

## Oregon sets new standards to reopen schools

**Natalie Pate**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced new requirements Tuesday that must be met by counties before schools are allowed to resume face-to-face instruction or hybrid models.

The new, statewide directive applies to both public and private schools, though higher education institutions and youth correctional facilities have their own guidelines.

Additionally, Brown is releasing \$28 million to public schools via the Emergency Education Relief Fund to pay for things such as mobile hot spots, technology for distance learning, online curriculum and training.

To resume in-person instruction in any form, counties must meet the following requirements three weeks in a row:



**Brown**

- 10 or fewer cases per 100,000 people over seven days
- Test positivity of 5% or less over seven days

That means Marion County needs to have fewer than 35 cases per week to open in-person teaching. From July 19 to 25, the county had 292 cases, according to data from the Oregon Health Authority.

Polk County needs to have fewer than nine cases per week. From July 19 to 25, the county had 43 new cases. These counties' estimates are based on population statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Brown said many Oregonians — including students with disabilities, students of color and students living in low-income households — have already faced disproportionate impacts since schools were closed to in-person instruction.

"I am absolutely unwilling to lose an entire school

year for kids — a year that could be foundational to the lifelong opportunities for thousands of Oregon students," Brown said, adding that most districts will return this fall with comprehensive distance learning models.

"But, it is also incumbent on all of us, every community, to take every measure to slow the spread of this disease so that we can get our kids back in schools as soon as possible."

As for statewide metrics, these must be met three weeks in a row:

- Test positivity of 5% or less over seven days

Under some conditions, in-person instruction can resume for K-3 students and remote and rural school districts with fewer than 100 students, officials wrote in the new state directive.

"Younger students get the virus at lower rates, get

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## Sticky the Kitty adds movie credits to fame



**Sticky, the famous cat rescued Oct. 19, 2018 on Silverton Road NE by Chuck Hawley, makes an appearance at Liberty Elementary School in South Salem. SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL**



**Forward This**

Capi Lynn  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A famous feline and his hero human are keeping their paws crossed that schools reopen this fall so they can resume their campaign to fight bullying and promote kindness.

The story of Sticky and Chuck Hawley went viral in the fall of 2018 — about the rescue of a kitten whose paws were glued to the pavement of a Salem road — and they've been sharing their heartwarming tale ever since.

They were ramping up visits to area elementary schools when the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

"That's the coolest thing I get to do with (Sticky)," Hawley said.

And that's saying a lot because he and Sticky have added movie credits to their bios since we last checked in with the Silverton residents. (More on that in a minute.)

Sticky, to be purrrrr-fectly honest, could take or leave the school visits. He's become a bit of a prima donna, slightly self-centered and a tad-bit tempera-

mental.

"It's like he knows he's famous," Hawley said.

Sticky's four-legged siblings — three dogs and a cat — know the pecking order at home.

"He'll be sitting on one side of the couch and all four other animals are sitting on the other side," Hawley said.

Everyone in the house cuts Sticky some slack because of where he came from.

He was a month old and weighed 1 pound when Hawley, on his way to work one morning in October 2018, stopped traffic on Silverton Road NE and peeled the kitten's tiny paws from the pavement. Hawley posted something on Facebook about the chance encounter, and news of the rescue spread quickly.

Soon emails and donations were pouring in from fans all over the world, and Hawley and his wife, Mikee, used the money to launch the Sticky the Kitty Foundation.

The nonprofit funds projects that promote compassion and kindness among animals and humans. In addition to donations, it relies on sales of Sticky merchandise, such as coffee mugs, T-shirts and post-it notes with various photos of the adorable kitten.

Daphne, a miniature pinscher, was an early benefi-

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## Oregonians' jobless claims still in adjudication

**Claire Withycombe**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

This week will likely be the last that jobless Americans will see a \$600 weekly boost in unemployment benefits from the federal government.

That amount, approved by Congress to help workers weather pandemic-related job losses in March, will expire Friday and the amount could be changed in the coming days on Capitol Hill.

Some federal lawmakers have proposed cutting that weekly benefit to \$200.

The state agency overseeing the distribution of those benefits, though, expects that any change in the dollar amount could take weeks to implement.

"Even if the legislation were to pass today and be signed into law, we would not be able to start making those payments under the new program next week," said David Gerstenfeld, acting Oregon Employment Department director. "It just takes longer than that to do the coding."

Although the agency has made progress on processing outstanding applications for benefits, Ger-

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**Hikers crossing a bridge at Smith Rock State Park in Central Oregon on a recent weekend didn't always maintain adequate social distancing without wearing masks.**

OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

## Seeking COVID-19 escape

**Oregonians crowd outdoors increasing accidents, garbage**

**Zach Urness**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

There are no Little League games to attend, overnight summer camps to stash the kids or music festivals to let loose and scream "play Free Bird" with beer-soaked brethren.

Family road trips have been largely put on hold. A vacation to Florida or British Columbia is off the table. Even watching a Blazers game in person is impossible without the nuclear codes required to enter the NBA "Bubble."

There is, simply put, not much to do this summer with one major exception: the great outdoors.

In the quest to escape COVID-19, Oregonians are flooding the state's beaches, forests and mountains in unprecedented numbers, say state and federal officials. And that's bringing a spike in accidents, making campsites scarce and bringing garbage and damage to both parks and forested areas.

"Especially on the Oregon Coast and west of the Cascades, we're seeing a level of use well beyond a normal year," Oregon Parks and Recreation Department spokesman Chris Havel said. "It's like having the crowds you see for a holiday weekend, except all the time."

**Supply and demand**

More people outdoors is a good thing, stress rangers. The virus doesn't spread as effectively outdoors, and that's particularly true if people wear masks where social distancing isn't possible.

Public lands are for everybody, and this is their time to shine.

The problem is finding a place for all those people — many of whom are camping for the first time or have limited experience. Campgrounds have been full almost every day during July, including remote sites normally overlooked.

The problem is supply and demand. At a moment when COVID-19 is fueling the rush outdoors, there are less campsites and limited capacity across the state due to COVID-19 related impacts.

Some sites in the Columbia Gorge remain closed. Eight state parks are still closed, and other campgrounds have reduced capacity. On the Oregon Coast, getting a campsite at a state park requires booking a month in advance. Few yurts and cabins are available for rental. The City of Bend has outright asked people to stay away.

"Everything is full: campgrounds are full and all of the good, established, dispersed campsites have also been full," said Darren Cross, McKenzie River district ranger for Willamette National Forest.

"The problem is, people packed up and drove all the way out here. So what we're seeing is that people are creating their own new dispersed sites," he said.

Cross said they've seen a roughly 30 percent increase in "pioneered sites" — meaning people are clearing brush for a place to put their tent.

"It only takes two to five uses before the vegetation is denuded and it's very hard for it to look like the

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Vol. 139, No. 33

Serving the Silverton Area Since 1880  
A Unique Edition of the Statesman Journal



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