

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Regional Coalition approved to implement State's 5 Star program
El Paso County businesses may apply now

El Paso County, CO, Feb. 3, 2021— Today, El Paso County businesses will be able to [apply](#) to increase capacity limits through the State's 5 Star program. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) approved the county's application to administer the state program locally on Monday night. A regional coalition of local governments and organizations have been working with CDPHE since late 2020 to certify El Paso County and ensure all qualifications are met.

The local program will be available to restaurants, gyms and fitness centers, personal services, and indoor events in El Paso County. Certified businesses can enjoy increased capacity limits at one level higher on the state's COVID-19 dial framework. El Paso County moved to Level Orange on January 4, and its incidence/metrics all reached the Level Orange threshold on January 24. This positive trend allows the program to be fully implemented in El Paso County today and certified businesses will be allowed to operate at Level Yellow capacities.

The 5 Star Program rewards businesses that implement safety measures beyond what is already required by public health orders. 5 Star certification reassures employees and customers that businesses are adhering to the enhanced measures. The program is completely voluntary and businesses are encouraged to learn about the [state's program framework](#) to determine if it will be a good fit for their business model.

El Paso County, the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC, the City of Fountain, Town of Monument, the City of Manitou Springs, Palmer Lake, and other community partners are each bringing tools and resources to launch the 5 Star Program and to implement the program in a way that is easy for businesses. A comprehensive webpage has been created to help businesses determine if participation is a good fit and provide a step-by-step guide and resources: CSCEDC.com/5Star

"We're proud of our community for working together to reduce the spread of the virus and enable us to apply for the state's program. Certifying businesses is a significant step forward in our regional recovery efforts. We're ready to help businesses become certified and safely increase their service to customers."
– Dirk Draper, president & CEO, Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC

The Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center is holding a free webinar next Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 3 p.m. to help businesses navigate the application and inspection process. [Register here](#).

Background:

El Paso County, with support from the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC, the City of Fountain, Town of Monument, the City of Manitou Springs, local hospitals, and law enforcement applied Jan. 1 to CDPHE to re-open local businesses.

The criteria for a county to apply included a two-week sustained decline in incidence, a positivity rate under 10 percent to demonstrate improvement over the past two weeks, and under 90 percent of ICU beds in use.

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