

## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Southwest Nebraska to Move into Phase 4 DHMs**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) will move into Phase 4 of reopening with Directed Health Measures (DHM) that will be in effect August 1st. SWNPHD will be the third local health department in the state to move into Phase 4, with the rest remaining in Phase 3 until August 31st.

“Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department continues to work closely with the public and partners to monitor the spread of the virus in the health district,” said Myra Stoney, Health Director of SWNPHD. “Even with a recent upward trend of COVID-19 cases due to a cluster we are actively managing, the health district is still reporting the lowest numbers in Nebraska. The transition from Phase 3 to Phase 4 of the DHMs does not change an individual’s personal responsibility for reducing virus transmission. Practicing safety measures such as maintaining good social distancing, wearing a face covering when appropriate, washing hands frequently and staying home when you are sick is everyone’s responsibility to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and to protect your friends, family, and neighbors.

“We understand the need for our communities to get back to normal, but please think of those people you meet every day who need your continued protection and vigilance. As we move into this new phase, your actions are more critical now than ever before. We all want to feel a sense of normalcy, but we must do it safely. Please continue to do these very simple acts of kindness, so you can be secure in knowing that you are not the cause of someone’s sickness or death.”

The outline of changes found in Phase 4 includes:

#### **Gatherings:**

- Indoor gatherings will be limited to 75% of rated occupancy.
- Outdoor gatherings can be 100% of rated occupancy.
- Gatherings include but are not limited to Indoor or Outdoor Arenas, Indoor or Outdoor Auctions, Stadiums, Tracks, Fairgrounds, Festivals, Zoos, Auditoriums, Large Event Conference Rooms, Meeting Halls, Indoor Theaters, Libraries, Swimming Pools, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.
- Six (6) feet separation between groups remains in guidance.

- Plans for reopening or expanding to new capacity limits must be submitted to the local health departments and approved for all indoor and outdoor locations/venues that hold 500 or more individuals. The reopening plan must contain planned number of guests, how the location will meet social distancing guidelines, and sanitation guidelines.

All other previous requirements are removed from the DHM and remain as recommended guidance for protecting communities and preventing the spread of the virus.

These guidance documents can be found on the COVID-19 Information pages of [dhhs.ne.gov](https://dhhs.ne.gov), or on SWNPHD's website [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov). You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook.

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