



Office of Governor Christopher T. Sununu
Press Conference
Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Governor Sununu:

Well, good afternoon. Good to see everyone. Afternoon, David, how are you? I think what we will do, just to kick things off, we have a few things to talk about. Then, we're going to open up for questions. And then, we're going to have Commissioner Shibinette kick things off with a little bit of a presentation on some of our latest statistics. Commissioner?

Commissioner Shibinette:

Good afternoon. So, today we will start with just a brief Public Health update. Today we are announcing 35 new positive cases in New Hampshire, for a total of 7,194 total cases. No new hospitalizations today, so we're still at the total of 713. And one new death to report associated with a long-term care facility.

As an outbreak update, we do not have any new outbreaks to report. We don't have any closing. And there's really no update on our current outbreaks. But I did want to update everybody on a couple of the new just updated slides. These are data points that I've reported on several times before. And I think it's prudent to come and update them every month, or every couple of weeks, just to give you up-to-date totals.

So, the first chart that you see is the long-term care facility. That's as a percentage of our licensed beds in our State as compared to our neighboring States around us. You will see the low in Maine at 0.9%, and then New Hampshire at 2.5%. And then, higher numbers in the other States: 3.9% in New York; 8.3% Connecticut; 9.7% in Mass.; and 14.2% in Rhode Island.

The next slide that we've reported on before is the percentage of long-term care facilities with positive cases. New Hampshire is trending right around the regional average at 44% of our facilities having cases.

And then, the last slide is something new that I thought I would put up here, which is the community deaths in New Hampshire as per 100,000 of our population. And as we've talked about many times in New Hampshire with the fatalities that we're seeing, the majority obviously in long-term care facilities, but I think this graph really does a good job of showing how few community deaths that we are having. So, Maine being the lowest again with 3.6 deaths per 100,000 of their population, followed by New Hampshire at 6, and then an upward trend from that at 33.5 in Connecticut; 46.7 in Massachusetts, 20.3 in Rhode Island; and 134.9 in New York.

So in that vein, I want to continue to talk about long-term care a little bit. Two weeks ago we came here with our reopening guidelines around visitation and moving our facilities phase-through-phase. And back two weeks ago, we had put all of our non-outbreak facilities into Phase 2 to allow for visitations. And we said we were going to revisit that.

And moving from phase-to-phase is really based on our prevalence of COVID within our counties. And you will see here on the graphs that there are three counties that have met the criteria, as of today, to move into Phase 3. Those counties being Belknap County, Coos County, and Grafton County. When you look at their active cases, under 10 per 100,000, and that's our threshold right now for moving into Phase 3, after you spend two successful weeks in Phase 2.

So this is a great accomplishment to be at this rate. And if you'll notice, Coos County has zero, which is really great to see, a full county that has no active cases of COVID. So, starting today, Belknap, Coos, and Grafton County can move into Phase 3. And what this really means is the lifting of restrictions around visitors, so having up to two visitors, and then also lessening the restrictions around communal dining and activities. And I think that is all I have today. Thank you.

Governor Sununu:

Great; well, good stuff. Thank you so much, Commissioner. We always tend to be very data-driven here. So, again, we just try to be very transparent about what we have and, again, I think it's so important to keep folks updated.

We also want to just very much encourage folks to visit our new dashboard, which is up-and-running on the COVID site, which is great, just a whole plethora of information. I'm thinking my 9th Grade English Teacher will love the fact I just used the word "plethora". But there is a plethora of wonderful information and analytics to look at and data to look at on that website, at a very microcosm level, which is very powerful, very powerful tool.

Three quick issues to also talk about, then we will open up for questions, this morning Officials from the Department of Justice and the Department of Business and Economic Affairs, along with the New Hampshire Legislators from both Parties did testify on behalf of the State of New Hampshire at the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's public hearing on the rule change they put forward that would permanently allow the State of Massachusetts to effectively pick the pockets, frankly, of our citizens who are working remotely during the COVID pandemic, and subject them to a Massachusetts income tax, even though they are working out of New Hampshire.

