

SUMMARY OF STATE-SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN THE US 2020/2021

COLORADO

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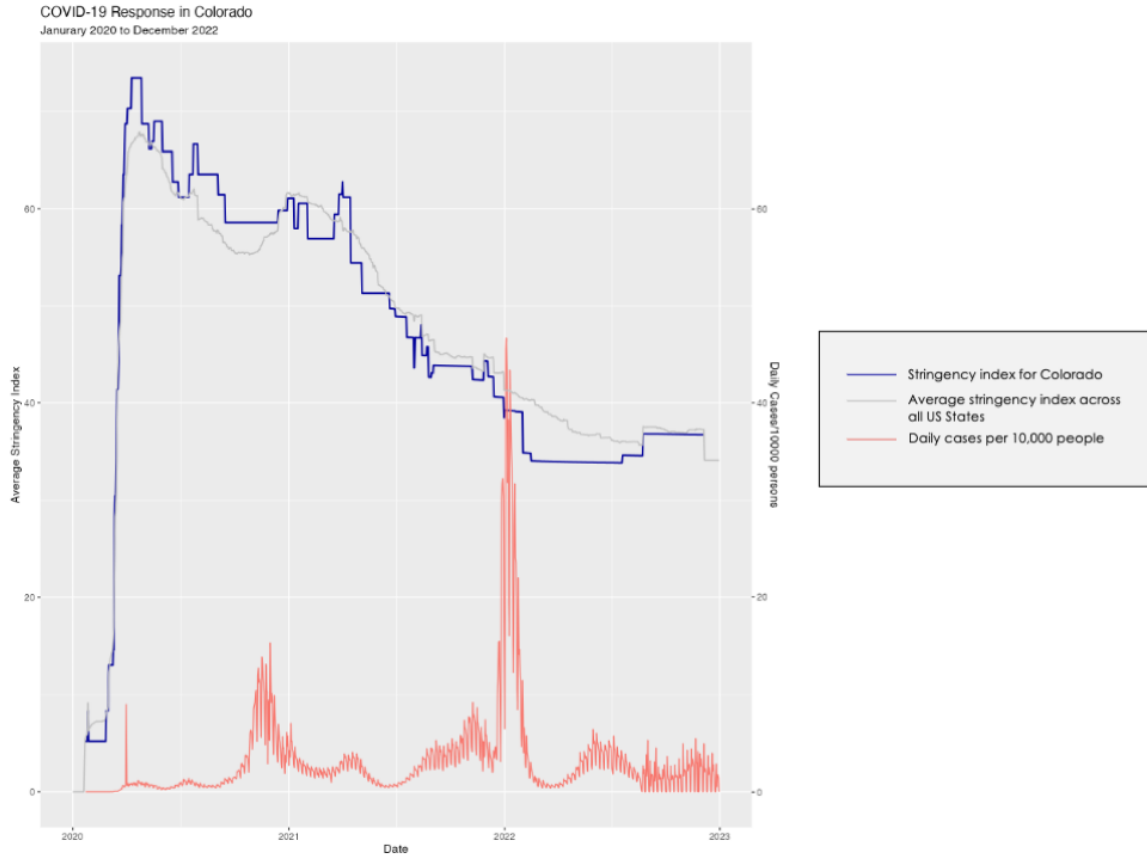
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Colorado

Summary of Government Response to COVID-19



COVID-19 Response in Colorado: Using the OxCGRT Stringency Index for Colorado (blue) and the average OxCGRT Stringency Index across all US states, the above shows the overall government response to COVID-19 in Colorado in comparison to the average US state response from January 2020 to December 2022. This also displays the number of daily cases per 10,000 people in Colorado (red).

Summary

Governor Jared Polis of Colorado first responded on March 2, 2020, announcing state testing was available preceding the states' first case on March 5, 2020 and death on March 13, 2020 in El Paso County. The first policies enacted were limitations on gatherings, business closures and school closures (represented as C4, C3, C2 and C1 indicators in OxCGRT data).

Closure and Containment

The indicators for closure and containment are measured on an ordinal scale and encompass government responses that required or recommended temporary closures of institutions, limitations on travel, and restrictions of gatherings or events. The measurement of these indicators included a binary flag that indicated the geographic scope of the government responses coded. Differentiated policies, or policies that were specifically directed at those vaccinated or unvaccinated, are indicated when flagged as 'Vaccinated' or 'Non-Vaccinated'.

