

"I recognize the burden these restrictions place on Oregon businesses and working families. My goal is to lift these restrictions as soon as it is safely possible, and keep Oregon on the path for lifting most health and safety requirements by the end of June so we can fully reopen our economy. But we will only get there if enough Oregonians get vaccinated. There are appointments available right now all across the state."

\$20 million for immediate aid to businesses in Extreme Risk counties
Brown is partnering with legislators on the \$20 million emergency relief package to provide immediate aid to impacted businesses

in extreme risk counties through the state's commercial rent relief program. "After conversations with legislative leaders, I am confident we can move quickly to bring relief to businesses and their employees in extreme risk counties," Brown said. "The vast majority of Oregon businesses have followed our health and safety guidance to protect Oregonians from COVID-19, even though doing so has come with an economic cost. This emergency aid will help businesses in extreme risk counties."

In addition, the governor announced that outdoor capacity limits for bars, restaurants, and other sectors will be raised from 50 to 100 people in extreme risk counties, with health

and safety measures, including physical distancing, in place. She added, "We know that the risk of COVID-19 transmission is lower outdoors. I am urging all Oregonians, if you choose to gather with others, keep it outdoors. Indoor transmission is a key driver in the COVID-19 surge that is making renewed health and safety restrictions necessary."

The Oregon Health Authority will also be working to align Oregon's outdoor mask guidance with the CDC guidance announced today.

Three-week limit placed on Extreme Risk level
Under the Risk Level framework, counties move to (or remain in) extreme

risk when they meet the county metrics for case rates and percent positivity, and Oregon meets statewide hospitalization metrics: COVID-19 positive patients occupying 300 hospital beds or more, and a 15 percent increase in the seven-day hospitalization average over the past week.

Counties will stay in extreme risk for a maximum of three weeks, and will be able to move to a lower risk level sooner if their COVID-19 case rates are brought down in the intervening weeks, or if Oregon moves below 300 statewide hospitalizations or the seven-day hospitalization average percent increase goes below 15 percent.

The governor has also worked in partnership with Portland metro-area hospi-

tals to ensure systems are in place to closely monitor and manage hospital capacity. Health systems in the Portland area are using the coordinated system developed at the beginning of the pandemic to manage hospital surge capacity, bed space, essential services, and non-urgent procedures as needed over the next three weeks in order to preserve hospital beds and critical care capacity.

"I want to thank hospital and health care leaders for the work they are doing to manage hospital bed space, so that no Oregonian is turned away from receiving the health care they need," Brown said. "Now, I am asking Oregonians to

do their part to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities so we can help support our nurses, doctors, and frontline health care workers."

Brown asked hospital leaders to alert the Governor's Office and OHA immediately if additional measures are needed to preserve hospital capacity.

If, after three weeks, Oregon still exceeds statewide hospitalization metrics and one or more counties still meet the case rates and percent positivity for extreme risk, the Oregon Health Authority will evaluate why and make recommendations to the Governor's Office.

CENSUS from page 1A

The 2020 Census population data includes the resident population of the 50 states, plus a count of the U.S. military personnel and federal civilian employees living outside the United States (and their dependents living with them) who can be allocated to a home state.

Oregon will be one of the beneficiaries of an increase in population as the state will gain one member in Congress, determined after a two-and-a-half-month delay in completing the census.

Oregon saw a 10.6 percent increase in resident population — from 3,848,606 to 4,237,256 — and will consequently gain one voice in the lower house of Congress. Each member of the Oregon delegation to the House represents 706,917 residents.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown was quick to acknowledge the increase in state representation, saying after the conference, "Every Oregonian's voice matters, and it is great news that as our state continues to grow, we will get an additional seat in Congress to represent us. Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2020 Census to make sure you were counted."

The challenges presented to the Census Bureau in 2020 were unprecedented, according to the acting Director of the Census Bureau, Ron Jarmin, but he insisted results of last year's census were accurate and thorough. Hurricanes, wildfires, lockdowns and civil unrest were all factors which Jarmin indicated combined to form serious challenges to collecting accurate information.

"Despite all the challenges of the pandemic, the completeness and accuracy of these first 2020 Census results are comparable with recent censuses. We had numerous quality checks built into collecting the data, and we have conducted one of the most comprehensive reviews in recent census history during data processing," Jarmin said. "We are proud to release these first results from the 2020 Census today. These results reflect the tireless commitment from the entire Census Bureau team to produce the highest-quality statistics that will continue to shape the future of our country."

Jarmin was just one of the high-profile speakers at the bureau's YouTube national unveiling conference, and a subsequent question-and-answer session with the media and the public on Monday, April 26.

The Census Bureau has attempted to distribute data and demographic results more widely during this census cycle, by using social media and virtual

conferences to share the department's results.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina M. Raimondo opened the meeting with praise for the agency and thanks for the participation of those being counted.

"The American public deserves a big thank you for its overwhelming response to the 2020 Census," she said. "Despite many challenges, our nation completed a census for the 24th time. This act is fundamental to our democracy and a declaration of our growth and resilience. I also want to thank the team at the U.S. Census Bureau, who overcame unprecedented challenges to collect and produce high-quality data that will inform decision-making for years to come."

Later, Jarmin responded to questions regarding the accuracy of the count and directed the public's attention to the bureau's website, which detailed the following steps which were activated specifically for the most recent census.

To adapt to last year's unique challenges, the bureau provided additional opportunities for everyone to respond, including:

- Deploying staff to places in low-responding areas to answer questions and help people respond to the 2020 Census.

- Introducing phone calls instead of, or in addition to, sending census takers door to door to follow up with households that hadn't responded yet.

- Extending data collection by 2.5 months to allow more time for households to respond and for follow up with those that didn't.

- Expanding outreach through more than 400,000 national and local partners and through national advertising to encourage the public to respond online, by phone or by mail or to cooperate with census takers.

- Working with local tribal leaders to hire individuals already living on reservation lands as census takers.
- Adapting telephone operations to allow social distancing in the call centers and to permit callbacks when sufficient operators were not available due to COVID-19 restrictions.

- Sending teams of skilled enumerators from other parts of the country closer to finishing to areas lagging behind after hurricane damage.

- Changing field procedures to minimize necessary in-person contact with the public, such as leaving census invitations on mailboxes and training enumerators to exercise social distancing during contact with respondents.

- Providing and encouraging electronic response options for group quarters facilities, such as nursing

homes and detention centers.

In addition to these newly released statistics, Raimondo delivered population counts to the president to be used for apportioning the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. In accordance with Title 2 of the U.S. Code, a congressionally defined formula is applied to the apportionment population to distribute the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives among the states.

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