The State also submitted written testimony to further implore the State of Massachusetts to cease collecting that income tax on our citizens. We made a public request last week at our press conferences. And just so glad to see 140 New Hampshire residents did respond to our call to action and submit comments and testimony opposing that rule.

So we repeatedly said it is not an accident that New Hampshire is income-tax free. Frankly, it's hard work. We fought very hard for it. All the citizens in the State have fought very hard for it and will continue to fight for it each and every day. And this is something that, again, we just want to make sure that we're continuing the fight to make sure that our citizens are being treated fairly.

Regardless of outcome of the hearing, as we've said, if they were to continue to try to impose this, there are legal remedies at the opportunity of the Department of Justice here in New Hampshire to, again, go down the right road and hopefully find other legal avenues, if possible, to ensure that Massachusetts has to do right by our citizens.

A little bit on community testing, this week Commissioner Shibinette did present an important initiative to the Legislative Advisory Board that met. And we plan to move forward on this right away. I think Commissioner Shibinette did a great job.

The State will be purchasing 25 rapid COVID test machines to be placed at each of our community testing centers. The machines are called Quidel Sofia Antigen Rapid COVID test machines, and it will allow for community access to rapid antigen testing for students, Teachers, and the general community. And the vast majority of these centers are located in our local community hospital or hospital affiliated medical practices. They'll provide a direct link to the healthcare system ensuring that seamless transition from test results to patient care.

We've already started looking into buying these machines. So we're going to secure them as fast and as soon as we can, and get them into place. Depending on the backlog, it may be weeks or maybe even a month-or-so before these devices might be up-and-running. But we've already started that process and we're going to push as hard as we can to get these 25 devices into our communities, and I think speed up the process and the turnaround time for testing. It's all part of our mission and our goal to be more self-sufficient for the testing results that we know we need to see.

Quick note on two of our grant programs that the application deadline is coming up, and so we always want to make sure folks are being cognizant around farms. I was out visiting Apple Hill Farm here in Concord earlier this week, which is a beautiful farm, by the way. Chuck and Diane Souther do an amazing job over there and I highly recommend it. We were celebrating Apple Day. It's kind of the first apples of the harvest, as we go into the fall season.

But it was a real reminder. The application for our expanded farm program under the New Hampshire Agriculture COVID-19 Relief Fund, it does close this coming Monday, August 31st. And this fund was expanded to provide relief from farms that bring in typically less than \$50,000 in gross sales in 2019, or maybe they had missed the registration deadline for the earlier agriculture fund. So the deadline is there until Monday for a lot of these smaller farms to be able to apply and receive some relief for those who have been negatively impacted economically for the COVID-19 pandemic. The first round was very, very successful. And we suspect we will continue with that success as we move forward. But that is on Monday, August 31st, that deadline.

Another application period that's ending soon relates to our cities and towns. And so, very early on in the pandemic, we announced \$32 million for cities, towns, and counties to help with COVID-related expenses. These funds were just there to allow towns to cover whatever costs that might be needed under COVID.

The State is still waiting for Reimbursement Requests from about 47 different towns across the State, haven't even applied for any of those funds. So those municipalities do have until September 15th, which is a couple weeks away, to submit their reimbursement for COVID-related expenses. It's critical that you get it in by the September 15th deadline.

And sometimes there's a little extra paperwork that might come as part of the town process. So we just want to really encourage folks to be on top of the ball and ahead of the game. While there is a couple weeks left to submit, it can take a little time to make sure you have everything you need for that application process.

And anyone can now see which municipalities have not submitted their reimbursements by going to [GOFERR\NH.GOV\MUNICIPAL](https://goferr.nh.gov/municipal) [sic]. So goferr.nh.gov/municipal, and you can see what towns have applied and where a lot of those dollars are, all part of our transparency process here with the CARES Act funds. And again, municipalities still interested in submitting those reimbursements can apply at goferr.nh.gov/apply. That's where a lot of our funds are located, goferr.nh.gov/apply. With that, we can open it up for questions.

Q&A Session

Governor, how much do those rapid testing machines cost, the 25?

Governor Sununu:

I don't know. Do you know how much they cost, Commissioner? Oh, yeah, what's that? \$2,000 each. Yeah.

