

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

WYOMING

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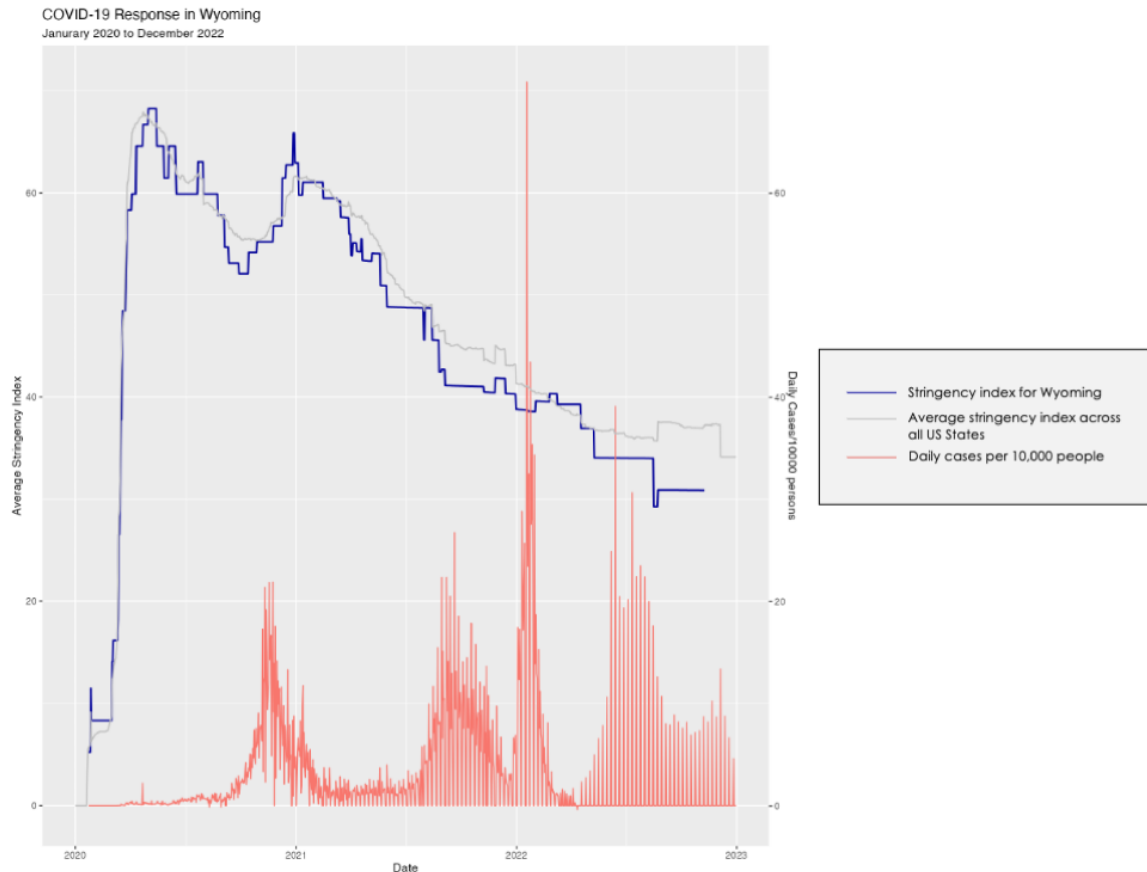
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Wyoming

Summary of Government Response to COVID-19



COVID-19 Response in Wyoming: Using the OxCGRT Stringency Index for Wyoming (blue) and the average OxCGRT Stringency Index across all US states, the above shows the overall government response to COVID-19 in Wyoming 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 Wyoming (red).

Summary

Wyoming first responded on January 27, 2020, preceding its first case on March 11, 2020 and death on April 13, 2020. The first policy enacted was the launch of a public information campaign (represented as the H1 indicator 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).

First school closure policies became active on March 19, 2020, in the form of all schools (K-12, trade schools, colleges, and universities) closed until April 3, 2020. School closures were extended until June 15, 2020.

During the summer months in 2020, the governor of Wyoming allowed schools to reopen with the specification of health safety requirements and summer schools could remain open. For the 2020-2021 school year, schools were allowed by state public health orders to be open and to provide in-person for groups of up to 50 in a classroom (or 250 in certain circumstances) throughout the fall, from September 28, 2020.

In the fall of 2021, the University of Wyoming, and Eastern Wyoming College saw COVID-19-related closures due to ongoing outbreaks. On November 17, 2020, Teton County schools moved to remote learning until November 30, 2020. Some schools moved to fully remote learning between Thanksgiving and Christmas (e.g., West Valley School District and University of Wyoming). Others returned to in-person classes after being remote (e.g., Teton County District).

