

RYAN P. SAYERS
District Attorney



LEANNE R. NEDZA
First Assistant District Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 9, 2020

Contact: Ryan P. Sayers,
District Attorney
(814) 765-2641 ext 5017

CLEARFIELD DA REASSURES LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT THEY WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED IF THEY REOPEN AND FOLLOW CDC GUIDELINES

CLEARFIELD, PENNSYLVANIA – Clearfield County District Attorney Ryan P. Sayers announced that any local business that wishes to reopen will not be prosecuted by his Office so long as they follow CDC guidelines relating to social distancing and cleanliness. Businesses that are already open pursuant to the directives of the Governor and Secretary of Health must continue to comply with these same restrictions.

Governor Wolf has labeled Clearfield County as being in the ‘Yellow Phase’ of his plan to reopen Pennsylvania. However, no guidance has been provided as to when a county can expect to be moved to the ‘Green Phase’ and fully reopened. Additionally, the Governor has yet to inform ‘non-essential businesses’ why they still have that status and why they cannot be open in the “Yellow Phase” of his plan.

“Many business owners and community members have contacted me and expressed concern, fear, and anger in regards to their inability to reopen or go to a business of their choosing,” said Sayers. “According to the Governor’s website, Clearfield County has had 24 positive cases, 556 negative cases, and zero deaths, since this pandemic started. In a county of almost 80,000, that means roughly 0.03% have contracted COVID-19 in an almost two-month period. The curve has been flattened. However, the backbone of the Clearfield County economy, small businesses, are continuing to be shuttered arbitrarily by the Governor.”

Sayers continued, “the Constitution of the United States guarantees certain rights and there is no caveat in there for a virus. I swore an oath to support, obey, and defend the Constitution of the United States and of this Commonwealth. Based on the data and in speaking with local, county, and state officials, I cannot in good conscience continue to allow the rights of the people of Clearfield County to be infringed upon. People should be free to choose if they want to go somewhere or stay home, and from which store they wish to buy from, instead of being forced to certain locations because of the unchecked decision of two individuals.”

“With that said, one concern that I have for some small business owners is their license through a state agency. There is nothing the District Attorney can do if a state agency decides to revoke a license for businesses like salons, bars, restaurants, etc., which would obviously shutter the business. However, one would hope that the Governor would not target these licenses if a business decided to reopen while taking the appropriate safety precautions.”

The Clearfield County District Attorney’s Office will not prosecute a business that reopens, so long as the business complies with the guidelines of the CDC. If a business fails to comply with these safety measures, then these allegations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.