Why just 25 if it's \$2,000 each? You've got a lot of CARES funds. You could effectively do more and get more rapid testing. I guess why 25?

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, good question.

Commissioner Shibinette:

So we asked that very question: how many can we get? And really it's about supply and demand. When we reached out to the Manufacturer, they said the most that they could get us would be 20 to 25 between October and November. CARES Act dollars need to be used by the end of December. So we felt that 25 was a good number that we could legitimately get them before the end of the year.

The limiting factor with these machines and all of the machines are really around supplies and the test kits. And that's the other factor that we had to weigh, when we were looking at the number of machines. So, most likely for the Sofias, we will be put on a weekly or an every-other-week rotation where we get supplies. And we're hopeful that we're going to get enough supplies that we are going to be able to nicely supply those 25. So it really is about the availability of the equipment and the supplies.

Why this particular brand? What made you choose this one over the others?

Commissioner Shibinette:

So this brand specifically does not require a backup PCR test for a negative test. So what you see in a lot of rapid tests is that, if you get a negative test, you need to do a swab and send it in for a regular PCR. This test does not require that. And that's why we moved towards this model.

What's the turnaround time for these rapid tests?

Commissioner Shibinette:

So this is about 15 minutes.

Commissioner, with regard to active cases, of course, again the numbers aren't large but we're seeing more active cases in Carroll County, in Cheshire County, and certainly in Hillsborough, which was kind of the epicenter for the pandemic at the beginning. Have you identified why that is the case? Is it tourism-related? Is it due to the increase of people in those counties during the summer months?

Commissioner Shibinette:

So I assume that you're talking about the increase in active cases, right, because Hillsborough County has 67 active cases and Cheshire County has 23.

But per 100,000, they're...

Commissioner Shibinette:

Per 100,000 and the increase, so some of the things that can factor into those numbers, so you think about colleges, right, for sure. In a small county, or a low-population county, when you even have six or eight additional tests, that could push that prevalence number up significantly. Small workplace outbreaks or small workplace clusters of illness can certainly push it up, anything like that.

But I think that when you look at some of our college numbers, right, when you look at Cheshire County, for example, you've got Keene State College. You have Franklin Pierce College that are all doing their testing right now. So that certainly can push those active cases up.

Carroll County, not easily identifiable what exactly is going on in that community. But, when you look at a small region like Carroll County and its location, and you can't pinpoint that increase, or that number, back to a college or a nursing home outbreak, or something like that, it makes us pay a little bit more attention to is this just increased community transmission, or is this just an outlier? So we're watching very closely.

While you're still there, can I ask about the South Dakota Department of Health issued public notifications regarding a COVID outbreak at Sturgis in South Dakota. We have apparently six cases so far. Can you tell us a little bit about -- I guess we've got two things going on at the same time. We've got residents that have returned to the State and have tested positive. But we also have perhaps visitors that were at the Sturgis event that are coming to New Hampshire for the rally. How are you guys handling the latter group and...

Commissioner Shibinette:

So if they're outside of New England, they should be quarantining based on our recommendation, right, and that that's what we're asking people to do. And one of the reasons why we did that public notification is to draw attention to the fact that if you have traveled to South Dakota for that Sturgis rally that you should be following Public Health recommendations and quarantining.

The other component to that notification was we don't know how many New Hampshire residents traveled to South Dakota to attend. So we wanted to make sure everybody knew that there is increasing number of cases across the country associated with that motorcycle rally.

And they had five locations that the State notified that there were places in South Dakota. Do you have the list of the locations in South Dakota?

Commissioner Shibinette:

No, when we looked earlier in the week, it was two. And now you're saying it's five. I think that when you have a rally that has almost 500,000 people in it, and people in regular close contact without wearing masks, you can assume that if you have two or three, or four, or five areas, public places where there was known exposures, you can assume that your risk was high if you were at the rally at all.

Commissioner, I know we've been told there's going to be fluctuations, but from 8 to 32 or 35 today, is that representing an increase with college students? And should we...

