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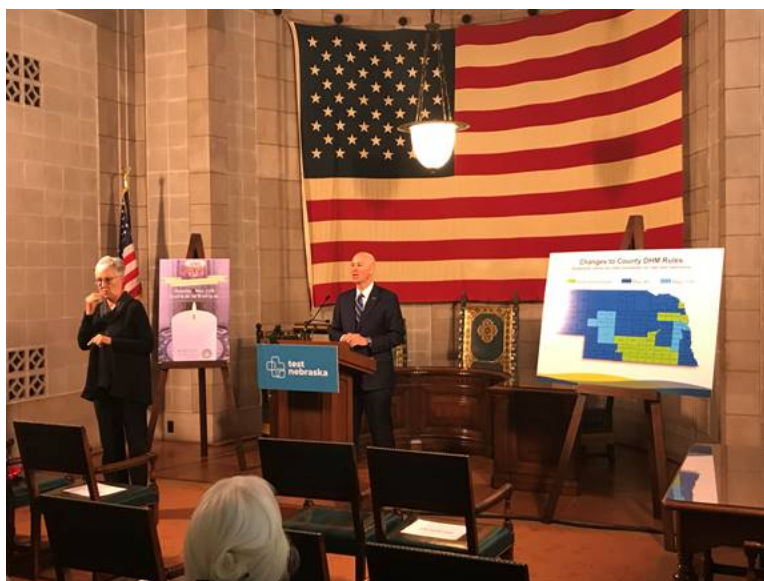
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Media Release:

Gov. Ricketts Reviews Regional Directed Health Measures, Unveils Mother-Friendly Initiatives for State Teammates

*Gov. Ricketts speaks at today's press briefing.**Video from today's briefing is available by clicking here (https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?**url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dropbox.com%2Fs%2Fqn5dh8id198pv7e%2FPress%2520Conf%25205.08.20.mp4%3Fd1%3D0&data=02%7C01%7Ccio.webmst*

LINCOLN – Today, Governor Pete Ricketts highlighted four regional directed health measures that will go into effect next week. Three had been previously announced. The fourth is for Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department (ELVPHD) and will relax some restrictions in that region on May 13, 2020.

In advance of Mothers Day weekend, the Governor also unveiled new mother-friendly policies that the State is implementing for its teammates. Additionally, Gov. Ricketts announced the State's plans to host a virtual Memorial Day observance from the State Capitol.

Jason Jackson, Chief Human Resources Officer for the State of Nebraska, joined the Governor to overview the new mother-friendly initiatives for State teammates. Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs (NDVA) Director John Hilgert also participated in the press event. He previewed the upcoming virtual Memorial Day observance and also announced NDVA's new virtual service office available at veterans.nebraska.gov (<http://veterans.nebraska.gov/>).

Gov. Ricketts: New Directed Health Measures (DHMs) Taking Effect

- As previously announced, new DHMs are taking effect in the following regions on Monday, May 11th.
 - Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Dept. (click here (<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dropbox.com%2Fs%2Fnsxjwuw6j3tgnl%2F2020.04.30%2520DH002.pdf%3Fdl%3D0&data=02%7C01%7Ccio.webmstr%40nebraska.gov%7C6c570a1edf664950DHM>))
 - West Central District Health Dept. (click here (<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dropbox.com%2Fs%2Fu6qwxgeum9zkhp1%2F2020.04.30%2520DH002.pdf%3Fdl%3D0&data=02%7C01%7Ccio.webmstr%40nebraska.gov%7C6c570a1edf664950DHM>))
 - Three Rivers Public Health Dept. (click here (<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dropbox.com%2Fs%2Fgff2j9ugesjcxl%2F2020.04.30%2520DH002.pdf%3Fdl%3D0&data=02%7C01%7Ccio.webmstr%40nebraska.gov%7C6c570a1edf664950DHM>))
- Each of these districts will move to a less restrictive DHM on May 11th.
- Additionally, the Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department (ELVPHD), in consultation with the State, will move to a less restrictive DHM on Wednesday, May 13th.
 - The new DHM for ELVPHD will be released next week and applies to Burt, Cuming, Madison, and Stanton counties.
- These less restrictive DHMs:
 - Allow for the limited reopening of dine-in services at restaurants and of salons, barber shops, tattoo parlors, and massage therapy services.
 - Increase the per room/space childcare limits from 10 to 15 kids (subject to the usual child-to-staff ratios).

“Most of our mass testing results have come in, and I feel comfortable with beginning the process of relaxing the Directed Health Measures in this district sooner than the original May 31st deadline,” said ELVPHD Health Director Gina Uhing. “Thank you to everyone for their contributions in helping to flatten the curve in Burt, Cuming, Stanton and Madison Counties. I ask the public to be prudent as the measures become relaxed, as we all want to continue making forward progress on the road to recovery in this area.”

“This is a reasonable first step in getting back to business,” said Norfolk Mayor Josh Moenning. “Area residents have done very well in the work of slowing the spread and mitigating the impacts of outbreak. I’m confident we’ll continue to do so, as it’s all the more important that we retain a sense of vigilance about protecting our health and the health of our neighbors.”

