Larimer County MItigation Plan

To: Jill Hunsaker Ryan, MPH, Executive Director, CDPHE
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From: Larimer County Department of Health and Environment

Re: Larimer County COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

Date: July 20, 2020

Variance & Mitigation Framework

Larimer County has a mitigation framework currently in place which includes:

- A robust contact tracing and active monitoring system
- An outbreak team working with businesses as soon as one case has been identified to be associated with a business, long term care facility or organization
- Community testing sites conducting specimen collections for PCR testing three days per week
  - Other healthcare systems conduct testing to members of the community as well (UCHealth, Banner Health, Estes Park Health, Salud, and other healthcare clinics)
- A compliance/enforcement team following up with requests for or complaints requiring on-site visits
- Outreach to our community members by sectors, including weekly elected official calls, weekly business Q&A sessions with business owners and operators, weekly discussions with our schools, biweekly local healthcare coalition calls which includes OEMS from all municipalities within Larimer County
- A Joint Information Center based out of the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment building to answer questions and address complaints
- Engagement with our local major hospital systems on a daily basis and monitoring of COVID-19-specific data and monitoring
- A public-facing dashboard to provide up-to-the-date data for our community, including number of cases, list of facilities currently experiencing outbreaks, hospital data, and testing information
- Level III (Remote) Activation of the Larimer County EOC

Larimer County has identified and continues to monitor a group of early warning indicators. These indicators, as outlined in Larimer County's Suppression Plan, are as follows:

1. **New COVID Positive Cases County-wide**
   Based on testing data reports from CEDRS (Colorado's reporting system used to track COVID cases), LCDHE receives reports of more than 25 new cases or 10% of individuals tested on three separate days over a 14 day period.

2. **New COVID-19 Presumptive Positive Admits to Hospitals**

Based on daily hospital data provided to the Larimer EOC, hospitals report 15 new hospital admits per day of presumptive positive cases on three separate days over a 14 day period.

3. **Number of COVID Patients in the Hospitals**
   Based on daily hospital data provided to the Larimer EOC, hospitals report more than 65 patients are being treated for COVID throughout the two major hospital systems in Larimer County.

4. **Hospital Census Rates (both Total and ICU)**
   Hospitals county-wide are required to maintain a daily occupancy of less than 70% in order to continue providing elective procedures. Based on the daily hospital data provided to the Larimer EOC, if we see hospitals at 80% occupancy, this is a trigger to begin a detailed review of where patients are coming from and what may be causing the surge. If hospitals achieve 90% occupancy, this is a trigger to reinstate more restrictive social distancing practices and would be a trigger to activate an ACS. If we see hospitals at 100%, this would trigger the reinstatement of emergency protective actions.

Describe in detail the county's existing mitigation framework and triggers defined in your approved variance(s). This should include the metrics used by CDPHE to monitor for variance threshold compliance.

Community Goals

1. Identify and contain the spread of COVID-19 through aggressive contact tracing, isolation and quarantine of affected community members, active monitoring, increased testing capacity, enforcement, and strong public messaging
2. Mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on our healthcare systems through strong partnerships with health agencies and hospitals, the evaluation of early warning indicators to determine impacts, and by providing logistical support for the sheltering and care of impacted people
3. Provide guidance to the community on the latest local and state public health orders

In order to accomplish the goals listed above, Larimer County has utilized an Incident Command Structure, in partnership between Larimer County Office of Emergency Management and Larimer County Department of Health and Environment. Functions in the form of Planning, Logistical, and Finance support has been provided by Larimer County OEM, while operational activities have been conducted by LCDHE staff. Operations has been broken up into four task forces listed below with descriptions of their assigned tasks:

- Case Investigation and Contact Monitoring (CICM) Team: tasked with conducting investigations of cases reported into CEDRS within 12 hours of reporting, and contact interviews for each contact identified within 24 hours following the case investigation
  - A CICM database has been developed by Larimer County IT to allow us to assign cases, collect notes, trace contacts to cases, and report interview information that can easily be uploaded into CEDRS
- Outbreak Task Force: tasked with following up with each business, long term care facility, or organization after a case has been associated with one of their facilities to discuss current protocols in place, and work with the facility to provide guidance through the outbreak protocols and provide technical expertise once a business has met outbreak criteria (defined as 2 or more

cases)

- Testing Task Force: tasked with operating the community-wide testing site run by LCDHE, notifying all community members of negative results, and working with community partners to identify other testing strategies. The team has developed a Strategic Testing Roadmap to outline long term testing efforts for Larimer County
- Compliance Task Force: tasked with providing outreach and education to businesses in Larimer County to ensure understanding and compliance of current guidance and orders, as well as conducting enforcement activities, such as issuance of Notices of Violations and Closures, when compliance is not being achieved

Larimer County communications efforts, including providing a means in which the public can provide feedback and ask questions, are primarily conducted through a Joint Information Center which is staffed Monday-Friday. LCDHE provides continuous outreach to businesses, schools, long term care facilities, hospital systems, and other organizations to provide situational awareness and guidance.

