested to date and the remaining 875 positive cases represent only a 15.18 percent positive test rate regarding true community spread cases.



Criteria for Moving into Phase 3 and Phase 4:

The five criteria to enter into “Phase 3: Recovery” and “Phase 4: Revitalization” of the Restore Illinois Plan are:

1. At or under a 20 percent positivity rate and increasing no more than 10 percentage points over a 14-day period, and
2. No overall increase (i.e. stability or decrease) in hospital admissions for COVID-19-like illness for 28 days, and
3. Available surge capacity of at least 14 percent of ICU beds, medical and surgical beds, and ventilators.
4. (*Phase 3*) Testing available for all patients, health care workers, first responders, people with underlying conditions, and residents and staff in congregate living facilities.

- (Phase 4) Testing available for all area residents regardless of symptoms or risk factors.
5. (Phase 3) Begin contact tracing and monitoring within 24 hours of diagnosis.
(Phase 4) Begin contact tracing and monitoring within 24 hours of diagnosis for more than 90% of cases in region.

The data provided above and the data collected by MCDH and IDPH demonstrates that our performance level when compared to the spread of COVID-19 meets and exceeds expectations. McHenry County has met the required criteria for Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. Tracing and controlling the spread of infections and viruses, by both ZIP codes as well as countywide, helps us to combat the known factor that people live, work, play and pray across zip codes. This methodology can help us understand if certain areas of the county are more affected than others, and can inform how best to respond. This is a more accurate description than being lumped into other counties that have a disproportionate population, case count and positive test rate than McHenry County.

As we exam each of the criteria set forth in Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan, we have found that McHenry County scores as follows:

Criteria #1:

As of May 12th, McHenry County is at an 18.46 percent positive rate, which falls below the 20 percent rate identified in the Restore Illinois Plan for both Phase 3 and Phase 4. By removing the congregate setting cases (residents only) our positive test rate falls to 15.18 percent. Since approximately April 15th (when the data was made public) our test rate of those tested versus positive test results has always remained between 17 percent and 20 percent. Additionally the seven day average noted above shows a steady decline in the positive percentage rate for the previous week which is also the trend from the end of that week (5/8) through today (5/12). MCDH and IDPH has provided all of testing numbers versus positive cases which have proven that we have maintained or been below the 20 percent positivity rate for well over the 14-day period required to move to Phase 3 or Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan.

Criteria #2:

The County is blessed to be the home of Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital, Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital, and Northwestern Medicine Woodstock Hospital of which both McHenry and Huntley are certified Level 2 Trauma Centers. In addition McHenry County has a smaller fourth hospital, Mercyhealth Hospital in Harvard Illinois and immediate access to two additional bordering hospitals, Advocate Good Shepard Hospital in Barrington and Advocate Sherman Hospital in Elgin. Together these six hospitals service all of McHenry County. Over the last 28 days all of our area hospitals have reported a stable census trend line regarding COVID-19 like illness admissions. This information is reported by each of these hospitals to IDPH and can be confirmed. This stable census trend line for COVID-19 like illness admissions meets the requirement for both Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. *Attached to this plan you will find correspondence from Northwestern Medicine and Mercyhealth Medicine confirming their partnerships and commitment to McHenry County in the mitigation of this pandemic.*

Criteria #3:

Currently Northwestern Medicine McHenry, Huntley, and Woodstock Hospitals along with Mercyhealth Hospital in Harvard, have well above the 14percent surge capacity for ICU beds, medical and surgical beds, and Tier 1 ventilators. They are confident that they can handle any unexpected increase or surge. This meets the requirements for both Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. The below chart represents the hospital beds in McHenry County as of May 11th, 2020 that were reported to IDPH and confirms that we are prepared to handle at minimum of a 24 percent surge.

McHenry County Hospital System (NW McHenry, NW Huntley, NW Woodstock, Mercy Harvard)				
	Total	Available	% Available	COVID/PUI
ICU Beds	42	10	24%	8/0
MS Beds	156	53	34%	26/1
Neg. Pressure	58	47	81%	
Ventilators	83	35	42%	3/0

Note: NW Woodstock has 20 beds that are in use for adult rehab.

