



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Howard County Board of Commissioners  
Howard County Admin. Center  
220 N. Main St.  
Kokomo, IN 46901

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### **County lifts travel advisory, extends public health emergency declaration, adopts state's 5-stage plan for reopening**

**KOKOMO, IN** – Effective Sunday at midnight, Howard County will lift the Orange Travel Advisory and will adopt Governor Holcomb's Back On Track Indiana reopening plan, enabling many businesses to open their doors at a limited capacity on Monday.

Howard County Commissioners will align the county's Public Health Emergency Ordinance with that of Governor Eric Holcomb's plan that encourages residents to practice social distancing and wear face masks in public settings. Also, those 65 or older or with compromising health conditions are asked to limit public outings.

"Over the last seven weeks, the residents of Howard County have worked hard to keep safe distances and stay home. Our success in flattening the curve has positioned us to continue the reopening of our community. We believe this is the smart and right approach going forward," said County Commissioner Paul Wyman. "Our plan from day one was to keep the spread of the virus to a level that did not overrun our healthcare system. Thanks to our residents and front-line workers we have been remarkably successful to this point. I have no doubt our team and our community will continue to successfully manage through the remainder of this crisis." he added.

Beginning Monday, all local nonessential travel will be permitted, as well as gatherings of up to 25 people. In addition, retail stores, malls, restaurants and bars that serve food, (no bar seating) can open at 50% capacity. Office settings may return as well, but in small waves and should continue to work from home when possible. All non-essential manufacturing facilities can begin operations.

“We have reviewed the Governors plan and agree with the guiding principles and the cautious approach to re-opening our community.” said Dr. Zent. “I sincerely appreciate the efforts of everyone who has made sacrifices to help us in the fight against the virus.” he added.

Places of worship will be able to conduct services starting Friday, May 8. The state plan outlines suggested guidelines for congregations. However, it is cautioned that elderly and, again, those with compromising health conditions should stay home.

Hair salons and nail services may open on Monday, May 11, by appointment only.

Not allowed at this time are sporting events, playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, gyms, fitness centers, and community centers.

Howard County government offices will reopen on Monday, May 11, and services will be offered by appointment only. Residents are asked not to enter government buildings without a scheduled meeting. A full list of offices and phone numbers can be found at [howardcountyin.gov](http://howardcountyin.gov). In addition, the Courts in Howard County will continue to remain open for emergency services while looking after the health and safety of all participants.

The Commissioners will conduct their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, May 4, at 4 p.m. via Facebook live Howard County Indiana Facebook. Since attendance is limited to 25 people, the public is encouraged to attend virtually. The agenda can be found on the county’s website at [howardcountyin.gov](http://howardcountyin.gov).

Gov. Holcomb’s full 5-stage plan can be viewed at <https://www.backontrack.in.gov/>.