

NEWS RELEASE

September 7, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Myra Stoney, Health Director, director@swhealth.ne.gov, 308-345-4223

COVID-19 Timeline Across the Pandemic

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) had 100 new cases of COVID-19 reported from August 31st to September 6, 2021, bringing the weekly average to 72 cases per week in the last 30 days. A breakdown by age includes: 0 to 19 – 31; 20 to 29 – 10; 30 to 39 – 13; 40 to 49 – 12; 50 to 59 – 13; 60 to 69 – 9; 70 to 79 – 8; 80 and over – 4. The total number of cases is 4,325. SWNPHD also received confirmation of one additional death due to COVID-19. Vaccination rates across the health district have reached 47%. This number includes fully vaccinated as well as partially vaccinated individuals.

Health Director Myra Stoney commented, “The COVID-19 pandemic has changed frequently over the past year and a half. Our goal at SWNPHD has always been to help people make informed decisions about their health. Sometimes we get caught in political crosshairs, but we focus on providing information that is evidence-based. SWNPHD remains committed to recommending guidelines that are supported by quality data for the duration of the pandemic.”

Timeline of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Southwest Nebraska

2020

February	First confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States.
March	First confirmed case in Nebraska. School campuses closed. International travelers required to self-quarantine for 14 days.
April	First confirmed case in SWNPHD. Directed Health Measures enacted prohibiting gatherings.
May	Total of 18 cases in SWNPHD. National Guard conducted mass testing for COVID-19. Churches, some businesses, and elective surgeries allowed to resume in the Directed Health Measures.
June	Total of 22 cases in SWNPHD. First death due to COVID-19 in SWNPHD. Started work with schools on safe reopening plans. Moved to Phase II of statewide reopening, then Phase III.
July	COVID-19 Community Risk Dial launched, with SWNPHD in yellow. Case counts spike up to 70 total.
August	Total of 140 cases. Moved to Phase IV of statewide reopening.
September	Total of 226 cases.
October	Total of 755 cases. Risk dial moved to orange. Directed Health Measures increase restrictions for gathering. Masking is recommended.
November	Total of 2,037 cases. Hospitals across the state begin to reach capacity limits. Risk dial moved to red. Directed Health Measures increase restrictions.
December	Total of 2, 875 cases. Risk dial moved to orange. DHM restrictions decreased as

	hospitalized COVID-19 cases drops below 20% of total capacity. Vaccine becomes available to healthcare and other frontline workers in Phase 1A.
--	---

2021

February	Total of 3,720 cases. Positive case rates decrease further. Vaccination progressed to Phase 1B for 65+ and critical infrastructure.
March	Total of 3,779 cases. COVID vaccine moves to Phase 2, available for anyone age 18 and older. Over 8,000 doses of COVID vaccine are distributed. First case of the Delta variant identified in the United States.
April	Total of 3,806 cases. 200 doses of single-dose J&J distributed, along with Moderna and Pfizer two-dose series.
May	Total of 3,837 cases. Pfizer receives FDA approval to vaccinate age 12 and older. Total vaccinated in SWNPHD is 13,480.
June	Total of 3,893 cases. 39% of SWNPHD is vaccinated. First case of the Delta variant identified in SWNPHD.
July	Total of 3,984 cases. Positive cases begin increasing due to spread of the Delta variant.
August	Total of 4,247 cases. 46% vaccinated in SWNPHD. Hospitalizations due to COVID-19 increase and begin to limit bed capacity statewide. Pfizer COVID vaccine receives full FDA approval for use in the United States.

Stoney continues, “As much as we would like to be done with COVID-19, it is still a threat to people in our communities. It is time to think of others around you and take steps to protect your community.”

SWNPHD would like to answer questions that residents have about the COVID vaccines, such as: ***Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I would like to have a baby one day?*** Yes. COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for everyone 12 years of age or older, including people who are trying to get pregnant now or might become pregnant in the future, as well as their partners. Getting infected with COVID-19 during pregnancy puts the mother at higher risk of severe illness. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine strongly encourages all women to receive COVID-19 vaccination when pregnant or attempting pregnancy to maximize the chance of a healthy pregnancy. Currently no evidence shows that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems (problems trying to get pregnant) in women or men.

Visit swhealth.ne.gov for information on COVID-19. 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 and can be reached by calling 308-345-4223.

###