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– <https://www.swr.de/swraktuell/rheinland-pfalz/lockerungen-corona-102.html>

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AFTER TELE-CONFERENCE OF STATE PRIME MINISTERS AND CHANCELLOR

Dreyer announces relaxation for all areas of life

The federation and the states have agreed on more relaxation in the fight against the corona virus. Restaurants and beauty salons are authorized to open again in Rhineland-Palatinate; contact restrictions are also alleviated.

As Malu Dreyer (SPD) announced after the tele-conference of the state prime ministers with Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) Wednesday afternoon, contact restrictions will generally continue to stay in effect until June 5; however, there has been the alleviation that members of two households are now allowed to meet. Before people were only allowed to stay in the public alone or with no more than one other person of another household or in company with members of their own household.

In this aspect she appealed to the other state prime ministers and to the chancellor to not elevate provisions for contact restrictions solely on the level of the states, said Dreyer. The solution which has been found now is a naturalistic way of procedure.

“I think that we have coped with the first wave of corona crisis quite well, but we must not carelessly handle that and we will still have to pull at the same rope”, said State Prime Minister Malu Dreyer (SPD)

“Good Successes with the Number of Infections”

Dreyer also announced loosening of restrictions for other areas of life: gastronomy businesses, adult education institutions, services for the bodily well-being such like cosmetic studios and tanning studios will be able to resume operation. She announced May 13 as the effective date for these relaxations. In a second step hotels are to follow, effective May 18.

Corona Relaxations in the State of Rhineland-Palatinate: these are the next Steps

They also wanted to give perspectives to cultural activities, soon. Leisurely sports and mass sports activities will also be authorized again, according to Dreyer. But there will be no competitions. Some individual sports disciplines and sports

disciplines for pairs like tennis and golf have been authorized to resume since April 20. River cruises with passengers will also be authorized to resume operations.

With reference to mass events the prime minister said that a firm maximum number of participants has not been set to decide upon whether or not an event may take place. Nobody was interested to set such a bench mark. All events are individually different; some rules still have to be found. Large community celebrations and festivals for example have been forbidden until August 31. With reference to the situation at the borders to France and Luxembourg Dreyer announced that this topic will play a major part during the meeting of the corona cabinet on the federal level this coming Thursday.

Careful loosening of Restrictions for Child Development Centers

There will soon be loosening of restrictions for child development centers (CDC) and schools. State Secretary for Education, Stefanie Hubig (SPD), explained that the next wave of students is to return to schools in Rhineland-Palatinate on May 25. This also applies to third classes in elementary schools as well as to classes in secondary level I in intermediate schools. Besides that effective May 18 classes of the vocational training institutions have also been scheduled to return to classroom education. All other classes are to return to their schools for full days effective June 8 until the summer recess.

Severe Restrictions for Gastronomy Businesses

Before that secretaries of economy of the federation and the states had already agreed on loosening of restrictions for gastronomy and hotels in a separate tele-conference. They said they would like to do that in a uniform approach. Public houses and restaurants in Rhineland-Palatinate are authorized to resume business under severe restrictions. E.g. one must always be able to follow who stayed in the restaurant at what time, said Dreyer. For this reason a visit in a restaurant will always require a reservation, and patrons will be seated by management. In the end and following the process of infections one always must know where infected persons have stayed before.

“Special Measures must be re-applied in direct Response to Regional Sources of Infection.” Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU)

In reference to infection statistics in Rhineland-Palatinate Dreyer said they had made a lot of progress. “I think we have very well coped with this first phase of the corona crisis, but we must not carelessly play it away, and we must continue to pull together.” People may now dare a little more” but they must consider: those who

effect loosening too fast will risk an increase in infections; those who are too hesitant risk severe economic damage, said the SPD politician.

“Emergency Mechanism” agreed upon

Dreyer explained that – in spite of relaxation as agreed upon – in case of local sources of Covid-19 infections an “emergency mechanism” which has been agreed upon between the federation and the states will be triggered: “When there will be local sources of infection, special measures have to be applied again”, Chancellor Merkel explained during a press conference in Berlin. According to the agreement the states are to assure that counties or cities with more than 50 new infections per 100,000 citizens within seven days must implement a consistent concept of restrictions.

New rules will also apply to retirement homes. Residents will be allowed again to receive visitors.

CDU asks for Planning Dependability, AfD opposes Shutdown

With reference to loosening of restrictions Chairman of the CDU parliamentary group in the Parliament to Rhineland-Palatinate, Christian Baldauf, requested that Dreyer should present a “restart plan” for Rhineland-Palatinate soonest. People must be informed in clear words what will drive the loosening, or tightening of corona restrictions. At current there remain unanswered questions

He also renewed his request for expedited assistance for small and mid-sized businesses – this were of existential importance for many enterprises in the gastronomy branch. Loosening of restrictions, however, does not mean that gastronomy businesses are out of the danger zone.

In advance to the tele-conference between the federation and the states AfD [right-wing, extremist, Nazi-inclined party K.B.] had stated that lockdown had to end as soon as possible. Enterprises should be allowed to resume operation under restrictions. One could very well debate whether or not all measures and restrictions during corona crisis had been necessary, said the chairman of the parliamentary group of AfD, Uwe Junge.

As of May 6, 7.58 p.m.