

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Thursday, September 10, 2020

The Philadelphia Board of Health held a special public meeting on Thursday, September 10, 2020. The meeting was held virtually using the GoToWebinar platform in light of restrictions related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, allowing access to the public via computer or other device and via a toll-free phone number.

Board Members Present

Dr. Tyra Bryant-Stephens, Dr. Ana Diez-Roux, Dr. Thomas Farley, Dr. Marla Gold, Dr. Jennifer Ibrahim, Dr. Scott McNeal, Dr. John Rich

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Health Commissioner and Board President Thomas Farley, MD, MPH called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

MINUTES

The Board unanimously approved the minutes from August 13, 2020.

BACKGROUND

Dr. Farley provided an update on the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. The Health Department reports that case counts have been relatively level for a few weeks, albeit with a spike due to an outbreak on Temple's campus, then a drop after that. Hospitalizations continue to be low throughout the entire region. The number of deaths is also continuing to drop, with only four deaths in the last week of August, which is 98% below the peak week in April. There are about 60 testing sites and are receiving about 3,000 results per day. Contact tracing is happening, with about 120 staff doing case investigations and contact tracing. They are reaching about 70% of cases and about 75% of contacts. Mask use among people exiting retail store is approaching 95%. Through a state grant, Penn, Temple, and Jefferson health systems are working with nursing homes and personal care homes to assist with testing, infection control, and response.

ELEVENTH SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY REGULATION GOVERNING THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF COVID-19 (INDOOR EXERCISE AND RECREATION FACILITIES)

Jo Rosenberger-Altman, City of Philadelphia Law Department, presented a supplemental regulation approving two interim orders on reopening indoor exercise gyms and recreation facilities. Limitations in the orders include a barring of food or drink in the facilities, adequate

spacing, and mask wearing. These orders are similar to other orders in terms or recommendations made for safety.

Dr. Farley noted that the Health Department has, for the first time, begun inspecting gyms as a result of this order and has found that the vast majority have been compliant. The inspections look for mask use, adequate spacing between exercise machines, and adherence to capacity limits.

Dr. Ibrahim moved; Dr. McNeal seconded.

Motion for approval of regulation approved unanimously.

TWELFTH SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY REGULATION GOVERNING THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF COVID-19 (INDOOR DINING AND THEATER)

The second order, effective September 8, is about indoor dining and indoor theaters and performance events. For indoor events, there are capacity limits and a barring of food or drink service as well as social distancing and mask requirements. Indoor dining rules are more strict than for the rest of the Commonwealth: for example, in addition to wearing masks servers must wear face shields, only four or fewer people per table, no smoking or vaping areas, service at bars is prohibited, alcohol service is limited to on-site consumption with a meal, and there are additional capacity limits and a reiteration of indoor events capacity limits.

Dr. Farley mentioned that he has spoken with his counterparts in other counties and they haven't seen problems with an increase in cases associated with that activity. He feels that the greatest risk is to the servers, who will come in contact with large numbers of unmasked people. The Health Department is having volunteers visit restaurants to help educate them on the new recommendations in addition to normal restaurant inspections.

Dr. McNeal moved; Dr. Ibrahim seconded.

Motion for approval of regulation approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Farley adjourned the meeting at 6:55 PM.