



Custer County Emergency Management and Custer County Public Health would like to address some of the recent concerns that have been raised regarding our response to COVID-19, specifically as it pertains to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

- Custer County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which is staffed by the Office of Emergency Management, the Office of Public Health, and qualified volunteers followed all state guidelines regarding the self-quarantine since its opening. We have heard concerns that an EOC staff member “broke quarantine.” The Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) set the following guidelines: A person should self-quarantine if they have a household member that has a positive COVID-19 test, has symptoms of COVID-19, or are getting ill. If you would like to read the guidelines in full, they can be found in the following link: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/> . Since no one on the EOC staff met the above requirements, no one “broke quarantine” and no one put other members of the public or fire department at risk.
- Another concern was voiced about a picture posted where an EOC worker broke social distancing protocol with an adult volunteer that was perceived to be a child. Both parties in the picture were adults. The EOC has acknowledged that they made a mistake in that instance and have self-corrected. Likewise, we encourage the public to be aware of the social distancing guidelines and follow them to the best of their ability.
- The EOC was operating in the Public Health Office, but this space was found to be too small to adhere to social distancing guidelines. A request was made to move the EOC to the Wet Mountain Fire Department training room. The space there would allow enough room to practice social distancing guidelines, remaining at least 6 feet from one another. The initial agreement included precautionary measures to ensure that EMS and Fire personnel could consistently and safely maintain a separate workspace from Custer Emergency Management and Custer Public Health during the COVID-19 response.

The initial agreement included the following precautionary measures which would be taken by EOC Staff:

- Use of a primary entrance/exit with an alternate entrance/exit for emergencies.
- Use of a single restroom, which would be cleaned multiple times per day and each evening prior to departing the Fire Department.

- Only access the EOC room, no access to truck bay or other spaces at the fire department.
- Disinfect the EOC room throughout the day, and each night prior to departing the Fire Department.

After concerns were voiced by the Wet Mountain Fire Board, a decision was made to move the EOC. The same precautionary measures listed above continue to be in place.

- Testing for COVID-19 has been extremely challenging, especially in a community that does not have a hospital. Custer County, along with many other jurisdictions in Colorado, was faced with many challenges in working to get the first cases tested. Testing supplies and lab resources were and continue to be limited both State and nationwide. Due to the lack of resources, testing results are now coming back to local jurisdictions up to 9 after the lab receives the test. We are working closely with the State and neighboring counties to ensure that our residents in Custer County, with a proper referral, can be tested for COVID-19. If you are currently experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and you receive a referral for a COVID-19 test, please contact Custer County Public Health for assistance.

This pandemic is constantly changing, and our country is learning more each day about how to slow it down and how to treat it. The Custer County personnel have learned from their mistakes and are putting our lessons learned into practice. We continue to plan and prepare not only for today, tomorrow, but also for the weeks ahead. We will continue to provide daily updates, with the most current information we have available for our county, and those updates can be found on our Facebook pages [@CusterCountyEmergencyManagement](#) and [@CusterCountyPublicHealthAgency](#) or <http://custercountygov.com/index.php?pg=covid19> .

If you would like more detailed information, please email us your questions: meredith@custercountygov.com or elisa@custercountygov.com