C1: School closures

C1 records closings of schools and universities and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend closing or all schools open with alterations resulting in significant differences compared to non-Covid-19 operations), 2 (require closing only some levels or categories, e.g., just high school, or just public schools), or 3 (require closing all levels).

On March 16, 2020, Denver public schools announced an extended spring break, biding time whilst waiting for decisions from the state government level regarding the return of in person schooling. The first school closure policies became active on March 23, 2020 in the form of executive order D 2020 006 signed by Governor of Colorado on March 18. The order suspended in-person learning in public and private elementary and secondary schools across the state until April 17, 2020. On April 22nd, the order was extended until the conclusion of the 2019-2020 school year. Upper division learning institutions followed opted to for closure on March 30th, 2020, when both private and public institutions announced remote learning models were in place until the end of the semester.

During the summer months in 2020, k-12 schools offered online learning, and Denver Public School spaces were made unavailable for use at this time. Universities offered online or hybrid summer sessions, permitting some individuals to attend in person learning. For the 2020-2021 school year, districts were granted authority to determine the reopening of schools within their jurisdiction so long as they were compliant with state and local health orders and guidance. By August 24, heading into the 2020 fall semester, several of the largest universities had opted to reopen, and many kindergarten-12 districts were also conducting in person learning. However, only select schools and institutions began in-person instruction, with the majority remaining online. This continued as a 2T code until the fall of 2021.

For the 2021-2022 school year, upcoming students were required to be vaccinated prior to attending higher education institutions including Colorado State University and University of Colorado. The Colorado State University system released a statement prior to a meeting on May 6, 2021, determining that a vaccine mandate for students would be required. This went into effect August 23, 2021, represented by a 2T/1T coding. The

vaccine mandate only applied to students attending higher division learning institutions and was not applicable to kindergarten-12 schools. Kindergarten-12 schools continued to legislate reopening on a local level, with some opting for hybrid, in-person learning and others online. Coding remained 2T/1T for the remainder of the 2021 year.

C2: Workplace closures

C2 records closings of workplaces and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend closing or recommend work from home or all businesses open with alterations resulting in significant differences compared to non-Covid-19 operations), 2 (require closing or work from home for some sectors or categories of workers), or 3 (require closing or work from home for all-but-essential workplaces, e.g., grocery stores, doctors).

First business closure policies were active on March 14, 2020 in the form of Executive Order D 2020 004, issued by Governor Polis, requiring the closure of downhill ski resorts. Following this, on March 16, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) issued a public health order to close bars, restaurants, gyms, theatres, and casinos. A “Stay-at-Home” order on March 25 was issued, including work closures across the state, represented with a 3G coding on the OxCGRT data. The stay-at-home order continued until April 26, 2020 and transitioned into a “Safer at Home” policy on April 27 with gradually loosening restrictions on workplace closures. Coding was changed to 2G to represent the changes.

On June 1, 2020, Governor Polis signed an executive order to transition into a phase called “Safer at Home and In the Vast, Great Outdoors” which loosened restrictions for workplace closures; offices could resume in person operations up to 50% capacity; restaurants could provide dine-in services up to 50 people, bars remained closed to in-person patrons. All the activities were subject to social distancing and public health guidelines, including mask wearing, keeping 6 feet apart and temperature checks. On June 30, 2020, Gov Polis further amended and extended the executive order of “Phase 2 Safer at Home and In the Vast, Great Outdoors” several times until a new framework was created on September 15, 2020.

On Sep 15, 2020, Governor Polis introduced a new dial framework for local Colorado communities. The dial framework included five levels to guide county response to COVID-19: “Protect Our Neighbors, Safer at Home 1”, “Safer at Home 2”, “Safer at Home 3”, and “Stay-at-home”. The dial framework was created to replace the general variance process in most cases. The local level jurisdiction was represented on the OxCGRT data set with a 2T coding. On January 4, 2021, the Department of Public Health and Environment issued Public Health Order 20-36 to implement restrictions for individuals, businesses, and activities, encouraging individuals to stay-at-home or in the “vast, great outdoors” and avoid unnecessary interactions whenever possible. All non-critical businesses were permitted to be open at

10% capacity including gyms and offices. Restaurants and casinos were not permitted to be open for indoor dining but could utilise outdoor dining to remain open. The state encouraged pivoting to outdoor settings instead of forcing closure. Offices were strongly recommended to work remotely; restaurants could operate at 25% capacity or max 50 people and retail permitted to open at 50% capacity. Coded as a 1G to represent the opening of non-critical businesses.

