



Joint NEWS RELEASE

Regional Coalition Will Submit Application to Re-Open Businesses *State's Five-Star Program would return indoor dining and increase capacity for participating restaurants*

El Paso County, CO, December 30, 2020—Regional leaders, including El Paso County, the City of Colorado Springs, the City of Fountain, the City of Manitou Springs, Town of Monument, the Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC, local hospitals, and law enforcement will jointly apply to the State to re-open local businesses. The State's program is the only option for businesses to increase capacity limits and for restaurants to provide indoor dining while in level red on the state's dial framework. The local application will initially apply to restaurants, which are the businesses most effected by recent regulations.

"The success of a program of this magnitude hinges on the whole-hearted support from our community coalition," said Dirk Draper, President and CEO of the Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC. "And this program is critical for our local businesses most impacted by COVID protocols to reopen as quickly and as safely as possible."

The State's program is commonly known as the "5 Star State Certification Program". The program requires participating businesses to implement additional standards in order to reopen or operate with additional capacity. The State released a checklist of requirements, along with the criteria to apply for the program, on December 16. The criteria for a county to apply includes a two-week sustained decline in incidence, a positivity rate under 10% or demonstrate improvement over the past two weeks, and under 90% of ICU beds in use. Based on the State's criteria, the region may be eligible to apply to the State on January 1, 2021.

The local application reflects a regional approach to implement this program. Municipalities such as the City of Colorado Springs, Fountain, Manitou Springs, Monument, will each directly implement portions of the plan and supply resources from their respective jurisdictions. Information on contribution of resources will be released as details are finalized.

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