On January 25, 2021, the University of Wyoming resumed in-person classes, but with hybrid learning. In Spring 2021, schools began to move back towards in-person learning.

On June 1, 2021, state-wide public health orders were no longer in effect. Unless circumstances warrant additional state-wide or local orders, specific protocols for the safe operation of K-12 schools during the pandemic were due to be determined at the school district level. On August 30, 2021, Teton School District voted to have a mask mandate within schools until December 31, 2021, after which mask-wearing became optional.

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 16, 2020, in the form of all municipal employees being ordered to work from home. This continued until May 1, 2020, when gymnasiums and childcare centers were allowed to open. Additional businesses were allowed to re-open on May 15, 2020, including restaurants, cafés, bars, gyms, movie theaters, and concert halls, under extensive sanitation and social distancing rules. On June 1, 2020, restrictions for opening aesthetic services (nail salons, hair salons, tattoo parlors, etc.) were lifted. Extensive restrictions remained, such as not allowing sick workers to work, and businesses "shall not operate" without adequate protective equipment.

C3: Cancel public events

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

First public event cancellation policies were active on March 19, 2020, in the form of all events of public nature including movie and performance theatres, operas, concerts, and music halls being required to close. This continued until June 15, 2020, when parades were allowed to take place with social distancing restrictions. On August 16, 2020, gathering sizes were increased making it easier for public events to occur. The order relaxed outdoor event restrictions to allow gatherings outdoors of up to 1000 people if that is 50% or less of capacity. Gatherings indoors had a limit of 50 people unless social distancing and extra sanitation is possible. On December 9, 2020, gathering sizes were decreased to 10, and people seated at an event were limited to groups of six unless all were members of the same household. In practice, this cancels most public events except religious services, funerals, and parades which were exempted. Reduced gathering sizes were sustained until May 21, 2021, when the Wyoming Department of Health eliminated the state-wide public health order #2, ending the restriction on 500 people at indoor events.

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 restriction on gathering was active on March 17, 2020 and restricted gatherings above 50 people. This continued until replaced on March 20, 2020, when gatherings above 10 people were restricted until April 3 - this was extended from March 27, 2020 until April 17, 2020. Following this, extensions continued until May 15, 2020, when gathering limits were increased to 25 people. On June 15, 2020 the gathering limit increased to 50 people without restrictions in confined spaces, and to 250 indoors with social distancing and increased sanitation.

From November 24, 2020, until December 15, 2020, gatherings became limited once again to 25 indoors if physical distancing was not possible, and with physical distancing, they can be 25% capacity up to 100. Gatherings were limited to 50% of capacity outdoors for up to 400 people. Gathering sizes were decreased again to 10 from December 9, 2020, through to January 8, 2021. On January 8, 2021, this order was extended until February 14, 2021. From February 15, 2021, until February 28, 2021, gathering sizes increased to 25 while increasing to 500 people for indoor events and 1000 people for outdoor events. On March 16, 2021, gatherings limits on private groups and gatherings outside were lifted. Gatherings of more than 500 were permitted at no more than 50% of venue capacity. On May 21, 2021, the restriction on 500 people at indoor events ended.

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).

The first public transport closure policies were active on April 11, 2020 in the form of the city of Cheyenne cancelling their fix-route public transit service. This continued until August 17, 2022, when Cheyenne no longer detailed their cancellation of a fixed-route bus as related to COVID-19.

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).

The first stay-at-home order was active on March 25, 2020 and recommended that all persons in Wyoming stayed at home. This continued until replaced on May 14, 2020, with the Governor's announcement that encouraged social distancing only.

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).

On April 3, 2020, a directive was issued asking travellers to Wyoming from another state or country, for non-work-related purposes, to self-quarantine for 14 days or the length of their visit. This continued until May 8, 2020, when the order expired.

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).

On April 3, 2020, the Governor of Wyoming required that all travellers (including residents) be quarantined for 14 days upon arrival in Wyoming. On April 30, 2020, this was extended until May 8, 2020, after which the order expired.

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).

No economic policies related to income support were enacted at the state level.