On April 16, 2021, Colorado dropped its COVID-19 dial framework along with state-wide mandates, to shift responsibility to county and local leaders to govern the pandemic on a local level. At this time, the city of Denver responded by permitting 75% capacity at offices, 75% capacity for retail businesses, 100% capacity for gyms, recreation centres, pools, and restaurants, with some limitations of party sizes and other restrictions. Colorado never adopted a differential policy for vaccinated and unvaccinated citizens. In fact, on March 4, 2021, the Colorado General Assembly passed bill HB21-1191, permitting discrimination against employees or applicants regarding vaccination status. The COVID-19 vaccine was deemed not mandatory, and that the state or any business within the state could not require any individual to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine.

C3: Cancel public events

C3 records cancelling public events and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend cancelling), or 2 (require cancelling).

On March 12, 2020, Eagle County issued a public health order, imposing restrictions on social gatherings. The order restricted gatherings of 50 people or more and was considered a misdemeanour offence if not adhered to. Coded as a 1T on the data set. On March 15, 2020, the CDC released similar guidelines, at which point the Colorado State Health Department recommended Colorado adopt these guidelines restricting events of 50 people or more, across the entire state. On March 19, the state formally implemented a public health order limiting public gatherings to no more than 10 people with certain exceptions. The state-wide policy is represented with a 2G coding on the OxCGRT dataset. These restrictions were in place until June 18, 2020, at which time the Colorado State Health Department amended Public Health Order 20-28 loosening restrictions to permit larger events to occur so long as they followed health guidelines such as social distancing and masking.

On April 16, 2021, Colorado dropped several state-wide mandates and delegated much of the COVID-19 response to local leaders. During this time, Pitkin County was forced to close events from January 17, 2021 until February 1, 2021, due to an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the county. On July 1, 2021, Colorado amended Public Health Order 20-28, to include no restrictions for events across the state. Colorado did not

implement any further interventions regarding event limitations for the remainder of the 2021 year.

C4: Restrictions on gatherings

C4 records limits on gathering and is measured as 0 (no restrictions), 1 (restrictions on very large gatherings where the limit is above 1000 people), 2 (restrictions on gatherings between 101-1000 people), 3 (restrictions on gatherings between 11-100 people), or 4 (restrictions on gatherings of 10 people or less).

First restrictions on social gathering were active on March 12, 2020, with Eagle County imposing limitations on gatherings of 50 or more people until April 8. On March 12, 2020, Governor Polis announced a 'stay-at-home' order (D 2020 017) to all individuals living in Colorado, limiting gatherings to no more than 10 people. The order was represented by a 4G coding in the dataset. On September 15, 2020, a dial construct was implemented. At that time, many counties restricted gatherings of 10 people or more. On April 16, 2021, Colorado dropped its COVID-19 dial framework. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment amended Public Health Order 20-38 on June 1, 2021, removed restrictions on gatherings. By July 1, 2021, a state public health order was issued with no further mentions of gathering restrictions and no restrictions on the local level were evident. At this point in time, Colorado was considered to have no restrictions on gatherings, coded as a 0 on the OxCGRT dataset until the end of 2021.

C5: Public transport closures

C5 records the closing of public transport and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend closing or significantly reduce volume/route/means of transport available), or 2 (require closing or prohibit most citizens from using it).

On March 29, 2020, The Colorado Department of Transportation suspended its Bustang and Outrider bus services between cities throughout the state to reduce intercity travel. The suspension lasted until June 28, 2020, and was represented by a 1G on the OxCGRT dataset. Due to a severe drop in ridership during the COVID-19 lockdowns, the Regional Transportation District Board of Directors in Denver reduced local services to 40 percent beginning April 19, 2020. The Covid-19 service plan continued operating for essential travel with restrictions such as mask requirement, limited capacity on buses, and social distancing. The policy with the restrictions listed remained in place through December 2021. The local restrictions are represented as a 1T in the dataset.

C6: Stay-at-home requirements

C6 records orders to "shelter-in-place" and otherwise confine to the home and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend not leaving house), 2 (require not leaving house with exceptions for daily exercise, grocery shopping, and 'essential' trips), or 3 (require not leaving house with minimal exceptions, e.g., allowed to leave once a week, or only one person can leave at a time, etc).

