

U.S. Federal Judge Strikes Down Pennsylvania's COVID Mandates as Unconstitutional

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A federal judge ruled on Monday that Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf's and Secretary of Health Rachel Levine's coronavirus orders, which shut down the state, closed businesses and limited gatherings, were unconstitutional.

U.S. District Judge William Stickman IV agreed with the plaintiffs claim that Wolf's business shutdown and stay-at-home orders violated certain constitutional rights.

The plaintiffs include Butler, Fayette, Greene and Washington counties, four Republican lawmakers and several small businesses in those counties.

Stickman [said in his opinion](#) that COVID-19 orders from Wolf and Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Rachel Levine violated and continue to violate the First Amendment right to freedom of assembly and the due process and equal protection clauses of the 14th Amendment.

Stickman wrote that he believes Wolf and state Secretary of Health Rachel Levine:

“undertook their actions in a well-intentioned effort to protect Pennsylvania from the virus. However, good intentions toward a laudable end are not alone enough to uphold

governmental action against a constitutional challenge.”

Stickman also wrote that the government engaged in a dangerous strategy where rights were taken away.

“In an emergency, even a vigilant public may let down its guard over its constitutional liberties only to find that liberties, once relinquished, are hard to recoup and the restrictions ... may persist long after immediate danger has passed.”

Sources

[The Hill](#)

[Butler Eagle](#)