

Kansas Reopening and Resuming Non-COVID-19 Health Care



Background

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Kansas health care providers ceased elective and non-emergent procedures to ensure that hospitals could prioritize COVID-19 efforts and provide safe, timely patient care. Quick actions by Governor Laura Kelly to implement social distancing and close non-essential businesses, coupled with Kansans' active role in following guidance and the diligent work by Kansas health care providers, have resulted in flattening the curve. As we move into a new phase of health care delivery, KHA members remain fully committed to protecting the health and safety of their patients and employees, while continuing to educate the public on measures to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Guidance

Reopen Kansas Framework - On May 4, 2020, Governor Laura Kelly will lift the statewide "Safer at Home" order and allow Kansas communities to begin a phased-in reopening by issuing a [statewide executive order \(EO 20-29\)](#) to begin Phase One of the "Ad Astra: A Plan to Reopen Kansas". [Please refer to this guidance](#). Gov. Kelly also extended some additional executive orders that were set to expire, please refer to [EO 20-28](#). The Governor strongly encouraged individuals who may have postponed receiving primary care or who require specialty medical and surgical services not related to COVID-19 to seek necessary care while following safety guidelines issued by each respective medical facility or provider.

Work Locally - Kansas will set the regulatory baseline for its counties in each phase of the Plan to Reopen Kansas Framework, allowing counties to modify the plan or impose additional restrictions in the best interest of the health of their respective residents, consistent with the decentralized public health system outlined in Kansas law. For example, if a county determines it is appropriate to impose a local "stay-at-home" order beyond May 4 or impose additional restrictions not outlined in the EO, they are permitted to do so under certain conditions. Hospitals are encouraged to work with their local public health department and county.

External Communications - Hospitals can and should continue to play an important role in educating Kansans. Remember, the COVID-19 pandemic continues, so throughout all phases of reopening the state, Kansans should maintain social distancing, practice good hygiene, remain home when sick, follow isolation and quarantine orders issued by state or local health officials, use cloth face masks when leaving their homes, and continue to clean and disinfect surfaces. These are basic public health guidelines that will help slow the spread of COVID-19 as we slowly re-open Kansas.

Talking Points (for member use)

- Even though the COVID-19 pandemic continues, members of our community should not be afraid to seek the care they need, when they need it.

- Ensuring maximum patient safety remains our hospital's highest priority.
- The highest ethical thinking has guided our decision to resume elective procedures, preventive care and other treatments patients need to get back to healthier living.
- Chronic illnesses and urgent or emergency conditions require timely care to avoid a high risk for complications later. Your health is our priority, so please schedule your health appointments.
- Do not delay emergency care during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially if you experience abdominal pain, chest pain, confusion, difficulty breathing, persistent vomiting or severe injuries.
- Patients should not be concerned about overwhelming medical providers or overburdening the health care system, as hospitals are prepared and ready to manage all types of patient care.
- Our hospital cares deeply about the health and well-being of the community and we do not want the public to put off needed health care services.
- We are equipped to safely protect patients from potential exposure to COVID-19 while taking care of other health concerns (such as their chest pain, stroke symptoms, traumatic injuries, emotional and mental health and any other acute medical or surgical needs).
- We will continue to use telehealth and telemedicine to deliver care when appropriate.
- Our hospital remains committed to maintaining social distancing, particularly for patient scheduling, positioning and movement within and around the hospital. Separate intake and care areas, staff screening, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and extensive safety and sanitization protocols are in place. *[Cite hospital-specific guidelines.]*
- In the event that we experience a COVID-19 resurgence, our hospital is continuing preparations to ensure appropriate staffing, equipment and patient care readiness.
- Our hospital – together with the KHA, public health departments and others – is continuously monitoring guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as collaborating with federal, state and local partners, so we can adjust safety practices and update contingency plans accordingly.
- Kansans should maintain social distancing, practicing good hygiene, remain home when sick, follow isolation and quarantine orders issued by state or local health officers, use cloth face masks when leaving their homes, continue to clean and disinfect surfaces to continue to slow the spread of the virus in our Kansas communities.
- We want to express our gratitude to Kansans for working together to make it possible to reopen Kansas and resume regular patient care.
- It takes everyone doing his or her part to stop the spread of COVID-19.

May 1, 2020



- We are all in this together!

May 1, 2020

