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Gov. Wolf to Pennsylvania: We Must Stay the Course, We Must Follow the Law

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Tom Wolf reminded Pennsylvanians that the state’s actions to stop the spread of COVID-19 are working and that we must stay the course and follow the law or there will be negative consequences.

“Pennsylvanians are fighting for our lives,” Gov. Wolf said. “We have fought this deadly virus in the best way we can, and sacrificed in ways we could never have imagined. It has been a new kind of heroism – in many ways a quiet heroism. These heroic acts deserve to be met not by surrendering, but by staying the course.”

The governor reiterated that reopening too soon can cause COVID-19 to spread, for cases and deaths to spike and for closures to be reinstated perhaps for much longer.

Reopening decisions are based on the advice of scientists, medical professionals, and the state’s epidemiologists. Factors that inform decisions include case counts, modeling, geographic location, contact tracing and testing capabilities for individual counties, regions, and the state. Each county is considered individually before deciding on placement into the red, yellow or green phases. Yellow counties have a lower risk of virus spread. Red counties have a higher risk of virus spread.

“I cannot allow residents in a red county to get sick because their local officials can’t see the invisible risk of the virus in their community,” Wolf said. “So, I must, and I will impose consequences if a county locally lifts restrictions when it has not yet been given the go-ahead by the state.”

The governor outlined the following consequences to counties that do not abide by the law to remain closed:

- Counties will not be eligible for federal stimulus discretionary funds the state receives and intends to provide to counties with populations of fewer than 500,000.

- Businesses in counties that do not abide by the law will no longer be eligible for business liability insurance and the protections it provides. The Pennsylvania Department of Insurance [released details of this](#) earlier today.
- Restaurants that reopen for dine-in service in counties that have not been authorized to reopen will be at risk of losing their liquor license.
- County residents receiving unemployment compensation will be able to continue to receive benefits even if their employer reopens. Employees may choose not to return out of concern for personal safety and safety of co-workers.

“This is not a time to give up,” Wolf said. “This is a time to rededicate ourselves to the task of beating this virus. I intend to keep fighting, and I believe that the overwhelming majority of my fellow Pennsylvanians intend to keep fighting it too. With that unity, I know we can win.”

MEDIA CONTACT: Lyndsay Kensinger, ra-gvgovpress@pa.gov