

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

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

The Philadelphia Board of Health held a special public meeting on Wednesday, March 10, 2021. 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 6:36 PM.

MINUTES

The Board unanimously approved the minutes from January 20, 2021.

OVERVIEW

Dr. Farley presented an update on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and the City's response.

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSOLIDATED AND RESTATED SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY REGULATION GOVERNING THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF COVID-19 (SPRING SAFER AT HOME ORDER)

Jo Rosenberger-Altman of the City's Law Department first described the regulation before the Board of Health. The Board will be adopting the Mayor and Health Commissioner's Spring Safer at Home Order and March 5th amendment. This regulation will be effective through April 14, 2021.

Order

Ms. Rosenberger-Altman then reviewed the Spring Safer at Home Order. Section 1 describes how this Order relates to current existing Orders.

Section 3 describes that indoor gatherings and events in private residences may only include members of two different households. Indoor gatherings and events in licensed non-residential facilities may only take place if no food or drink is served and are limited to 10% of maximum capacity for fewer than 2,000 people, and 5% of maximum capacity up to 500 people for

gatherings between 2,001 and 10,000 people. For outdoor gatherings and events, provided no food or drink is served, they can take place with 15% of maximum capacity for fewer than 2,000 people, 10% of maximum capacity for events with between 2,001 and 10,000 people, and 5% of maximum capacity up to 2,500 people for gatherings above 10,000 people. For outdoor gatherings with no maximum capacity posted, the maximum capacity should be considered 67 people per 1,000 square feet of occupiable space. If food or drink is served or consumed, the gathering or event shall consist of 100 or fewer people, inclusive of staff.

Sections 4 and 5 cover business limitations. Where in-person work is authorized, such work must comply with all applicable City and State regulations. In general, a maximum of 20 people per 1,000 square feet, and office locations can only allow 2 people per 1,000 square feet, with certain exceptions. If ventilation can meet certain criteria, up to 4 people per 1,000 square feet. All settings must comply with density, masking, and social distancing requirements.

In-person instruction is now available in all educational settings. Non-residential retail settings may operate. Gyms and indoor exercise facilities may operate provided classes and similar group activities are limited to no more than 15 participants. Recreational facilities can operate with no eating, drinking, or smoking. Other recreational facilities involving significant physical exertion may operate with a maximum occupancy of 10 people per 1,000 square feet. Theaters and performance venues may operate under the aforementioned gathering limits. No smoking is allowed in indoor theaters and performance venues, and people stay in those seats for the duration of the performance. Outdoor theaters and performance venues may allow eating and drinking beyond the aforementioned 100 person limit if there is assigned seating, provided that eating and drinking occurs only while individuals are seated in their assigned seats in groups of six or fewer. Other cultural institutions are allowed to operate. Houses of worship and funeral homes are allowed to operate, and are subject to the density requirements provided in Section 3(A)(2), Section 5(1), or 20% of maximum occupancy, whichever is least restrictive. Senior activity centers may operate but may not allow eating, drinking, or smoking. All staff and attendees must either wear KN-95 masks or be double masked. They are also limited to the lesser of twenty-five (25) individuals per group and ten (10) persons per 1,000 square feet. Adult day care centers are not allowed to operate at this time. Formally organized sporting events are allowed, with spectators provided applicable density limits are enforced.

Outdoor dining at restaurants continue to be allowed, with no more than six people per table, with no limitation on households. Outdoor dining is not allowed for unseated customers. Indoor dining is still limited to four or fewer people per table, from no more than one household. Indoor occupancy of 25% of fire code; can be raised to 50% of fire code if certain ventilation standards are met.

Construction continues to be covered by previous orders.

Face coverings and social distancing rules are the same as before, with the exception of masks are not required when a person is alone in an office or otherwise completely separated by floor-to-ceiling barriers. As before, the owner, operator or host is required to ensure compliance.

Amendment

Permissible gatherings can continue, and the limits were brought into line with the State's existing guidance. For indoor gatherings, the number of people allowed is 15% of maximum capacity. Outdoor gatherings are allowed up to 20% of maximum occupancy. Food is permitted when 100 or fewer people are present. For sporting activities, teams that do not maintain 100% mask compliance or serve food or drink can only operate with Health Department approved health and safety plans.

Joshua Roper noted some comments in the chat, about allowing catered events. Dr. Farley responded to the comments by saying that our experience from previous outbreaks is that these types of events can lead to major outbreaks and that these types of events are the highest risk events. He noted that as more Philadelphians are vaccinated, we may feel more comfortable with these types of events.

Dr. Gold moved; Dr. Bryant-Stephens seconded.

Motion for approval of regulation approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Farley adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.