Effective March 24, 2020, Denver mayor Hancock announced a citywide stay-at-home order for all people in the city and county of Denver. The following day, on March 25, Governor Polis announced a state-wide "stay-at-home" order (D 2020 017) active on March 26, directing all citizens of Colorado to stay-at-home, subject to limited exceptions such as obtaining food and other household necessities, going to and from work at critical businesses, seeking medical care, caring for dependents or pets, or caring for a vulnerable person in another location. Coded as a 2G on the dataset until May 9th, 2020. On May 9, Health Order D 2020 017 was revised, removing any requirements for Colorado citizens to stay home. The Colorado State Health Department still encouraged citizens to stay home when possible. These changes were represented with a 1G coding.

On January 17, 2021, Pitkin County entered a red zone on the dial, implementing a stay-at-home order for that county until February 2nd, 2021. On April 16, 2021, Colorado lifted several state-wide mandates and transferred responsibility to local leadership within a dial framework dependent on local COVID-19 case numbers, at which point Colorado was considered to no longer have any stay-at-home orders.

C7: Restrictions on internal movement

C7 records restrictions on internal movement between states and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend not to travel between states), or 2 (internal movement restrictions in place).

The first domestic travel restrictions were enacted on April 10, 2020, with the Colorado Department of Public Health prohibiting all travel, including, but not limited to, travel by automobile or public transit, with restrictions to only necessary travel. Coded a 2G until April 26, 2020, when this order expired. In response, the following day, on April 27, Denver extended their stay-at-home orders, including a prohibition of unnecessary travel. This order expired on May 8, 2020. Across the state, general advisory from the government focused on individuals staying home, such as evidence in the "Protect Our Neighbors Executive Order". On May 9, 2020, the State Health Department announced Public Health Order 20-28, which encouraged but did not require individuals to stay-at-home and avoid unnecessary interactions. This expired on August 7, 2020. No restrictions on internal movement were implemented after this date to the end of 2021.

C8: International travel controls

C8 records restrictions on international travel for foreign travellers (not citizens) and is measured as 0 (no restrictions), 1 (screening arrivals), 2 (quarantine arrivals from some or all regions), 3 (ban arrivals from some regions), or 4 (ban on all regions or total border closure).

Colorado followed federal CDC guidelines for international travel and implemented no state-level international travel controls during the pandemic.

Federal regulations dictated that starting on February 2, 2020, travellers from Hubei province in China were required to quarantine after arrival in the United States. This was quickly replaced with bans on individuals entering from multiple countries beginning on March 2, 2020. Policies changed in November 2021, where vaccinated non-citizens were permitted to enter the United States. Unvaccinated individuals were not permitted to enter. However, on November 27, 2021, the United States began banning travellers from certain countries regardless of vaccination status. President Biden and his administration lifted these bans on December 31st, 2021, implementing a differential policy for vaccinated and unvaccinated persons entering the country internationally.

Economic Response

The indicators for economic policies measured the policies that provided economic support from the state government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic indicators recorded at the subnational level in the US were E1 and E2, which are measured on an ordinal scale without a flag indicating the geographic scope.

E1: Income support

E1 records if the government is providing direct cash payments to people who lose their jobs or cannot work and is measured as 0 (no income support), 1 (government is replacing less than 50% of lost salary or if a flat sum, that is less than 50% median salary), or 2 (government is replacing 50% or more of lost salary or if a flat sum, that is greater than 50% median salary).

On March 10, 2020, Governor Jared Polis of Colorado signed an executive order declaring a state of emergency to ensure resources were available to the state to combat COVID-19. These included paid work leave for COVID positive individuals, as well as directing the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) to identify additional support and wage

replacement needed for citizens such as access to unemployment insurance. The CDLE engaged in emergency rulemaking to ensure workers in food handling, hospitality, childcare, health care, and education had access to paid sick leave. The CDLE encouraged all employers to use paid leave, telework, or CDLE's work-share program before implementing temporary layoffs and issued guidance on allowing all workers experiencing a reduction of wages and hours due to the virus to file unemployment claims. Coding at this point indicated 1F, since less than 50% of wages were offered. Coding remained 1F until all state-level financial benefits expired on December 4, 2021, at which point it was changed to a 0.

E2: Debt/contract relief

E2 records if the government is freezing financial obligations for households (e.g., stopping loan repayments, preventing services like water from stopping, or banning evictions) and is measured as 0 (no debt/contract relief), 1 (narrow relief, specific to one kind of contract), or 2 (broad debt/contract relief).