Commissioner Shibinette:

I think that is a component of it. I think that there are small clusters of illness or increased testing due to colleges and things like that. So that's certainly a component of it. But there are other variations, right? We've routinely said in the middle of the week tends to be kind of our slower time for test reporting. We only reported eight yesterday. We reported 35. We really look at the average over the week, right, because you can't pick one day and just go by the data on that day.

The people who watch closely, though, should they expect to see a slight increase now with college students?

Commissioner Shibinette:

Yeah, on Tuesday I said in the near term that we should expect to see increasing numbers in the demographic of 18 to 25, for sure, as we start seeing colleges coming back. And even pretesting, before people left their home States or their home communities, we saw asymptomatic college students testing positive. So we should expect to see those numbers increase in that demographic group regularly over the next couple of weeks.

On the two-week quarantine, maybe specific to Sturgis or more in general, is there an exemption for essential workers?

Commissioner Shibinette:

Yes, we have made exemptions for essential workers in a variety of industries, right? If you've come back from travel, specifically if it's essential travel, you're traveling for work, or even at times when you've traveled for a vacation, if the employer reaches out to us and we walk them through kind of the essential worker guidelines, that happens. We've done that regularly throughout this pandemic.

Governor, why now on the rapid test machines? Wouldn't these have been helpful to have right away, in terms of back to school?

Governor Sununu:

Sure, they're available now, right? I mean, everything is just becoming much more available: new testing devices, new machines, new assays that go into the testing devices. And these ones, I think, as the Commissioner pointed out, are simply more accurate. They don't require that backup secondary test every time you do a negative.

So I think as the technology becomes more available and easier to get, and there's just more in the pipeline, it just creates an opportunity for us. And we're going after it. And again, we're limited right now to about 25, because that's what we can get.

You also need to train the staff and make sure. It's not like everyone can have one of these in their house, obviously. You want to make sure you train the staff. Make sure it's readily available. And I think the idea of keying them seamlessly into our current healthcare system and testing protocol system is just a great opportunity, especially as the kids are coming back into school.

We've made the orders. We're pushing hard to get them. Might not be until October that we actually get these things, so we will see. I mean, again, we try to set expectations realistic. But it's one of those things where you just want people to know that we, you know, talked to the Legislative Advisory Board. Commissioner Shibinette did a great job looking into the actual devices and the technology to figure out what one to get, because you could go a couple different ways. And I think everyone feels very confident that these -- it's called Quidel Sofias -- are going to be the right solution for us.

So just to clarify, these were not available a month ago, or a few months ago?

Governor Sununu:

I think they came online about six weeks ago, or maybe a couple months ago, possibly. So we started looking at, like we said, a variety of different options. One idea would be to stick with a lot of the Abbott machines that we had, because we're getting a lot more of those cartridges and looking at the accuracy of those, how available those are.

There's another device that has come out that is now in the long-term care facilities. I don't think that's a Quidel Sofia. I think that one's a little bit different, as well. So, the Federal Government made those available to all the long-term care facilities. So we looked at that as a possibility.

Again, just it's easier to have one or two types of devices, instead of too many. But whether it's the accuracy and the speed, and the availability of testing materials, a lot of those are going to be focused on long-term care. So we didn't want to kind of compete with that. This device again had the accuracy, the availability. And it, I think, was timed very well with where we want to go. So, you can rush into a lot of things. But I think we just want to make sure we do it right. And I think everyone agrees this is the right time and the right purchase for us.

Governor, the CDC is now saying that if I come in contact with someone who had COVID, but I'm asymptomatic, I don't have to be tested for COVID. What's your advice for people here in that situation? Should they go get a test, if they came in contact with someone?

Governor Sununu:

I think everyone should go get a test if they think they came in contact with somebody that had COVID, because especially here in New Hampshire we have a lot of access to testing. So if there's any hesitation or any doubt at all, absolutely go get a test. It's readily available. And as we've been discussing, we're trying to make it even more readily available with more rapid devices coming online to get people the immediacy of those results. So, yeah, always get a test if you can, and if you have any questions about your contact. Better safe than sorry, right?

The Open Up Taskforce met today. And D.J. Bettencourt talked about that you're willing to expand the percentage at the attractions from 25% to 35%.

Governor Sununu:

I think it's going to 35%. Yeah.