Larimer County Department of Health and Environment also requires plan submissions and conducts plan reviews for any public gatherings over 10 attendees, indoor and outdoor events, personal services operations, malls, day camps, residential camps, and graduations to ensure they meet guidance and requirements approved by the State.

Describe in detail the overall community goals for COVID-19, and any and all response efforts that have been implemented to date.

Disease Trends

Describe in detail the current disease trends the county is facing.

Larimer County has seen an increase in cases since the end of June with the average age of cases now below 30. Many of the more recent cases over the last week have been associated with large gatherings occurring on the Fourth of July weekend. The positivity rate of testing remains around 3.6% which is where it has remained over the past month. Despite the increase in the number of cases, an increase in hospital utilization within Larimer County has not been observed. Specifically, the number of COVID patients admitted to the hospital has remained between 5-15 per day. With the increase in cases, we have seen a rise in facilities meeting outbreak criteria within the community. Many employees have reported to have close contact interactions with other staff outside of work. The demographic data below is used to determine the best means of outreach and planning for our community.

CUMULATIVE CASES PER 100,000 RESIDENTS
(As of July 16, 2020)

WHITE	162

HISPANIC (ALL RACES)	**603**
UNKNOWN	**N/A**
OTHER/MULTIPLE	**185**
BLACK	**198**
ASIAN	**68**
AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKAN NATIVE	**304**
NATIVE HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	**689***
OVERALL	**308**

*the Native Hawaiian rate is based of two cases in the county and makes up a very small portion of our population

Mitigation Steps

Mitigation steps should define the individual components of the LPHAs mitigation strategy, including but not limited to community partnerships, increased isolation and quarantine capacities, and communication plans. Each step should include as much detail as possible regarding process and actions, relevant stakeholders, and applicable timeframes.

LCDHE has implemented the following steps to ensure alignment with the LPHA's mitigation strategy as outlined above, and to work toward continued sustained suppression of COVID-19 in Larimer County:

1. Larimer County Department of Health and Environment Full-Time COVID Response Team
    - A staffing plan has been developed based on the current structure for the LCDHE COVID response funded by COVID grants.
    - Team consists of 31 staff members to conduct case investigations and contact tracing, outbreak investigation, testing operations, compliance/outreach, and data analysis to supplement staff already dedicated to this response.
    - The jobs are currently being posted and contact tracers have already been hired to fill the case investigation and contact tracing needs. These roles will be filled until COVID operations are no longer needed or funding no longer exists.

2. Utilize Demographic Data to Adjust Plans and Outreach Appropriately
    - The staffing plan for the full time COVID Response Team includes a population epidemiologist to continuously analyze the data
    - LCDHE has hired bilingual contact tracers and is in the process of hiring a LatinX Outreach Specialist based on the demographic data above
    - Collaborate with our three school districts language, culture and equity coordinators with an objective to provide cultural awareness and trust among the Latinx and Native American communities.
    - The COVID response plan and outreach strategies will continue to be modified based on the changing demographics

3. Increase Disease Investigation, Contact Tracing, and Isolation/Quarantine Monitoring and Support
    - Larimer County IT has developed a system, using the Salesforce platform, that integrates CICM, outbreak and testing efforts for the entire county into one system. This system allows us to collect data and report information through one system.
    - The CICM Task Force is able to assign cases to team members for investigation and will collect information of close contacts and tie them to the cases in this system
    - The Outbreak Task Force is able to identify employers associated with each case and report information from the employer into this system
    - The Testing Task Force will begin utilizing this system to register individuals who are to be tested through the community testing site run by LCDHE and to notify registered individuals of their results automatically
    - This tool has been used by our CICM Task Force since the beginning of June and continues to be modified to support the needs of the COVID response efforts