Gov. Ricketts: Test Nebraska

- We continue to encourage people to take the TestNebraska.com (<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftestnebraska.com%2F&data=02%7C01%7Ccio.webmstr%40nebraska.gov%7C>)
- Test Nebraska completed 465 tests yesterday in Grand Island and Omaha (combined).
 - So far, 968 test results have been received and 30 people have tested positive.
 - A mobile testing site also started in Lincoln today.
- We are adding a mobile testing site in Schuyler for Monday and Tuesday of next week.
 - Testing in Grand Island, Lincoln, and Omaha will continue next week as well.
 - More mobile testing sites will be announced in the near future.

Gov. Ricketts: Mothers Initiatives

- As we look forward to celebrating Mother’s Day this weekend, we want to announce some mom-friendly initiatives in Nebraska state government.
- Our team with the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services has been working to implement four different initiatives:
 - Mothers’ rooms for nursing mothers.
 - Enhanced maternity benefits.
 - Priority parking for expectant mothers.
 - Our new Workplace for Families Pilot Program.

Gov. Ricketts: Virtual Memorial Day Observance

- Memorial Day is Monday, May 25th, which falls inside the timeframe of our current Directed Health Measures.
- This will prevent communities throughout the state from holding the traditional Memorial Day activities they host each year.
- We want to provide a special Memorial Day observance that anyone in the state can participate in, while still following our directed health measures and practicing social distancing.
- Our Nebraska Department of Veterans’ Affairs is working with NET to broadcast a live stream from the Rotunda in the State Capitol on Memorial Day.
- We encourage folks to participate in this virtual Memorial Day Observance in lieu of traditional activities.

Director Hilgert: Virtual Memorial Day Observance

- At 8:00 AM on Memorial Day, we’ll kick off our virtual observance in the center of the Capitol Rotunda.

- We'll light a candle at that time, and the flame will continue until 8:00 PM in the evening.
- Guard sentinels will be in place throughout the day, serving in 30-minute shifts.
- On a first come, first serve basis, veterans groups from across Nebraska can sign up to send two members from their post to stand guard over the flame.
 - Groups can learn about the event and sign up to participate by clicking here (<https://veterans.nebraska.gov/memorialday>).
- This broadens our participation statewide, while staying within the 10-person social gathering limitation.
- The virtual online observance makes it possible for anyone to tune in and reflect on the sacrifices of our fallen service members.
- We're also excited to announce our virtual veterans service office.
- On March 23, 2020 our physical service office had to close its doors due to the pandemic.
- Through our virtual office, available at veterans.nebraska.gov (<https://veterans.nebraska.gov/>), you can chat—in realtime—with a fully accredited state service officer.
- You can coordinate with this service officer to upload all of your data, to apply for veterans benefits, and to check the status of benefits.
- We're going to have the chat available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm to serve working veterans.

Director Jackson: Mothers Initiatives

- Over the past few years, the Governor's administration has worked to make the State a family-friendly employer, and specifically a premier workplace for moms.
- To achieve this goal, we have implemented, or are in the process of implementing, four initiatives:
 - We are providing mothers' rooms that will be exclusively dedicated to nursing mothers
 - With women making up 54% of the State's workforce, and with the unique challenges they face in balancing career and childbirth, we want to make their work experience as easy as possible post-childbirth
 - At a minimum, each mothers' room will consist of a private space that is shielded from view, free from intrusion by others, and include a chair and flat surface.
 - Our policy will be that all state buildings managed by DAS will have mothers' room accommodations for nursing mothers, including commercially leased space, starting July 1, 2020
 - We have bolstered our maternity benefits by cutting the cost for maternity and childbirth health care by 75%.
 - Effective July 1, 2020, for teammates choosing the In-Network WellNebraska Health Plan with Wellness Incentive, the out of pocket maximum is \$500 for the birth of a child.
 - More information on this can be found on our website at <http://das.nebraska.gov/Benefits/Active-HRIG.html> (<http://das.nebraska.gov/Benefits/Active-HRIG.html>).
 - One of our more recent initiatives involves providing teammates who are expectant mothers with priority parking.
 - Expectant mothers may request a Special Use Placard good for one year to be displayed in their vehicle.

- Our final initiative is Workplace for Families, which is being piloted by the Department of Administrative Services.
 - This program will allow new mothers, fathers, or legal guardians the ability to bring their children into the workplace (provided those children fall within the two categories below).
 - Infant: A child who is between the ages of six weeks to six months old (or mobile, whichever comes first) and whose parent is a full-time or part-time permanent teammate.
 - Child: A child who is under 19 years old, does not require supervision, and whose parent is a full-time or part-time permanent teammate.
 - Research demonstrates that allowing a parent and infant to remain together in their earliest stage of life supports critical bonding, healthy infant brain development, and parental wellbeing.
 - This will also allow for mothers to return to the workplace sooner so they can continue their careers in public service.
 - This program also will encourage managers to work with new parents on flexible work styles and telecommuting arrangements to help meet their family needs.
 - At the appropriate time, we plan to expand this pilot to other agencies. We will weigh when that time may be as we continue to practice social distancing.
- These four initiatives will help Nebraska become a national leader in family-friendly practices.

Full video of today's press briefing is available by clicking here

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