On March 20, 2020, Governor Jared Polis, issued Executive Order D 2020 012, limiting evictions, foreclosures, and public utility disconnections. The order directed the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), and Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) to work with property owners and landlords to avoid removal or eviction process as a result of late or non-payment from tenants until April 30, 2020. Low-income households were also offered housing support for 6 months. Governor directed DORA to "encourage financial institutions to provide a ninety-day deferment of payment for all consumer loans, including residential and commercial mortgages, refinances, auto loans, student loans, and small business loans for customers and businesses that have been economically impacted by COVID-19. These policies were represented as a 2 on the OxCRGT dataset.

This executive order also directed Public Utilities Commission (PUC) which is under DORA, to suspend disconnections for delayed or missed payments, waive reconnection fees, and suspend accrual of late payments fees for residential and small business consumers. The scope of coverage for Colorado residents gradually narrowed over time with utilities no longer covered on April 29, 2021, with the expiration of Executive Order D 2021 074 on this date. By May 5, 2021, coverage significantly narrowed enough to reduce to a 1 coding indicator on the OxCRGT data. The state government directives providing rental assistance for residential tenants due to the economic impact of COVID-19 is expired as of July 31, 2021. September 4, 2021, marked the expiration of the eviction moratorium. After this date no further policies were implemented for the remainder of 2021.

Public Health Responses

The public health response indicators recorded health system responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The indicators recorded at the subnational level in the US were H1, H2, H3, H6, H7, and H8. The geographic scope of these policies was marked by an ordinal flag for indicators H1, H6, and H8. Differentiated policies, or policies that were specifically directed at those vaccinated or unvaccinated, are indicated when flagged as 'Vaccinated' or 'Non-Vaccinated' for indicators H6 and H8.

H1: Public information campaigns

H1 records the presence of public info campaigns and is measured as 0 (no Covid-19 public information campaign), 1 (public officials urging caution about Covid-19), or 2 (coordinated public information campaign, e.g., across traditional and social media).

The Colorado State Health Department issued a fact sheet on COVID-19 available to the public on February 27, 2020. On March 16, 2020, Governor Polis launched a social media campaign entitled #DoingMyPartCO, represented by as 2G on the OxCRGT dataset. The following day on March 17, the Colorado State Health Department launched a COVID-19 specific website. Colorado's health information campaign continued as a coordinated public health campaign throughout the pandemic. Vaccine campaigns were launched on January 18, and February 2, 2021, Governor Polis announced a COVID awareness campaign called "Do Colorado Right" run by the Colorado Tourism Office, which aimed to encourage winter travellers to avoid risky behaviour while visiting the state's ski resorts and destinations. On April 9, 2021, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment launched the "Power the Comeback" campaign to make COVID-19 vaccine information more accessible. Coding remained 2G from March 16, 2020, until the end of 2021.

H2: Testing policy

H2 records government policy on who has access to testing and is measured as 0 (no testing policy), 1 (only those who both have symptoms AND meet specific criteria, e.g., key workers, admitted to hospital, encountered a known case, returned from overseas), 2 (testing of anyone showing Covid-19 symptoms), or 3 (open public testing, e.g., "drive through" testing available to asymptomatic people).

On March 2, 2020, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) announced that the State Laboratory can start testing for COVID-19. Prior to that day the testing had only been performed by the CDC. Testing was available under three circumstances: 1) people with a fever and have been in close contact with someone tested positive for COVID-19, 2) people who had travelled to the parts of the world where

infection rates were high or 3) people with severe lower respiratory illness that required hospitalisation.

The CDPHE announced the opening of the state's first community testing centre on March 11, 2020. To be tested at a community testing centre, individuals were required to have a doctor's order confirming they met the testing requirements along with photo identification that matches the name on the order.

On March 13, 2020, CDPHE encouraged all the symptomatic individuals who believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19 to reach out to their health care provider for guidance prior to coming to a health care facility for testing. CDPHE continued to reiterate similar sentiments throughout March and April of 2020, indicating there was a limited supply of testing kits and personal protective equipment, forcing prioritisation of testing to those most at risk and healthcare professionals. Coding remained a 1 on the OxCGRT dataset until May 18, 2020, when CDPHE encouraged the testing of all symptomatic individuals, indicating the state was able to expand surveillance testing at this time. By July 2020, Colorado's testing numbers increased from a daily average of 160 tests per day to 10,000 tests per day, with availability of testing for all symptomatic individuals continuing throughout the year. On January 25, 2021, testing expanded to include asymptomatic health care workers and other first responders.