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 26, 2020, the Wyoming Public Service Commission ordered utilities not to shut off service. On March 30, 2020, the mayor of Cheyenne announced that there was a fund created (public-private partnership) to help Cheyenne residents, where they could apply for financial support. On June 4, 2020, a program created by Wyoming state legislatures launched, allowing for relief of payments to landlords or mortgage servicers. On September 4, 2020, Wyoming became subject to the CDC's ban on eviction, until January 12, 2021, when it became evident that Wyoming had not suspended evictions completely - allowing them if they could be processed through video proceeding. On February 8, 2021, Governor Gordon signed an order to prevent evictions prior to the implementation of the Federal Rental Assistance Program. However, it is not clear in the order whether evictions were being prevented and when they would be prevented.

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 first public information was available on January 27, 2020, when the Wyoming Department of Health began sharing recommendations and COVID-19 symptoms with healthcare providers. By March 2, 2020, a more coordinated public campaign was launched, and the public health department also began sharing information through its Facebook page.

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 4, 2020, the Wyoming state health department provided guidelines to health providers to prioritise testing for only those who were symptomatic with contact or travel. By April 22, 2020, the Department of Health expanded priorities to anyone with symptoms. On October 14, 2020, the governor announced a program to provide free at-home tests that would enable any resident to test for COVID-19.

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 February 10, 2020, the Department of Health provided guidelines on contact tracing and had limited numbers of contact tracers. By July 22, 2020, the Wyoming Health Department began receiving federal funding to help increase contact tracing efforts. After January 5, 2021, all communications from contact tracers stopped, with the exception of a few counties and tribes and certain priority situations.

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).

On April 6, 2020, the Wyoming Department of Health began recommending face coverings. By May 1, 2020, some businesses, such as salons, massage services, and tattoo/piercing shops, could reopen; however, staff was expected to wear masks. By March 1, 2021, the state-wide order mandated the wearing of face coverings at all times when entering or waiting in line in a public space. Masks were also required when obtaining services or visiting any health provider. On June 11, 2021, facial coverings were recommended state-wide. However, after August 30, 2021, a number of school districts and universities reinstated a mask mandate. On February 25, 2022, the last major school district ended its mask mandate. On February 26, 2022, the health department asked residents to consider wearing masks while few counties recommended mask usage. After May 10, 2022, there was no clear policy in place regarding mask use.

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).

On December 15, 2020, Pfizer vaccines were available to medical workers. By December 30, 2020, frontline medical workers, emergency responders, and long-term care residents and staff were vaccinated with both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. On January 25, 2021, people aged 70 years and older, frontline workers, teachers, first responders, and essential workers were vaccinated. Eventually, Wyoming began vaccinating the general public with Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. After April 19, 2021, people 6 months and older were vaccinated.

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).

The Wyoming Department of Health issued a visitation ban to long-term care facilities with an exception for compassion purposes on March 13, 2020. By

June 16, 2020, the governor relaxed the order and permitted outdoor visitation. Both indoor and outdoor visits were allowed by September 17, 2020, as long as safety measures, such as screening, frequent disinfection, and testing, were conducted.

On March 10, 2021, guidelines were provided based on the vaccination status of residents or visitors. Those that were not up to date on vaccinations could be quarantined, tested, or banned from indoor visits at any time, depending on the infection and transmission rates. The general recommendation was to have outdoor visits to reduce COVID-19 exposure. By March 10, 2022, Wyoming began following the guidelines outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It was encouraged to stay up to date with all vaccines and take extra precautions when hosting visits.

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.

The groups initially prioritised were healthcare workers, people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, people aged 65 and older (including those living in long-term care facilities), people at increased risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19, or people with limited access to routine vaccination services, and non-healthcare essential workers. Additionally, further prioritised groups included: additional critical workers, people with underlying conditions, those in congregate settings, and people with limited access to vaccination services in the plan first published November 25, 2020. This plan was further altered on December 31, 2020, to reprioritize residents and staff of long-term care facilities, assisted living facilities, and residential care facilities in Phase 1A and people who are 70 years of age or older and frontline essential workers in Phase 1B. Vaccine availability shifted from prioritised to universal on April 1, 2021.

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 15, 2020, for healthcare workers involved in direct patient care. The expansion of availability then included emergency responders and long-term care residents and staff on December 30, 2020, and those aged 75 and older on February 1, 2021. Following this, the expansion of availability continued to those aged 70 and above on February 8, 2021, educators and those aged 65 and older on February 15, 2021. On March 1, 2021, vaccination availability expanded to those with underlying conditions and at risk, caregivers caring for those at high risk, and frontline workers, followed by those aged 50 and older and those living in congregate settings on March 8, 2021. On May 12, 2021, vaccine availability expanded to ages 12 and older. On November 3, 2021, vaccine availability expanded to ages 5 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).

No vaccine mandates were active in Wyoming.