

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Larimer Recovery Collaborative
Laura Levy
Pandemic Recovery Manager
laura@larimerrecovers.com
(303) 931-8080

Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce
Ann Hutchison
Executive Vice President
ahutchison@fcchamber.org
(970) 482-3746

Loveland Chamber of Commerce
Mindy McCloughan, President & CEO
mmcloughan@loveland.org
(970) 744-4791



Larimer County Level Up Program Approved

Businesses can now apply to receive approval to operate at next level

LARIMER COUNTY, COLO. – December 23, 2020 – Larimer County’s “5 star” certified business variance program, locally known as the Level Up Program was approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Office at 12:47 p.m. on December 23, 2020. Businesses in Larimer County can now apply and upon approval, inspection, and certification, operate at the capacities one level above the overall county position. At this time, Larimer County is in level red, so Level Up certified businesses may open at level orange capacity levels on the dial.

“We are thrilled that CDPHE, the Larimer County Commissioners and the Larimer County Department of Public Health and Environment (LCDPHE) provided this opportunity for business to reopen safely. This could make the difference between survival and closure for so many of our business partners. We appreciate the incredible work of our local Health Department staff to enable this process,” said Ann Hutchison, Executive Vice President of the Fort Collins Area Chamber.

Forty businesses successfully completed their pre-applications and were undergoing inspections on Wednesday and will receive approval to operate later this afternoon. An additional 20 businesses are scheduled for review and inspection next week. A list of Level Up participants will be maintained on NoCoRecovers.com.

The Level Up Administrative Committee, made up of representatives from the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment (LCDHE), the Loveland and Fort Collins Area Chambers of Commerce, the Cities of Loveland and Fort Collins, Towns of Estes Park, Windsor, Berthoud and Wellington have been working closely with local businesses to develop and implement this program.

Application Process for the voluntary Level Up Program:

1. Complete the online application at <https://www.larimer.org/health/communicable-disease/coronavirus-covid-19/level-program>

- a. This application asks for A COVID-19 Prevention Plan and Outbreak Plan for each business and/or business location is required
 - b. The LCDHE will review applications and initiate inspections
2. Level Up Administrative Committee reviews and certifies the business contingent upon a successful on-site inspection
3. On-site inspection and certification by Public Health Representative
 - a. Please Note: LCDHE will make every effort to review applications and inspect facilities but likely won't get through them all before the holidays. LCDHE will begin reviewing and scheduling inspections again on the Monday, December 28.

It is important to note that the Level Up Program is contingent upon keeping Larimer County COVID-19 numbers at a two-week sustained decline in cases, positivity percentage and hospitalizations. The community is being asked to continue to do its part and help [#KeepNoCoOpen](#).

About Level-Up

The Level Up Pilot Program was inspired by the Mesa County Variance Protection Program (referred to as the 5-star rating program). It represents a creative grass-roots effort to keep Larimer County residents safe and businesses functioning during the ongoing pandemic. This is a collaborative effort that has had robust participation from the business community-spanning a diverse set of industry sectors- the local chambers of commerce, economic development professionals and public health officials. Enlisting the help of the business community creates more cooperation and engagement resulting in a higher level of compliance. Ultimately, the Level-Up Pilot Program is focused on suppressing the virus and mitigating economic damage to the business community.

The Level Up Pilot Program will have participating businesses apply a layered approach of proven strategies to reduce the transmission of Covid-19. Participation will be based on the ability to apply current best practices and to prove compliance with implementing those protocols. This pilot program couples a robust messaging and education campaign to the business community and the general public to increase compliance with current public health guidance, particularly in the importance of limiting gatherings to members of a single household.

In adherence with the core elements of the state framework, the program was developed and will be operated by an Administrative Committee made up of members of the Loveland, Estes Park and Fort Collins Chambers of Commerce, City of Fort Collins, City of Loveland and Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development, Larimer Recovery Collaborative, and the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment. For more information and updates, visit [NoCoRecovers.com](#).

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