On March 27, 2021, testing became widely available with more than 50 state sponsored community testing sites available to the public, along with numerous locations offered by private providers. These sites were free to the public and available for anyone who wanted to be tested, and did not require a doctor's note, identification, or insurance. Coding changed to a 3 at this time and remained a 3 for the remainder of the year. On April 7, 2021, CDPHE broadened the at-home COVID-19 testing program (Binax At-home Rapid Testing Kit) to all public-facing employees free of charge. Public-facing employees included, but were not limited to: retail workers, hotel and other hospitality employees, delivery and truck drivers. Throughout the year of 2021, Colorado COVID-19 testing remained available on a widespread scale, at no charge to the individual.

H3: Contact tracing

H3 records government policy on contact tracing after a positive diagnosis and is measured as 0 (no contact tracing), 1 (limited contact tracing; not done for all cases), or 2 (comprehensive contact tracing; done for all identified cases).

On March 5, 2020, the Governor of Colorado along with Colorado Department of Public Health and Department (CDPHE) conducted a press conference indicating that contact tracing had begun with the detection of the first case, on March 13, 2020. On April 29, 2020, during a press release, Governor Polis provided an update on the struggle Colorado state endured

to keep up with the demand of cases. He provided insight into a contract between CDPHE and the Colorado School of Public Health, through which CDPHE was able to increase the COVID response team from 31 to 56 staff members by recruiting students from the Public Health School. Students would aid with contract tracing along with the many other responsibilities, working closely with state and local public health staff.

By July 23, 2020 CDPHE had 115 full-time COVID-19 case investigators and contact tracers who were able to reach 96% of positive cases within a 48 hour window, with 72% responding. CDPHE appeared to be keeping up with demand until January 2021, when winter cases overwhelmed the state. Some contact tracing continued for the remainder of the 2021 year, coded as a 1.

On October 27, 2020, the CDPHE launched the COVID-19 Exposure Notification System to increase the effectiveness of contact tracing. The notification system created a new feature on a mobile phone that notified the person if they may have been exposed to COVID-19. This system was designed to work alongside traditional contact tracing methods.

In a press release on September 8, 2021, The CDPHE indicated local public health agencies would need cooperation from citizens with contact tracing as the delta variant spread increased. Local public health agencies played a central role in initiating disease investigation. In May of 2021, the state of Colorado received federal funding through the federal Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity cooperative agreement to continue and sustain the work of contact tracing. For most of the pandemic, H3 indicator was coded as a 1 with some contact tracing performed, but not all cases. Generally, the state struggled with the demand of cases and was not able to trace all cases.

H6: Facial Coverings

H6 records policies on the use of facial coverings outside the home and is measured as 0 (no policy), 1 (recommended mask wearing), 2 (required in some specified shared/public spaces outside the home with other people present, or some situations when social distancing not possible), 3 (required in all shared/public spaces outside the home with other people present or all situations when social distancing not possible), or 4 (required outside the home at all times regardless of location or presence of other people).

At a press conference on April 3, 2020, Governor Polis encouraged the state of Colorado to adopt a strong mask culture to fight the pandemic. The Denver Department of Public Health announced a mandatory masking order on May 14, 2020, requiring face coverings in public spaces. Local policy was represented as a 2T on the OxCGRT dataset until July 16. On July 16, 2020, Governor Polis passed a state-wide mask order, Executive Order D 2020 138, requiring the use of face masks in public spaces, while waiting for public transportation, or while using rideshares. This order remained in effect

until April 3, 2021, at which time Executive Order D 2021 079 was amended to exempt the use of masks in some public spaces based on the states' color-coded geographical system of COVID-19 caseloads and local vaccination rates. Coding changed from 3G to 2G on this date. On June 21, 2021, the executive order was amended, requiring face coverings for unvaccinated individuals. Vaccinated individuals were no longer required to wear masks. Coding changed to 2G/0 to reflect policy changes.

The Executive Order D 2020 138 was amended for the sixth time on August 31, 2021, requiring that all individuals in Colorado, regardless of vaccination status, must wear masks in some settings such as medical facilities (including long term care facilities), homeless shelters, prisons, and jails. The state also required universal mask use for staff, visitors, and residents in residential care facilities regardless of vaccination status. The order specified unvaccinated individuals must continue to wear masks in indoor settings. The policy is represented with a coding of 2G on the OxCGRT dataset since both vaccinated and unvaccinated fall under the same umbrella.

