

## Gov. Lujan Grisham updates public health order focused on combating gun violence

Written by gallupsun

Saturday, 16 September 2023 16:51

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Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham issued an updated public health order on Sept. 15 outlining additional measures to combat gun violence in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. The governor made the announcement in Albuquerque alongside state legislative leadership and public safety officials.

“I’m going to continue pushing to make sure that all of us are using every resource available to put an end to this public health emergency with the urgency it deserves,” Lujan Grisham said. “I will not accept the status quo – enough is enough.”

Provisions in the updated public health order issued Sept. 15 include:

- Removing the previous provision around firearms and replacing it with a provision that temporarily suspends the carrying of firearms at parks and playgrounds in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County.
- Directing the New Mexico Department of Corrections and the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to provide assistance to the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center and its contractors to ensure adequate staffing, space, and screening for arrested and incarcerated individuals; provided that nothing in this provision shall be construed to limit the authority and responsibility of Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center in managing its operations.
- Directing all participating New Mexico Managed Care Organizations to immediately ensure that individuals who need drug or alcohol treatment have received a permanent, adequate treatment placement within 24 hours of the request.
- Directing the New Mexico Human Services Department to send relevant Managed Care Organizations letters of direction requiring them to provide their plans to achieve continual behavioral health network adequacy.

This updated order clarifies that the limitation of the open/concealed carrying of guns does not apply to parklands managed by the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department or State Land Office.

House Speaker Javier Martínez showed his support for the public health order.

“My wife and I are raising our two young children in Albuquerque. I want them - and all New Mexicans - to not only feel safe in our communities, but also feel proud of this place we call home,” Martínez said. “Our commitment to these issues is deep and it is personal. We will not

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let the politics of the day, or anything else, distract us from working together - city, county, and state leaders and law enforcement - to move forward real solutions that make our communities safer.”

Senate Pro Term Mimi Stewart stated that multiple things need to change within the state to fix the gun violence issue.

“To address the gun violence crisis, we need to be looking at a multitude of issues: stopping illicit drug use, reducing illegal and all-too-easy accessibility of guns, violence prevention and intervention programs. We must stay focused on our continued work on expanding treatment services and our behavioral health support network,” Stewart said. “The changes to the health order today will make a positive difference. I’m committed to working with the governor, my colleagues in the legislature, and this incredible team the governor has put together to make our state safe.”

As part of the effort to stem violent crime in New Mexico, Gov. Lujan Grisham has named Ben Baker to the governor’s staff as a Senior Public Safety Advisor. Baker has been the Deputy Cabinet Secretary and Interim Law Enforcement Academy Director at the Department of Public Safety since 2021, and has worked in law enforcement since 1997.

“This is an opportunity for all New Mexico public safety professionals from all disciplines – police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole personnel, corrections, emergency services and dispatchers – to unite under the shared goal of making our state a safer place to live,” Baker said. “I am grateful to the governor for trusting me with this critical responsibility.”