Criteria #4:

To move into Phase 3, testing must be available for all patients, health care workers, first responders, people with underlying conditions and residents and staff in congregate living facilities. With over 248 state-listed testing sites and numerous local sites such as the McHenry Community Health Center (3901 Mercy Drive, McHenry, Illinois) testing is now available for all county residents regardless of symptoms or risk factors. McHenry County has exceeded this Phase 3 requirement and has met the Phase 4 requirements as well with testing available to all regardless of symptoms. *See the attached IDPH Notice for reference.*

Criteria #5:

The MCHD has been conducting contact tracing and monitoring within 24 hours of diagnosis since its first case was reported. Currently the MCDH has 15 people conducting contact tracing along with three epidemiologists overseeing disease surveillance and monitoring. As of the date of this request, the MCDH is meeting the 90% benchmark set for Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. The County and the major municipalities within the County recognize that as McHenry County phases its opening in accordance with Restore Illinois, and as more residents are tested, the County could see a rise in case counts. Furthermore, as residents are permitted to increase their movement beyond the current parameters of the Executive Order, they will likely increase the number of people they come into contact with. As a result, it is anticipated that the number of investigations and length of time to conduct contact tracing will necessarily increase as more follow-up will be needed to identify individuals who may have come into contact with a COVID-19 positive case.

To assure the necessary controls are in place to monitor and respond to any possible increases in cases, and reduce the risk of exposure among McHenry County residents, the County and major municipalities (through their signatures on this document) are committing to ensuring the MCDH

is provided with the necessary financial and human resources to meet and sustain the 90% contact tracing requirement and to enforcing all the requirements outlined by IDPH (see County Established Procedures) until such time Illinois is deemed restored (Phase 5).

Please see the attached letter verifying tracing and monitoring from the MCDH.

Formal Request:

The County of McHenry has supported Governor Pritzker’s actions to the fullest extent of the law and credit those strict guidelines for our current status.

As McHenry County has been able to meet or exceed the criteria set forth in the Restore Illinois Plan needed to move into Phase 3 or Phase 4. We are asking as a community for the State to:

1. Acknowledge that we do not belong grouped into the Northeast Health Region and allow us to be moved into our own unique region consisting solely of McHenry County because of the high volume of healthcare capabilities we possess, coupled with our compliance to all the requirements necessary to enter Phase 3. As an alternative, please move McHenry County to the North Central Health Region. Lake, Kane and Cook Counties do not compare to our demographics or the rate of spread for COVID-19. We have half the population of Lake County, and our positive test rate is approximately 2.5 times lower as well. McHenry County (and portions of other counties) is in IDPH Emergency Medical Services Region 9, whereas Chicago falls within an entirely different region – Emergency Medical Services Region 11.
2. Acknowledge and approve our ability to move from Phase 2 to Phase 3 of the Restore Illinois Plan effective immediately, upon your independent confirmation that we have met all five criteria in the Restore Illinois Plan.
3. Provide a commitment to a timely review and approval of our transition to move to Phase 4. This will only occur after McHenry County has a plan in place for hiring and training contact tracers sufficient to sustain a surge in McHenry County so that the MCDH can continue to maintain their current ability to begin contact tracing and monitoring within 24 hours of diagnosis for more than 90 percent of cases in the County.

With this acknowledgement, the County would prepare to move forward with the restrictive and modified openings of certain types of business identified in the Restore Illinois Plan.

In addition, if the State acknowledges and approves the County’s stepped approach to move to Phase 3 immediately and Phase 4 once additional tracers are employed and trained, we will move forward with local safety measures that all municipalities will adopt to ensure the safe operation of each business. The following safety measures are a condition of this formal acknowledgement request and will be enforced by all municipalities and the County. Should the State require additional safety measures, those will be adopted and implemented.

Countywide Established Procedures

Phase 3 Action Steps:

General Procedures

- Gatherings of 10 people or less are still in place
- Travel will follow the most current IDPH and CDC Guidelines
- All health care providers are open with IDPH approval and safety guidance
- Remote learning in P-12 schools and higher education continues
- General outdoor recreation can resume in groups of 10 or fewer

Childcare and Summer Programs

Limited child care and summer programs may resume with the following restrictions and guidance:

- No groups larger than 10 (children and care workers combined)
- Face coverings required (unless under the age of 2 or due to a health condition) in a setting where 6-foot social distancing cannot be applied.
- Must provide use of hand sanitizer stations at all entrances and exits.
- Common areas of facilities (i.e. doors, handles, counters, play areas, changing areas, etc.) shall be cleaned hourly or after customer use with disinfectant wipes.
- **All IDPH approved safety guidance published will be followed.**

