

Public health orders will be enforced

Written by gallupsun
Thursday, 09 April 2020 12:00

The New Mexico Emergency Public Health Order now has teeth. On April 6, New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham extended the order to April 30. This means all non-essential businesses are required to stop operating. New Mexico State Police, in conjunction with local law enforcement, will ensure that businesses adhere to the directive.

New Mexico State Police is in the position to hold businesses and people accountable. In the event businesses are not compliant, officers will first issue a written warning along with a cease-and-desist order.



On a second violation the business will receive a citation under the Public Health Act (contrary to NMSA 24-1-1 a petty misdemeanor).

A third or subsequent violation will be sent to the Department of Health where the business will face a civil penalty of up to \$5000.00.

The public health order also states that mass gatherings of more than five individuals are prohibited at this time.

New Mexico State Police has been educating non-compliant establishments and has given them a reasonable opportunity to adapt. NMSP reports having seen many businesses and people voluntarily comply with the order. However, compliance is not universal.

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If you wish to report non-compliance within a business, a violation of the mass gatherings ban, or other violations of the public order, you may report them to NMSP.COVID19@state.nm.us or contact our non-emergency COVID-19 hotline at (833) 551-0518, Option 9 or contact your police or sheriff's department on their non-emergency phone lines. When submitting a non-compliance complaint via email, please provide the following: date and time of observed violation, city, county, business name and business address.

"We have enormous sympathy and empathy for our small business community and everyone across the state who is dealing with this pandemic, but we must all understand that the sooner we strictly adhere to the Public Health Order, the sooner we'll all get through this, and the better off our state will be as far as preventing illnesses and death," NMSP Chief Tim Johnson said. "Citizens must understand that we are getting many complaints about non-compliance. It's putting our officers, law enforcement all across the state and the public in jeopardy - and it risks increasing the already significant strain on our health care professionals."