Okay. Can you explain a little bit of your rationale behind allowing it to go up, and why not go up more than that?

Governor Sununu:

Well, I think, again, this is going from a 25% capacity limitation to a 35% capacity limitation into essentially what we call amusement parks, right? So we use Canobie Lake Park as the example. One thing we have looked at is the data, right? We've had about a month of data under our belt. We're looking at it, trying to see, knowing that a lot of those visitors do come from out-of-state. So we try to do a lot of our contact tracing and just make sure that any cases that may have been there, were there outbreaks? Are there additional risk factors that we didn't anticipate?

And the good news is right now, no, there aren't any major outbreaks to report from those types of venues. So we're going to increase the capacity. A lot of our decisions are still based on what we think is practically reasonable in terms of maintaining social distancing.

Again, I don't mean to just pick out one individual location. But as an example, I've been to Canobie Lake Park. I think they did a tremendous job. All the staff was right there making sure people wore their mask, maintained the social distancing. They want it to be a success.

And so, knowing that we have, I think, very good partners in that industry across the board, up and down the State, we haven't seen any significant outbreaks, increasing this capacity limitation from 25% to 35% seemed like it was their request. It seemed like a reasonable request, something we could accommodate and still help ensure that that's a low-risk endeavor, when visiting those facilities.

And have you thought about ski areas, in terms of down the road, what capacity, if there will be capacity issues for ski areas?

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, we've been talking kind of behind-the-scenes a little bit. I don't want to say behind-the-scenes, but in anticipation of the season, right, of ski season now. We're not going to wait until November to try to figure that one out, and talking with a lot of the industry leaders.

And there's some very interesting ideas out there. It's not about skiing and your capacity on the mountain. I think a lot of folks understand that's an outdoor endeavor. There's a lot of mask wearing usually when you're skiing. That's not a big ask of folks. You're usually there with a small group. There's a lot of social distancing in the activity of skiing.

The problem and the risk really comes likely around the lodges, as we know. And when you go indoors, those effectively can be sometimes some very crowded restaurants, if you want to think of it that way. So we're looking at what those models might be.

In a couple of the different areas, they want it to be successful. They don't want to have to shut down. They don't want to be spreading COVID. I think they're taking a very responsible approach to this. So they're looking at a couple different models, whether it's people reserving space in a lodge, or frankly just limiting the number of people that walk in the door at any given time.

Skiing can be tough because it can be very cold day. And you don't want to deny access to somebody to coming inside, if it's extremely cold or there's other issues at-hand. So one of the models they're looking at is having more open access to bathrooms and things of that nature, but a tighter access around the bars or the restaurants.

So they'll, at a minimum, have to obviously abide by the restaurant guidelines, but maybe even looking at a little more restrictive there, because just of the nature of what happens there, the longevity. Maybe doing more grab-and-go type food as opposed to the cafeteria style; so there's a couple different options there. And I know the industry's looking at it. And we will be working with them over the coming weeks and months to try to get something, so people can prepare ahead of time. But it will be a good ski season. I promise.

Governor, line of discussion on social media of some images from UNH of a large gathering, what are your thoughts on that? It was outdoors, but, nonetheless.

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, I saw those very images and I picked the phone right up and talked to President Jim Dean. We had a great conversation. My understanding -- and again I would probably defer to them to the final details, but the images online that we saw were a bunch of students -- some wearing masks, some not -- a larger gathering in the evening. It seems that the university was doing a good job having smaller-type events for a lot of the incoming freshmen.

That was a gathering that was kind of an informal gathering that was happening as some of those events were just closing up. My understanding is it lasted about 15, 20 minutes. To their credit, I think the RAs and some of the Advisors there went out, reminded the students you really can't be doing this,

and broke it up. And the students, I think, understood their responsibility and headed back to the dorms. It was in front of some of the dorms.

So we just want to encourage folks and remind students it's easy just to start lingering around. And next thing you know, you're in a crowd. But you got to be very cognizant of it. And from my understanding, at least, so far from what I know, hats off to UNH for the Advisors for stepping right in, reminding students of what that responsibility was, what the rules were. And the students responded fairly well, as far as I know.

