


News Release

DHHS Friday COVID-19 Update

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Phase 3 reopening restrictions extended two weeks, until Sept. 13

LINCOLN – The state case total, as of 5:45 p.m. CT today, is 33,436, an increase of 1,810 from last Friday. There were 16 new COVID-19-related deaths in the state, for a total of 392. A total of 25,282 Nebraskans diagnosed with COVID-19 have since recovered.

The daily average of positive cases for Aug. 22-28 is 259, compared to 234, 269 and 270 in recent weeks.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Gov. Pete Ricketts, local health department leaders, and medical experts across the state continue to stress the importance of masks and ask Nebraskans to wear them along with taking the preventive actions listed below:

1. Wear a face covering – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers tips on how to select, wear and clean a reusable mask - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html> 
 - **Do choose masks that**

- have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric
 - completely cover your nose and mouth
 - fit snugly against the side of your face and don't have gaps
 - **Do not choose masks that**
 - are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl
 - have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape
 - are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks
2. Keep your distance - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html> 
 3. Wash your hands - <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html> 
 4. Know your risk - https://www.nebraskamed.com/COVID/7-steps-to-identify-risky-covid-19-situations?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MIM07012020 
 5. Stay home - if you're sick or if you've been exposed to COVID-19 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html> 
 6. Get tested - if you've been exposed or have symptoms via [TestNebraska.com](https://www.testnebraska.com)  or [TestNebraska.com/es](https://www.testnebraska.com/es)  for Spanish, or another testing site in your community

DHM restrictions extended

DHHS announced this week that Phase 3 Directed Health Measures (DHMs) will be extended for two weeks, continuing until Sunday, Sept 13. Unless hospitalizations dramatically increase, the 66 Nebraska counties currently in Phase 3 will move to Phase 4 of reopening on Monday, Sept. 14, and remain until Saturday, Oct. 31.

The Phase 4 DHM moves restrictions on restaurants, bars, churches, child care centers, and other businesses to guidance, and allows outdoor venues to operate at full capacity. Arenas and event centers may operate at 75 percent capacity, though organizers of events of 500 or more people must still receive local health department approval prior to reopening.

Twenty-seven counties are currently in Phase 4, which will be extended through Wednesday, Sept. 30.



A summary of each county's status and Phase 4 measures is available online at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Directed-Health-Measures.aspx>. Guidance associated with these next steps is posted at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Nebraska-Guidance-Documents.aspx>.

Regardless of the county of residence, recommendations remain for all Nebraskans to continue social distancing, as well as to wear face coverings, wash hands frequently, and stay home when sick to help limit COVID-19 transmission. Anyone with close contact to someone testing positive for COVID-19 is encouraged to quarantine and get tested.

Test Nebraska now in close to 60 locations across state

Test Nebraska lab capacity continues to expand and more appointments and locations have been added as testing scales up at hospitals and community centers. Expanded testing is being used to help long-term care facilities, schools and communities identify COVID-19 cases and respond to slow virus spread.

Those concerned they may have been exposed to COVID-19 or who are experiencing symptoms, can receive a free test through Test Nebraska. Symptoms can include a fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, tiredness, muscle aches, headaches, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

To reserve a test, complete an online assessment at TestNebraska.com , or using TestNebraska/es  for Spanish, and schedule a visit at one of more

than 50 locations across the state.


Nebraskans with general questions about testing or need help completing the online assessment can call the **Test Nebraska hotline** at (402) 207-9377.

Nebraskans seeking information or help with general questions can call the DHHS COVID-19 information hotline at (402) 552-6645, or toll-free (833) 998-2275. The COVID-19 hotline is open 8 a.m.-8 p.m. CT, 7 days a week. DHHS will continue to share new information via the DHHS website, as well as Facebook and Twitter.

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