

EDGAR COUNTY BOARD STATEMENT
Adopted May 26, 2020

The Board appreciates the significant impact of the COVID19 crisis on Edgar County businesses, some of whom have remained closed throughout this entire health crisis. Those business owners who made public comments at our recent meeting raised a number of important concerns and we are working to address all of the various issues. As neighboring areas begin to take steps to return to normal levels of commerce, our community must continue to act responsibly and keep one another safe. We have done a tremendous job so far and the proof can be found in the fact that Edgar County still has zero COVID19 positive cases.

Although some Illinois counties have proposed their own calendars and plans for “reopening”, our Board will not be issuing any such plan. After assessing all of the relevant metrics and standards, the Board has instead written to Governor Pritzker stating that Edgar County meets all of the requirements for the Governor’s Phase 4 as set forth in his Executive Orders. Despite sending a request for a response, none has been received. The lack of a response is disappointing, but does not alter our assessment of our County’s position.

This is an evolving situation and there are a number of pending legislative and judicial actions involving the COVID19 situation which may not be resolved in the near future, all of which creates a challenging environment for small businesses in particular. Therefore, the Board urges all business owners to educate themselves regarding best practices for your type of business as you adapt to the new circumstances, start to reopen or increase operations. Basic concepts like social distancing, sanitizing, employee hygiene, appropriate use of PPE and monitoring employee health are going to be a standard part of doing business in our community until this health crisis is resolved on a more widespread basis.

The following resources may be instructive:

<https://www.ecphd.org>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>

<https://ilchamber.org/communications/covid-19/>

These resources should place every business owner in a better position to assess his/her own situation, using these resources prepare and plan to act appropriately. Your elected officials and the local agency staff members are here to provide support and answer questions so that you can keep yourselves, your patrons and our entire community safe. Please consider them your allies in the process of reopening amidst the improving health situation in Illinois.

Any business that demonstrates a blatant disregard for community safety standards and endangers the health of either employees or patrons will be the subject of appropriate sanctions and enforcement actions.

One final note: We realize there are many businesses located just across the state line that are open and operating under somewhat different standards. However, we urge our citizens to support local businesses here in Edgar County whenever possible, even if that requires some patience as each business positions itself to operate safely. Our goal is a healthy Edgar County with a solid economic future and we look forward to even better days ahead for our community.