And so, again, we will keep looking into it and provide whatever supports and resource is needed. But, those are going to happen. We're not going to be -- no one's going to be perfect. But I think the university has been very strong with their messaging there. And the most important thing is I think the response was appropriate and we got the results that we wanted to see. So we just have to be vigilant on it and ask the students to make that social sacrifice a little bit to make sure that their entire campus could be successful through the fall.

Governor, just wondering about your assessment of Motorcycle Week so far and are you satisfied with...

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, I was up at The NASWA cutting a cake with Cynthia Makris. We always do it kind of right in the middle of Motorcycle Week. The crowds really aren't nearly as big as they have been in the past. They're very light. They're there. There's some folks there, to be sure. I'm going to ballpark it and say you're looking at 20% or 30% of what you'd typically see during Bike Week.

So I think it's going off the way we want it to go off. Folks are wearing their masks. They're practicing the social distancing. They're still enjoying a lot of what Bike Week has to offer, knowing that it's a bit limited in scope and size.

But, again, hopefully, I think, as we get through this, I haven't seen anything so far that gives me a lot of concern in terms of individual events or anything of that nature. I was there Sunday. I kind of drove through the town, as well. And again, crowded, but not packed, right? The parking lots weren't even completely full. And what I saw, people were managing their distancing very well.

So I think the town has done a great job with the messaging. And I got to tell you. I think Liquor Enforcement has done a great job just being a great educator and messenger about what the guidelines are, working in a very proactive, not with a stick but with a carrot, saying, hey, look. This can be done this way. You can stay open and still achieve the results you want to see during Bike Week in a safe and healthy manner this way. And I think most of the restaurants and the owners that I've talked to so far have responded very, very well.

So we're very hopeful. We got a few more days. We hope it's successful for them. It looks like, as long as people stay on this track, we can -- I don't want to say get through it, but have that successful week. And similar to what we saw at NASCAR, or what we see out at Hampton Beach, there are large venues and I don't want to say fixed-time events, but venues where people can follow the guidance and still have the flexibility, and the opportunities that we're trying to provide here. Should we do some on the phone? Sure.

Kathy McCormack with the Associated Press:

Hi, thank you. This week's National Drought Report shows areas of severe and moderate drought expanding in southern New Hampshire, even though it looks like we will have a good amount of rain on Saturday. What concerns are you hearing at this time from communities and from farmers, in particular?

Governor Sununu:

Great question, I'm glad you brought it up. Not directly COVID-related but I got to tell you, I was at a farm just yesterday. We talked exactly about this, about the effect on the harvest, on the fruit, the size of the fruit. It's going to be a good fall. I think everyone agrees on that. But the drought has had a lot of effect. It's limited their ability to water. It's limited their ability, I think, to maximize their bushels of what comes in, depending on the variety, whether it's apples or peaches, or whatever it might be.

We do have the COVID Relief Fund, which is going to provide some economic support through this time. And through the first phase of that, we saw, I want to say, 40 or 50 farms come in, in the first round, and request funds. We now have kind of the smaller farm fund going forward. We may have further dollars down the road. But it does have a direct impact to their bottom dollar, without a doubt.

It's great that the past few days, winds aside -- we've had some troubling winds, of course. But it does look like we have seen some of these rainstorms come in. And hopefully we're back on a more normalized weather pattern and can get the soil a little looser. And you don't want it to come down in downspouts to create flashfloods by any means. It would like to all be a little more on a regular schedule.

But it has definitely impacted them. And we will keep monitoring it and making sure that the cities and towns that need to conserve water, they have the data so they know where their water well levels are, where their tank capacities are, and all those variables that come into play when cities and towns are trying to figure out whether they have to go to temporary conservation efforts. But I think the good news is most people are pretty aware of what's happening. And hopefully we're back on a better track with the weather to get a regular stream of rain in here.

Rick Green with The Laconia Daily Sun:

What advice would you give consumers who are concerned when they go to a retail business or a restaurant and see employees who interact with the public but are not wearing a mask? And is the State proactive in trying to enforce that? Or is that just on a case-by-case, complaint-by-complaint basis?