Salons (hair and nail) and Barbershops

Salons and barbershops may open to the public with the following restrictions:

- Only one employee and one customer per 100 square feet of floor space will be allowed in the business at any time. This will ensure a minimum of a 10-foot social distancing.
- Entrance to the business shall be by appointment only to prevent violations of social distancing.
- Customer must be wearing at a minimum, a cloth face covering.
- Employee must be wearing full PPE, including a face mask, disposable gloves and eye protection.
- All surfaces the customer comes in contact with (i.e. barber chair, sink area, door handles, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected between each appointment and common areas of the business shall be cleaned hourly with disinfectant wipes.
- Must provide use of hand sanitizer stations at all entrances and exits.
- **All IDPH approved safety guidance published will be followed.**

Manufacturing, Retail & Service Businesses

All non-essential manufacturing, retail and service businesses may open to the public with the following restrictions and in accordance with the Executive Order and the Illinois Department of Public Health:

- Reduce public access by 50 percent.
- Require face coverings for all employees and customers in accordance with the Executive Order.
- Must provide use of hand sanitizer stations at all entrances and exits.

- Common areas of the store (i.e. doors, handles, counters, etc.) shall be cleaned hourly or after customer use with disinfectant wipes.
- **All IDPH approved safety guidance published will be followed.**

Single Recreational Sports and Recreational Boating

Recreational boating will be allowed, with an exception to the two-person rule for family or residents who already reside together. Other single-person recreational businesses such as golf driving ranges can reopen, provide social distancing is strictly followed.

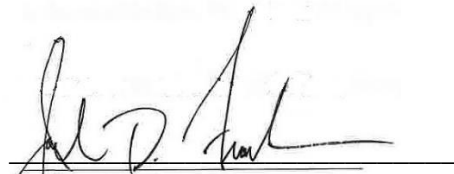
Health & Fitness Facilities

Health and fitness facilities may open to the public with the following restrictions:

- Outdoor classes will be permitted, provided there are no groups larger than 10.
- One-on-one personal training sessions will be allowed indoors or outdoors, provided that social distancing requirements are strictly adhered to.
- Face coverings shall be utilized in a setting where 6-foot social distancing cannot be applied.
- Must provide use of hand sanitizer stations at all entrances and exits.
- Common areas of facilities (i.e. workout equipment, doors, handles, counters, changing areas, etc.) shall be cleaned hourly or immediately after customer use with disinfectant wipes.
- **All IDPH approved safety guidance published will be followed.**

We thank you for your leadership, and we are grateful for your review of our request which meets every one of your stated criteria. We ask that you grant the changes necessary to effectuate the implementation of the Restore Illinois Plan, and to allow McHenry County to serve as an example to the rest of the State. We welcome the opportunity to answer any questions or concerns you may have.


Respectfully Submitted By all McHenry County Leaders of Government,



McHenry County
Chairman Jack Franks



Barrington Hills
President Martin McLaughlin



Algonquin
President John Schmitt

Emily Berendt
Bull Valley
President Emily Berendt



Cary
Mayor Mark Kownick



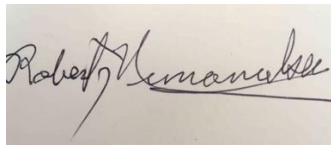
Island Lake
Mayor Charles Amrich



Crystal Lake
City Council Member Cathy A. Ferguson



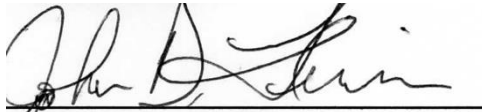
Johnsburg
President Ed Hettermann



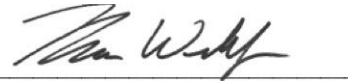
Fox River Grove
President Robert Nunamaker



Lake in the Hills
President Russ Ruzanski



Greenwood
President John Ferris



Lakemoor
Mayor Todd Weihofen



Harvard
Mayor Michael Kelly



Lakewood
President Phil Stephan



Hebron
President Kimberly Martinez



Marengo
Mayor John Koziol



Huntley
Mayor Charles Sass

Marilyn E. Shepit
McCullom Lake
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McHenry
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Richmond
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Ringwood
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President Mark Eisenberg

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Woodstock
Mayor Brian Sager