On September 3, coding changed to 3T as the city of Boulder implemented their own mask mandate. The order, approved by the Board of Health on September 2, requires mask wearing in all indoor public spaces for all individuals 2 years and older regardless of vaccination status. Colorado University Boulder updated its policies as a response, requiring masking regardless of vaccination status while on campus. The city of Boulder's indoor mask mandate remained in effect until the end of 2021.

H7: Vaccination policy

H7 records policies for vaccine delivery for different groups 0 (no availability), 1 (availability for ONE of following: key workers/clinically vulnerable groups that are non elderly/ elderly groups), 2 (availability for TWO of following: key workers/clinically vulnerable groups that are non elderly/elderly groups), 3 (availability for ALL of following: key workers/clinically vulnerable groups that are non-elderly/elderly groups), 4 (availability for all three plus partial additional availability for select broad groups/ages), or 5 (universal availability).

Colorado received its first vaccine doses on December 21, 2020, with the administration of Pfizer vaccines to healthcare workers marking the beginning of Phase 1A on Colorado's vaccine roll out. On December 30, 2020, Governor Polis issued Phase 1B of Colorado's vaccination procedure, which allowed high-risk individuals that met certain criteria to receive vaccines. By February 22, Colorado expanded to Phase 1B.2, at which time Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were administered to people over 65, first responders, healthcare workers and other key workers. Johnson & Johnson vaccines began to be administered on March 9, 2021. Colorado expanded its COVID vaccine eligibility to Phase 1B.4 on March 19, 2021, to include 2.5 million people eligible. At this time, the OxCGRT dataset coded H7 as a 4G.

Vaccination Phase 1B.4 included people 50 years and older, essential and frontline workers, individuals 16 to 49 years old with one eligible high-risk condition and adults who received a placebo in a COVID-19 vaccine trial.

Coding changed to 5G on April 3, when vaccine eligibility expanded to include all citizens of Colorado aged 16 and older. Providers administering the vaccines, were still instructed to prioritise high-risk individuals, but generally, vaccination was widely available for all people in Colorado at this time until the end of 2021. On November 5, 2021, the Pfizer vaccine became available for Coloradoans 5-11 years old.

H8: Protection of elderly people

H8 records policies for protecting elderly people (as defined locally) in Long Term Care Facilities and/or the community and home setting. This is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommended isolation, hygiene, and visitor restriction measures in LTCFs and/or elderly people to stay-at-home), 2 (narrow restrictions for isolation, hygiene in LTCFs, some limitations on external visitors and/or restrictions protecting elderly people at home), or 3 (extensive restrictions for isolation and hygiene in LTCFs, all non-essential external visitors prohibited, and/or all elderly people required to stay-at-home and not leave the home with minimal exceptions, and receive no external visitors).

On March 12, 2020, Public Health Order 20-20 was instated, which ordered all Colorado licensed or certified skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities and assisted living residences to follow the restrictive Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMC) guidelines for operation, including stringent visitor restriction. This order limited outside visitation to individuals that were essential to the operation of the facility, including only the most urgent compassionate care, such as end of life visits.

An amendment to the Public Health Order 20-20 on April 20, 2020, required that long-term care facilities submit COVID-19 prevention and response plans to CDPHE by May 1, 2020. These plans must address key issues such as severe limitations on visitors in long-term care facilities, an at-the-door symptom check for all employees, vendors, and visitors before entering the facility, a plan to isolate patients who have COVID-19 symptoms or positive tests, a requirement that facilities ensure all residents have access to necessary medical care, and a requirement that all facility residents and employees wear a mask or other face-covering when in public. This order was amended and continued July 30, 2020, reflecting a 3G code until a third amendment was made on September 3, 2020.

On June 1, 2021, facilities were no longer mandated to update isolation plans or produce plans for inspection during on-site visits and requirements for daily reporting to CDPHE's Residential Care Facility Comprehensive Mitigation Guidance were removed. On September 27, 2021, indoor and outdoor visitations were permitted with narrow at-the-door symptom checks and unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated individuals were required to wear masks and personal protective equipment (PPE) within

medical facilities. These restrictions remained in place until the end of December 2021.

Vaccine Policies

The vaccine indicators record vaccination policies regarding the distribution of vaccines and vaccine mandates. This is recorded as V1-V4 and includes a state's prioritisation list, eligible groups, cost of vaccination to the individual, and the presence of a vaccine mandate. These indicators do not include a flag for geographic scope.