4. Increase Community-Wide Testing
    - Utilizing the Salesforce tool, a new registration and notification system is being developed to support the community testing site operation which will automate the registration and notification process.
    - The Testing Task Force will be able to spend less time registering individuals and notifying them of their results manually which should allow more time to expand our hours of operation at the testing site.
    - LCDHE is currently partnering with Colorado State University (CSU) and the City of Fort Collins on wastewater micro-surveillance testing to help understand the spread of the virus in the community. We anticipate the new technology will assist in early detection of active virus spread and ultimately in assessing the prevalence of the infection in Larimer county. The wastewater micro-surveillance is part of our Strategic Testing Roadmap which includes ongoing active RT-PCR by LCDHE and ongoing testing by our partners at UC Health and Banner.
    - Communication has focused on the availability of testing and the amount of people getting tested has dramatically increased in the last few weeks. In addition, any case contact is encouraged to go get tested, and this continues to return positive results as asymptomatic individuals get tested. LCDHE will continue to encourage testing in the community, but will need to balance that with the fear that rising case counts will impact the economy.
    - Additionally, testing sites are currently set up at UCHealth Harmony Campus, Banner Health Fort Collins Medical Center, Estes Park Health, Salud Family Clinic in West Fort Collins, and Salud Family Clinic in Estes Park.
        i. UCHealth also plans to open another testing site at the Medical Center of the Rockies campus in Loveland.

5. Community Partnerships
    - Larimer County Department of Health and Environment has developed and maintained strong community partnerships with the hospital systems, long term care facilities, emergency managers, municipalities, colleges/universities, schools, and businesses throughout this response
    - LCDHE has hosted a number of routine calls with different partners to include:
        i. Incident briefings with the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management twice per week, with the ability to conduct more if the need arises;
        ii. Weekly COVID update calls with Larimer County elected officials;

iii. Weekly Business Q&A sessions with business owners and operators;
iv. Weekly economic development calls with workforce development groups within our municipalities;
v. Weekly COVID update and planning meetings with Larimer County school districts; and
vi. Biweekly COVID update calls with the NOCO Healthcare Coalition comprised of hospitals, long term care facilities, emergency managers, schools/universities, and other ambulatory service providers throughout Larimer and Weld Counties.

- LCDHE continues the development of a response Situation Report in collaboration with planning support from Larimer OEM that is issued every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week. This report is issued to all emergency response partners and the CDHSEM (via WebEOC) to provide continual updates, show trends, and provide situational awareness for partners.
- LCDHE has been working with CSU and the City of Loveland to provide an accessible location for the community testing operations to occur three times a week.
- LCDHE has partnered with CSU on case investigations and contact tracing tied to students, faculty, or staff of CSU, and has integrated CSU into the system developed by Larimer County IT.
- Larimer County has worked extremely closely with the local hospital systems to monitor hospital and PPE utilization.
- The business community has taken COVID-19 seriously, and the enforcement of our local face covering order relies heavily on businesses to enforce. As residents and businesses have relaxed enforcement of face covering orders, LCDHE and the county have pulled municipalities together to develop a regional communication approach to remind the community of the restrictions in place and support businesses in enforcement. Additionally, this communication works to ensure that both businesses and the general community understands the risk to our variance if our early warning indicators continue to be met.
- LCDHE, the county economic and workforce development team, economic and small business chambers of local municipalities, as well as communications representatives from across the county continue to meet regularly to discuss strategies for continuing the economy functioning while protecting the community and continuing to remain below our early warning indicators.
- LCDHE has met with the county economic and workforce development team, economic and small business chambers of local municipalities weekly since the variance was approved, but has recently shifted to support the business community in the importance of following restrictions and keeping case counts low. This is reiterated weekly in the business town halls we lead with the business community. Messaging went out beginning July 17 and will continue to go out over the next few weeks. Business support packages are being developed to help stress the importance of keeping cases low. A new face covering campaign for the whole county will roll out in the next week to stress the order and remind people to take restrictions seriously.

6. Increase Enforcement Efforts
- LCDHE is expanding its Compliance Task Force to provide more field staff for increased site visits following complaints. Enforcement around non-compliance businesses are being communicated to through Notices of Violations and closed where there is a risk to the public.

- The focus of the Compliance Task Force is to enforce social distancing, wearing of face coverings and no large gatherings unless approved by LCDHE.
- LCDHE has reached out to all municipalities, law enforcement, and Code Compliance teams to assist in enforcement efforts around face coverings and public health order compliance. LCDHE will continue to work with them to expand enforcement in the community.

Timeline

This section should include a comprehensive list of dates and corresponding actions that demonstrate a clear timeline for mitigation, including future dates and actions. Please include as much detail as possible.

Example:

Date	*Reported relevant metrics to CDPHE*
Date	*July 15, 2020 met with business community about supports needed for enforcement* *July 17, 2020 met with law enforcement partners about education and enforcement.*
Date	*July 20, 2020 - submission of mitigation plan to CDPHE*
Date(s)	*August 3, 2020 (Two weeks from submission)*

Guide for Mitigation Process

Variance update - what Larimer County Variances will be kept or not maintained