Governor Sununu:

Sure, so the question is what advice would we give to anyone if they walk into a facility, whether it's a restaurant, frankly, or any sort of business that is customer-facing, where an employee should be wearing a cloth facemask or cloth protection. Look, first and foremost, people have to be comfortable. If you're not comfortable, you should not be there, or you should make that choice and obviously...

Rick Green with The Laconia Daily Sun:

[Dogs barking] I thought I was muted.

Governor Sununu:

Sorry about the dogs. But people need to make obviously -- first and foremost, they need to make that decision and make sure that they're in an area where they feel safe and they feel comfortable, and appropriate.

In the cases especially around restaurants where we have had some complaints, the Attorney General's Office is really in charge on the enforcement and most importantly the education side. And so, we always reach out and talk to the Owners or the Managers of those facilities, once if not twice. If they're really derelict in their ability or willingness to enforce the rules as they should be, they get kind of a written letter from the Attorney General's Office. And then, again, we can take that final step and go to a penalty or enforcement. But we haven't come to that at all.

I think the education piece is so important. And that's why I think the Liquor Enforcement Team that has been -- especially in Laconia and across the State -- has been so good about really in a proactive and constructive way letting restaurants know what the process is, and if they're having trouble with something just to let us know. And the State is always willing to work with Managers and Owners to find a better solution, if it's possible.

But if they are going to continue and willingly disregard those rules and policies for not just their health and safety, but their customers' health and safety, there are enforcement actions that we can and will take. Great, I think the dogs scared all the rest of the questions off the phone. Adam?

Governor, will there be any official people, I guess, it's a rally on tomorrow, President Trump's rally, to enforce the mask mandate?

Governor Sununu:

So, I apologize. I was thinking the Bike Week rally, sorry.

Will there be any specific enforcement of the mask mandate, beyond the campaign?

Governor Sununu:

So, like, will the State be there kind of watching over? The State hasn't taken that role in any other event, really. So I don't think we would do it in this event. Like I said earlier, I think the campaign's done a very good. Every time I've heard it talked about or promoted, they're constantly reminding people masks are required. They're embracing that message. They're really encouraging that.

I think they're trying to set up a venue. I don't know exactly what the final venue is going to look like. But I do know they are going to try to set it up so that social distancing is possible to make it successful, not just from their campaign-rally point of view, but also from a health and safety standpoint. I think people understand, no one wants to be the group that gets it wrong, the group that doesn't manage it.

And so, I think they're trying their best to make sure it goes off successfully. And so far, we've been very pleased with the messaging they've put out. But we're not going to treat them any different than the protests or the sit-ins, or any of the other types of events that have happened across the State.

But typically just how many people, or percentage, if they're not wearing a mask, would the State say that's a violation? And what would the line be? Or how is that?

Governor Sununu:

Well, again, we work with the organizers, right, where the imposition of a fine, if we were to get to that point, is really around the organizers. And that's why we keep it to scheduled events, because you always have an organizer in that.

We're not looking to find individuals. We want to encourage them to do the right thing. We understand organizers, if someone were to come in and put a mask on, and halfway through the event take their masks off, the organizers, whether it's a rally or even a wedding, or whatever, they're going to manage that as best as they can.

I think what we're looking for is -- and I don't want to speak for the Attorney General's Office. They really are in charge in the enforcement side. But I think what we're looking for is folks that are just disregarding the rules, saying we don't have to follow this, that aren't even trying to manage it, that aren't providing masks, that aren't doing what is reasonably expected at any event like that.

It is probably a bit of a good-faith effort. And again, the early Black Lives Matter protests, I think, put forward a very good-faith effort. Did every single person wear a mask in those events? No, they didn't. But they put forth a good-faith effort and we championed them. We said, great job. That's exactly the way to do it. That's the model, even though they might not have had -- the individuals participating might not have been 100% onboard. I think they did a very good job with that.

So, that's really what we're going for, I think, more than anything, making sure folks are managing it, getting the messaging out, and hopefully getting enough folks in there so that we don't have a massive -- that's what we're trying to avoid: the large outbreak, super-spreader-type events. And if folks are abiding by that, then we can be successful.