V1: Vaccine Prioritisation

V1 records the ranked position for different groups within a state's prioritisation plan when vaccines resources were too scarce for universal availability. Groups are ranked on an ordinal scale, the number represents the rank of prioritisation, and equal-ranked categories share the same number.

On December 9, 2020, the Department of Health of Colorado announced the vaccination prioritisation plan consisting of groups 1A: healthcare workers with extended, direct contact with patients, residents and workers of long-term care facilities; 1B: other healthcare workers and first responders; 2: any individual with at-risk comorbidities, individuals aged 65+, workers in contact with the public such as grocery store workers and educators, workers in high-density environments (eg. meat packing plants); 3: members of the public aged 18-64.

This plan was further specified by the Department of Health of Colorado on January 8, 2021, to include individuals aged 70+, frontline journalists, essential officials of the state legislature/judicial/executive branches, frontline workers including manufacturing, transit, postal service, retail in group 1B, as well as amend group 2 to lower the age to 60+ and include other government workers who are needed for the operation of the government.

On January 29, the Department of Health of Colorado updated the prioritisation list to include 6 phases for vaccination; 1A: healthcare workers, staff and residents of long-term care facilities; 1B.1: Coloradoans aged 70+, moderate-risk health care workers, general public aged 70+ and first responders such as paramedics; 1B.2: Coloradoans aged 65-69, grade pre-K to grade 12 educators, childcare workers and workers of state government; 1B.3: frontline essential workers, individuals aged 16-64 with two or more high

risk conditions; 2: individuals aged 60+, individuals with high-risk conditions, and workers of local government; 3: the general public.

Vaccine availability shifted from prioritised to universal on April 2, 2021 for individuals aged 16+.

V2: Vaccine Availability

V2 records when categories of people – regardless of their position in a prioritised rollout plan – receive vaccines. This is measured as 0 (vaccines are not being made available to this category) or 1 (vaccines are being made available to this category).

Vaccine administration began on December 14, 2020, when Colorado received its first shipment of Pfizer vaccines from the federal government and began vaccinating individuals in group 1A that day. This included healthcare workers and residents and patients in long term care facilities. On January 2, 2021, expansion of availability for administration included individuals within the 1B group. Governor Polis indicated a drive-up vaccination clinic would be operating over the weekend of January 2-3, expanding eligibility to include other healthcare workers and first responders as well as the general public aged 70+. By February 8, 2021, Colorado began vaccinating group 1B.2 including Coloradans aged 65-69, all Pre-K-12 teachers, student-facing educators or staff, childcare workers in licensed programs and essential state workers.

On March 5, Colorado began vaccinating individuals in group 1B.3. This included individuals aged 60 and older, grocery store and agriculture workers, individuals with two or more comorbidities, and frontline essential workers. By March 19, Colorado expanded to include individuals within group 1B.4 indicating nearly 2.5 million people were eligible for vaccination. Phase 1B.4 included individuals 50 years and older, higher education employees, food and restaurant workers, manufacturing workers, postal workers, public transit workers, public health workers, human service workers, faith leaders, individuals who provide direct care to those experiencing homelessness, frontline essential journalists, local government workers, adults who received a placebo during a COVID-19 vaccine trial, and individuals aged 16-49 with a high-risk condition. On April 2, 2021, Colorado progressed to phase 2, where vaccine administration was open to any individual 16 years or older. On May 12, 2021, Colorado began vaccinating people aged 12 and older.

V3: Vaccine Financial Support

All vaccines were government-funded at the federal-level across the US.

V4: Mandatory Vaccination

V4 measures the existence of a requirement to be vaccinated and is measured as 0 (no requirement to be vaccinated) or 1 (requirement to be vaccinated).

The first vaccine mandate was active on August 23, 2021, for all students, faculty and staff to be vaccinated at the University of Colorado. This policy was in alignment with the decision to institute a vaccine requirement for the Colorado University System in attempts to return to a traditional campus experience for the fall 2021 semester.

On September 20, 2021, all state employees were required to either be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or participate in twice-weekly testing. Not-fully-vaccinated or unvaccinated employees were required to wear masks inside state facilities when they are around others.

In Colorado, health care workers that interacted with patients were required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The rule affects all licensed health care entities, mandating personnel to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This included employees, direct contractors, and support staff who interacted with people receiving or seeking medical care. The rule allows for both medical and religious exemptions for personnel who are unable to be vaccinated. The deadline for healthcare workers to be fully vaccinated in Colorado was November 1, 2021.