



Arkansas Department of Health

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Governor Asa Hutchinson
Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health

To: Arkansas Casinos
From: Dr. Nate Smith, Secretary of Health
Date: March 16, 2020
Regarding: **Civil Directive to Limit Operations of Arkansas Casinos for two weeks**

On March 15, 2020, in response to the emerging threat of COVID-19, the CDC released guidance for large events and mass gatherings, as they can contribute to the spread of COVID-19 via travelers who attend events and introduce the virus to new communities. Examples of large events and mass gatherings include conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, and other types of assemblies. The CDC, in accordance with its guidance for Mass Gatherings or Large Events, recommended that for the next 8 weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States. The CDC recommends that events of any size should only be continued if they can be carried out with adherence to guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations, hand hygiene, and social distancing.

While the CDC recommendation does not apply to the day-to-day operation of certain business operations at this time, there are no reasonable assurances of recommended social distancing and safety in Arkansas casinos. This directive to Arkansas Casinos is made in an attempt to reduce introduction of the virus into new communities and to slow the spread of infection in communities already affected by the virus.

In order to slow the spread of COVID-19, all casinos should close for the next two weeks. This civil directive will be in effect as of March 17, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.