

News Release

DHHS COVID-19 Weekly Update

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LINCOLN – The latest statewide total of COVID-19 cases is 130,194 as of Dec. 2. There have been 130 COVID-19-related deaths in Nebraska reported in the last seven days, for a total of 1,080. To date, a total of 64,975 Nebraskans testing positive for COVID-19 have recovered.

Over the last week, daily hospitalizations have been slightly lower than recent highs, with Nebraska hospitals caring for an average of 910 COVID-19 patients a day versus an average of 968 during the prior week.

The daily average of new positive cases over the last seven days is 1,787, compared to a daily average of 1,982 new cases last week, and 2,296 and 1,953 cases in prior weeks.

	Nov. 10	Nov. 17	Nov. 24	Dec. 1
Total positive cases	87,733	103,805	117,682	130,194
Current hospitalizations	860	978	936	869

Total deaths	730	816	950	1,080
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“COVID-19 hospitalizations remain very high and continue to be a challenge for our health care workers,” said Dr. Gary Anthonie, Chief Medical Officer and Director of Public Health for DHHS. “To everyone who has made adjustments in their daily life, changed plans, and continues to wear a mask, thank you. Those decisions have made a difference for our health care workers. They've been able to manage the patients needing their help.

“We won't know the full impact of Thanksgiving on the trajectory of the pandemic for some time. Our hospitalizations are already high. We must all continue being vigilant about our movements and diligent about limiting opportunities for transmission.”

Nebraskans are reminded to wear a mask, watch your distance, wash hands and avoid the 3Cs – crowded places, close contact with others, and confined spaces – every time you're away from home.

Winter safety

Those who hosted or attended a holiday gathering with people from outside their household over Thanksgiving are encouraged to be extra vigilant in practicing social distancing and to self-monitor.

Anyone who may have been exposed to COVID-19, should quarantine and get tested. Everyone is encouraged to avoid the three Cs – crowded places, close contact and confined spaces.

DHMs Continue

A five-phase series of Directed Health Measures (DHMs) remain in effect for the entire state. DHM restrictions are aimed at protecting hospital capacity for urgent medical care as COVID-19 hospitalizations remain high.

More than 20% of beds are currently needed for COVID-19 patients, putting the state in the orange threshold, which is the second most restrictive of the five levels of directives. Many elective surgeries requiring an inpatient hospital stay are restricted, along with the capacity of indoor gatherings and other measures.

An outline of DHM restrictions is available at <https://www.dropbox.com/s/hmadcuih3j2xlyd/Color-Coded%20%20Phase%20Comparison%2011.13.20.pdf?dl=0> .

Second New Testing Pod Arriving in Lincoln

The second of two drive through testing pods is being installed this week in Lincoln on the Gateway Mall campus to support expanded testing. The two pods will support mobile COVID-19 testing during the winter months.

In addition to the two pods in Lincoln, two more are in use in Omaha at Metropolitan Community College's Fort Omaha and South Omaha campuses.

A total of five drive-through and five walk-up pods will be used to support testing. The drive-through pods provide a heated, enclosed center unit for healthcare workers and enclosed garages to administer tests to drivers and passengers who remain in their vehicle. The freestanding walk-up model allows medical personnel to collect data while minimizing contact with patients.

COVID Vaccine Update

At the Governor's press conference today, DHHS provided an update on the first round of COVID-19 vaccine distribution. The Nebraska Immunization Program continues its COVID-19 vaccine planning, distribution, and administration. Forecasts from the federal government project that Nebraska will receive approximately 100,000 doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines (combined) by month's end.

- Forecasted allocations for Nebraska (these numbers are projected and subject to change):
 - Week of December 13-19
 - Pfizer: 16,500
 - Week of December 20-26
 - Pfizer: 19,500
 - Moderna: 32,100
 - Week of December 27-31
 - Pfizer: 23,400
 - Moderna: 14,200

Due to limited COVID-19 vaccines, immunization programs have been encouraged to utilize a phased approach to vaccine allocation. It's vitally important that those on the frontlines in the fight against the pandemic stay as healthy as possible and that we reduce their chances of spreading this virus. This is why the first allocations will focus on healthcare personnel. Groups prioritized for vaccination can be found in the [State of Nebraska COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#)  and are subject to further clarification and prioritization by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

COVID-19 Testing via Test Nebraska

Those who 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.

Visit [Testnebraska.com](https://testnebraska.com) , or TestNebraska/es  for Spanish, to schedule an appointment at one of more than 60 Test Nebraska locations across the

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

Nebraskans seeking information or needing help with general questions can call the DHHS COVID-19 hotline, available from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. CT, seven days a week, by calling (402) 552-6645, or toll-free (833) 998-2275. DHHS will continue to share new information via its Coronavirus website, <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>, as well as on Facebook and Twitter.

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