COVID-19

5 Star State Certification Program

What is the 5 Star State Certification Program?

The program encourages businesses to implement safety measures beyond what is already required by public health orders and guidelines that will help slow the spread of COVID-19. In doing so, businesses will be able to accelerate their reopening. Depending on where their county falls on the COVID-19 dial, certified businesses are eligible for less restrictive capacity caps. 5 Star certification reassures employees and customers that businesses are adhering to enhanced guidance. The program is completely voluntary and also serves as an expanding directory of establishments recognized for their efforts to keep their communities safe and open.

Importantly, public health agencies are being asked to achieve demanding and historic objectives with their high burden of contact tracing and disease control, and the new milestone of vaccine delivery. Special care should be taken to ensure that launching this program does not detract from public health core functions.

What steps can a county take in order to begin setting up this program?

Each county can determine whether or not this program is a good fit for their community. Counties may exercise significant flexibility and creativity in designing their program, so long as it meets (at a minimum) all of the requirements listed in this document. If a county wants to take action towards launching this program, here are the immediate term steps they can take:

❏ **Determine how the program will be administered.** Each county must set up an administrative committee responsible for implementing the program. The committee must include the Local Public Health Agency (LPHA) because they are the agency that has jurisdiction over development, compliance, and enforcement of public health orders, but the LPHA should not be primarily responsible for the administration or coordination of the committee. The committee should include other partners like the local Chamber of Commerce, nonprofits, local elected leaders, and industry association members. In addition, members of the community at large should be a part of the administrative committee. Any

of these entities may host, fund, or provide the day-to-day operations of the administrative committee, so long as the LPHA is a participating member.

- Who will your committee members be?
- What roles will the different entities play?
- How often will the committee meet?

❏ **Determine what resources a city or county will be able to devote to this program.** Due to the demanding nature of the pandemic, and critical existing public health responsibilities like vaccine distribution and contact tracing, local public health dollars should not be diverted to fund this program. The administrative committee will need to identify resources it may need to ensure the successful implementation of the program.

- Will administering this program require new staff?
- Will setting up the program require contracting with other organizations to help conduct compliance and enforcement checks?
- What is the administrative committee budget and what sources of funding will be used to appropriately resource program needs?
- Who will administer the financial portions of this program?

❏ **Determine how you will ensure compliance and enforcement.** At this point in time "self-certification" of individual businesses is not allowed. It is required that all businesses receive a live third party inspection. The entity doing the inspection must be trained and follow an inspection procedure developed and approved by the administrative committee.

- How will the committee assure that live inspections are completed by a third party prior to a business being certified?
- How will you develop the training and procedures for inspections?
- How will you conduct live inspections?
- How will you ensure all inspections are conducted with appropriate rigor and quality?
- How will you ensure that every certified business has a publicly advertised way for customers to file a compliance complaint with CDPHE?
- How will the administrative committee respond to these complaints?
- How will the administrative committee issue single warning citations, and then revoke certifications for non-compliant businesses?

❏ **Begin preparing your application to CDPHE.** The administrative committee must submit a variance application to CDPHE to receive approval to stand up this program. **As is standard with all variance applications,** this variance requires a supportive letter from the LPHA, local hospitals, county commissioners or other local elected body, and local tribes (if applicable). Additionally, CDPHE requires a letter of support from a local law enforcement agency.

You can find the application template HERE. This template includes all questions and prompts included in the application and requires you to answer questions such as:

- What is the composition of the administrative committee?
- How will you ensure that this program does not detract from a public health authority's ability to conduct core public health functions such as contact tracing and vaccine distribution?
- What is your protocol for conducting live inspections?
- What is your protocol for enforcement?
- How does your administrative committee plan to process compliance complaints from customers and members of the public?

❏ **Begin preparing the application you would like your businesses to use.** Each county may tailor their own application.
- Who will develop the individual business application?
- How will the administrative committee track applications?
- How will you ensure individual businesses are trained on the specific requirements for their sector?
- Will you provide your businesses a template to write their individual prevention plans to file with the administrative committee? Will these templates be industry specific?
- What is the full application process a business will go through, including education, application, inspection, and certification?

What requirements must a county or a city meet, and what is the approval process, in order to launch this program?