And again, maybe it's something where if you had events that really couldn't be managed, maybe again you say, okay, well, we got to avoid that type of event in the future or something like that. But we're not looking to penalize individuals as much as just making sure we're getting the right messaging and the right tone out of the organizers.

Governor, you talked about amusement parks, the potential for that, loosening some of those restrictions. Are there other industries that you're looking at right now that we can expect in the near future to see some loosening restrictions?

Governor Sununu:

So, I believe the Reopen Taskforce group that met today -- and did you listen to that, Paula? So I didn't listen into it, to be honest. I know they took up a few different areas. So, I don't want to say minor things. But I think they looked at tourism trains and buses. They might have took [sic] up some flexibility there.

The capacity is going from 50% to 100% for those trains and buses, and excursion, provided they can keep the 6-foot distance.

Governor Sununu:

That's right. And folks that work in, like, a salon, I think now one person -- it was like one person per customer. And now, like one individual can now work with two customers at once. It gives them a little more flexibility there, things of that nature.

And then, I think a big step we took forward today was some new universal guidance. We have these kind of base universal guidance documents where now a lot of the smaller industries are going to kind of be built into a single universal guidance document. So everyone's a little more on the same page, where they can be.

Obviously, healthcare facilities might be a little different. Restaurants are going to have their own guidance. But there are a lot of businesses out there that have very similar guidance documents. We've now built them into the universal guidance document.

The other big step we took today was the ADA provisions. So, the Federal Government says, you don't have to make provisions under the ADA, or accommodations, I should say, for folks that have medical or physical disabilities to wear facemask or face coverings.

And while I appreciate the Federal Government doesn't make that accommodation, I think it's important. I think it's important that if someone has a medical or physical disability and they just can't wear a mask, we shouldn't be necessarily preventing them from doing their job. They just want to work, right? And we've heard from a lot of industries.

And so, working with Public Health, I think we've tried to find a good balance there where we can allow those accommodations to happen for folks. Other States do it and they do it fairly well. We want to make sure it doesn't get abused. But other States have really found a good balance with it. And I think, as part of that guidance document we're moving forward with this coming week, I think we're taking the right approach there.

One thing you've resisted, Governor, I wonder if you can speak to it, is allowing restaurants or businesses that serve food to have entertainment indoors, whether it's playing pool or darts. Could you talk a little bit about why that's such an added risk that you don't want to go there yet?

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, so we're opening businesses in the southern four counties for 100%. We've done that. Bars and restaurants, nightclubs, those are the areas that do have high risk attached to them. The data is very clear about that, when you look at where a lot of the super spreader and outbreak-type events happened in other States. We learned from that and we make sure we're not falling into those same traps.

So we want to provide opportunity for those businesses. But we don't want to open things so much that we're really encouraging people frankly standing around, breaking the rules, those type of things. If folks want to have entertainment, I think we allow it. But we allow it in a bit of a limited fashion.

We're really trying to avoid that congregating, that lingering, those lingering situations that can truly become super-spreader events. We've seen it. The data's very, very clear. So it's really about

striking that balance. And so, bars, restaurants, nightclubs, things of that nature, I think we're always going to have a very cautious eye to.

Okay. Well, great. Well, thanks, everyone, for joining us today. We want everyone to have a great healthy and safe weekend. We will be back. We know schools are starting for a lot of folks as early as this week and tomorrow, and early next week. A lot of kids are starting school.

And so, we're going to really be keeping an eye on that and continue to working with the university as well as the K-12 schools, as kids kind of get back to kind of their new normal, whether it's in a hybrid program, an in-person program, or even the few schools -- I think we still have less than 10 -- that are starting out remote.

And we will have some more information on the website, where folks can find out if there are positive cases in their schools, what the situation is in their schools. We will have more information on that next week. And I think, again, if we all kind of keep this same discipline, we stay vigilant on wearing our masks and our social distancing, I feel very confident -- while I still believe the numbers are going to rise, as we've already started to see a little bit -- the numbers are going to rise in the fall, but it's going to be manageable. And I think we've put the right tools and resources to be as successful as anybody can be during these very unknown times, as we hit the fall. Everyone have a good weekend. Thank you.