Any county that wants to apply must have an LPHA director who meets the minimum qualifications as defined by the State Board of Health.[1] The county must also be in compliance with state public health orders and working actively in their community on compliance and enforcement.

In order for a county to launch the program, they must apply for a variance from CDPHE. **As is standard with all variance applications,** this variance requires a supportive letter from the LPHA, local hospitals, county commissioners or other elected body, and local tribes (if applicable). Additionally, CDPHE requires a letter of support from a local law enforcement agency.

The administrative committee must report weekly updates to their LPHA and to CDPHE about the new certifications granted, all complaints received for certified businesses, the businesses that receive warnings, and the businesses whose certifications are revoked. CDPHE may remove approval of the administrative committee at any time if they do not conduct effective compliance and enforcement. A business may only receive one warning. If non-compliance continues after a warning, the certification must be revoked. If a county does not enforce this, CDPHE will remove its approval of the administrative committee.

Who is eligible to participate in the program, and what are the benefits?

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[1] https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=6459&fileName=6%20CCR%201014-6

Level	Eligibility	Benefit for Certified Businesses
Green	An automatic capacity increase process is already built into Protect Our Neighbors	Increases consumer confidence
Blue	Eligible if incidence, percent positivity, and hospitalizations ALL meet Level Blue thresholds. Incidence and percent positivity must be maintained for 7 consecutive days.	Certified businesses can operate with an additional 50 people added to their cap
Yellow	Eligible if incidence, percent positivity, and hospitalizations ALL meet Level Yellow thresholds. Incidence and percent positivity must be maintained for 7 consecutive days.	Certified businesses can operate at Level Blue allowances
Orange	Eligible if incidence, percent positivity, and hospitalizations ALL meet Level Orange thresholds. Incidence and percent positivity must be maintained for 7 consecutive days.	Certified businesses can operate at Level Yellow allowances
Red	Eligible ONLY if a county has had a two-week sustained decline in incidence, a percent positivity under 10% or 10 cumulative days of decline in the previous rolling 14-day period, and less than 90% of regional ICU beds in use in addition to 10 cumulative days of decline in the previous 14-day period for hospitalizations.	Certified businesses can operate at Level Orange allowances
Purple	Not eligible	Not eligible

What if cases rise in a community?

If a county sees a significant rise in cases, percent positivity, or hospitalizations, then the program may be suspended. This automatically occurs if the region reaches more than 90% of their county's/RETAC ICU hospital capacity.

What are the sector specific guidelines that must be followed?

- **All businesses**
- **Gyms and fitness**
- **Restaurants**
- **Personal services**
- **Indoor events**

General Business Mitigation Strategies	CURRENT REQUIREMENTS	CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS
MASKS ARE MANDATORY AND ENFORCED Find more details about mask requirements.	✔	✔
6-FOOT DISTANCING Signs, decals, and staff all ensure people from different households remain at least 6 feet apart.	✔	✔
REGULAR SANITATION AND CLEANING OF HIGH-TOUCH SURFACES Find cleaning guidance here.	✔	✔
DAILY EMPLOYEE SYMPTOM AND EXPOSURE CHECKS See CDPHE's symptom support tool and employee screening form.	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
SCREEN FOR SYMPTOMS, AND RECORD CUSTOMER NAMES AND CONTACT INFO TO SUPPORT TRACING	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
BUSINESS-SPECIFIC WRITTEN IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE PLANS, FILED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE		✔
BUSINESS-SPECIFIC PLANS FOR OUTBREAK DETECTION, REPORTING, AND RESPONSE Find information on what should be included in outbreak plans.		✔
SUFFICIENT QUALITY VENTILATION View CDPHE's ventilation guidance.		✔
EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION SERVICE PROMOTION & OUTREACH TO EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS		✔
PUBLICLY DISPLAYED INSTRUCTIONS FOR A CUSTOMER TO LODGE COMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS TO CDPHE		✔
EXTRA EFFORT TO CREATE SPECIAL HOURS OR		✔

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR AT RISK POPULATIONS		
ZERO PRIOR CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS		✔

Gyms & Fitness Mitigation Strategies	CURRENT REQUIREMENTS	CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS
MASKS ARE MANDATORY AND ENFORCED Masks are enforced in both the workout area and locker rooms.	✔	✔
6-FOOT DISTANCING Signs, decals, blocked off equipment or lockers, and staff all ensure people from different households remain at least 6 feet apart	✔	✔
REGULAR SANITATION AND CLEANING OF HIGH TOUCH SURFACES	✔	✔
DAILY EMPLOYEE SYMPTOM AND EXPOSURE CHECKS See CDPHE's symptom support tool and employee screening form.	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
SCREEN FOR SYMPTOMS, AND RECORD CUSTOMER NAMES AND CONTACT INFO TO SUPPORT TRACING	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
WORKOUT RESERVATIONS	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
BUSINESS SPECIFIC WRITTEN IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE PLANS, FILED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE		✔
BUSINESS SPECIFIC PLANS FOR OUTBREAK DETECTION, REPORTING AND RESPONSE Find information on what should be included in outbreak plans.		✔
VENTILATION IMPROVEMENT BY: ● HVAC improvements, or ● HEPA filters appropriate for space size, or ● Permanently open windows.		✔
EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION SERVICE PROMOTION & OUTREACH TO EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS		✔
PUBLICLY DISPLAYED INSTRUCTIONS FOR A CUSTOMER TO LODGE COMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS TO CDPHE		✔

EXTRA EFFORT TO CREATE SPECIAL HOURS OR ACCOMODATIONS FOR AT RISK POPULATIONS AND EXTRA EFFORT TO PROVIDE OUTDOOR FITNESS OPTIONS		✔
BUSINESSES SEEKING CERTIFICATION MUST HAVE ZERO PRIOR CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS		✔

Restaurant Mitigation Strategies	CURRENT REQUIREMENTS	CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS
MASKS ARE MANDATORY AND ENFORCED Masks are only removed for eating and drinking indoors. While talking to servers/hosts, waiting to order or for food, or talking to others at the table while not actively eating, masks must be replaced.	✔	✔
TABLE AND HOUSEHOLD DISTANCING Table distancing must allow for at least 10 feet between parties seated at different tables if the county is in Red. In levels Green through Orange, parties may be seated 6 feet apart. In Red, **only** people from the same household may sit together at the same table.	6'	10'/6'
REGULAR SANITATION AND CLEANING OF HIGH TOUCH SURFACES	✔	✔
DAILY EMPLOYEE SYMPTOM AND EXPOSURE CHECKS See CDPHE's symptom support tool and employee screening form.	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
SCREEN FOR SYMPTOMS, AND RECORD CUSTOMER NAMES AND CONTACT INFO TO SUPPORT TRACING	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
RESERVATIONS If not using reservations, you must document how you will ensure parties remain 6 feet apart and do not congregate while waiting. You must also keep a log of what table a customer occupied.	✔ Recommended	✔ Recommended
BUSINESS SPECIFIC WRITTEN IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE PLANS, FILED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE		✔
BUSINESS SPECIFIC PLANS FOR OUTBREAK DETECTION, REPORTING AND RESPONSE Find information on what should be included in outbreak plans.		✔
VENTILATION IMPROVEMENT BY: ● HVAC improvements, or		✔

• HEPA filters appropriate for space size, or • Opening windows or doors during business hours to maximize airflow.		
EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION APP PROMOTION & OUTREACH TO EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS Visit addyourphone.com for printable materials		✔
PUBLICLY DISPLAYED INSTRUCTIONS FOR A CUSTOMER TO LODGE COMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS TO BOTH LPHA AND CDPHE CDPHE complaint form: covid19.colorado.gov/certified-compliance		✔
EXTRA EFFORT TO CREATE SPECIAL HOURS OR ACCOMODATIONS FOR AT RISK POPULATIONS		✔
BUSINESSES SEEKING CERTIFICATION MUST HAVE ZERO PRIOR CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS		✔

Personal Services Mitigation Strategies	CURRENT REQUIREMENTS	CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS
MASKS ARE MANDATORY AND ENFORCED Masks may be temporarily removed if required to perform the service, but then must immediately be replaced.	✔	✔
6-FOOT DISTANCING Signs, decals, and staff all ensure people from different households remain at least 6 feet apart	✔	✔
REGULAR SANITATION AND CLEANING OF HIGH TOUCH SURFACES	✔	✔
DAILY EMPLOYEE SYMPTOM AND EXPOSURE CHECKS See CDPHE's symptom support tool and employee screening form.	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
SCREEN FOR SYMPTOMS, AND RECORD CUSTOMER NAMES AND CONTACT INFO TO SUPPORT TRACING	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
RESERVATIONS	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
BUSINESS SPECIFIC WRITTEN IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE PLANS, FILED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE		✔

	CURRENT REQUIREMENTS	CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS
BUSINESS SPECIFIC PLANS FOR OUTBREAK DETECTION, REPORTING AND RESPONSE Find information on what should be included in outbreak plans.		✔
VENTILATION IMPROVEMENT BY: ● HVAC improvements, or ● HEPA filters appropriate for space size, or ● Opening windows or doors during business hours to maximize airflow.		✔
EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION SERVICE PROMOTION & OUTREACH TO EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS		✔
PUBLICLY DISPLAYED INSTRUCTIONS FOR A CUSTOMER TO LODGE COMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS TO BOTH LPHA AND CDPHE CDPHE complaint form: covid19.colorado.gov/certified-compliance		✔
EXTRA EFFORT TO CREATE SPECIAL HOURS OR ACCOMODATIONS FOR AT RISK POPULATIONS		✔
BUSINESSES SEEKING CERTIFICATION MUST HAVE ZERO PRIOR CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS		✔

Indoor Events Mitigation Strategies	CURRENT REQUIREMENTS	CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS
MASKS ARE MANDATORY AND ENFORCED	✔	✔
6' DISTANCING, AND PLAN FOR GUEST ENTRY, EXIT, AND MOVEMENT WITH CLEAR SIGNAGE	✔	✔
REGULAR SANITATION AND CLEANING OF HIGH TOUCH SURFACES	✔	✔
DAILY EMPLOYEE SYMPTOM AND EXPOSURE CHECKS See CDPHE's symptom support tool and employee screening form.	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
SCREEN FOR SYMPTOMS, AND RECORD CUSTOMER NAMES AND CONTACT INFO TO SUPPORT TRACING	✔ Recommended	✔ Required
BUSINESS SPECIFIC PLANS FOR OUTBREAK DETECTION,		✔

REPORTING AND RESPONSE Find information on what should be included in outbreak plans.		
IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE PLANS, INCLUDING ROOM DIAGRAMS, FILED WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE		✔
VENTILATION IMPROVEMENT BY: ● HVAC improvements, or ● HEPA filters appropriate for space size, or ● Opening windows or doors during business hours to maximize airflow.		✔
EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION SERVICE PROMOTION & OUTREACH TO EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS		✔
PUBLICLY DISPLAYED INSTRUCTIONS FOR A CUSTOMER TO LODGE COMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS TO BOTH LPHA AND CDPHE CDPHE complaint form: covid19.colorado.gov/certified-compliance		✔
EXTRA EFFORT TO CREATE SPECIAL HOURS OR ACCOMODATIONS FOR AT RISK POPULATIONS		✔
BUSINESSES SEEKING CERTIFICATION MUST HAVE ZERO PRIOR CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS		✔

Frequently asked questions

What is sufficient quality ventilation?

If there is an HVAC system it should be:
- Equipped with the highest-rated filter available for the system.
- Set to run continuously when people are present (DCV disabled).
- Operated at the highest optimized settings for the space.
- Serviced by an HVAC technician at least twice per year.

If there is no commercial HVAC system, or an HVAC system that does not meet above requirements, then ventilation must be improved by:
- Incorporating portable air purifiers (preferably with HEPA filters) appropriate for space size, and/or
- Increasing natural ventilation through opening doors and windows to allow cross-ventilation and installing fans that operate to increase airflow in a unidirectional (non-recirculating) manner.

All businesses are encouraged to consult the Ventilation and COVID-19 Guide for a more thorough reference of tips and suggestions for ensuring sufficient ventilation.

What is required for a customer symptom and exposure check?

The best practice for a symptom and screening check is to use the [CDPHE screening form](#) to ask if a patron has any symptoms, or was recently exposed to somebody known to have COVID-19. It is recommended that a temperature is taken as part of this process, but it is acceptable to verbally ask if the person has a temperature if necessary. Temperature checks are required for employee symptom and exposure checks.

What is a citation for non-compliance?

A citation of non-compliance is either a state or local citation for a business that despite warnings and educational efforts, willfully violated the public health order.