



August 18, 2020

For immediate release

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Goal is to keep schools and businesses open while mitigating risk

Panhandle total: 517, Active: 72, Recovered: 439, Deaths: 6

When there is a confirmed COVID-19 positive case in a school or business, they are not required to close. It is public health’s goal to keep everything running safely while swiftly mitigating risk through disease investigation, contact tracing, and quarantining any close contacts. Masks and social distancing are critical prevention tools in who will then need to self-quarantine.

Students and employees can do their critical part by wearing a mask, especially when social distancing is difficult to maintain, monitoring for symptoms, frequently washing or sanitizing their hands, and staying informed of important updates happening in their communities.

Unified Command confirms thirteen more cases of COVID-19 in the Panhandle. The investigations are underway, all close contacts will be quarantined and actively monitored for symptoms by public health officials.

Children 19 and under: 3		
County	Cases	Exposure Type
Dawes	1	Community Spread
Scotts Bluff	1	Community Spread
Scotts Bluff	1	Unknown

Adults: 10		
County	Cases	Exposure Type
Dawes	4	Community Spread
Dawes	2	Close Contact
Scotts Bluff	1	Travel
Scotts Bluff	2	Unknown
Scotts Bluff	1	Close Contact

Unified Command confirms five more recoveries in the Panhandle:

Recovered: 5

County	Total
Scotts Bluff	4
Sheridan	1

Testing information and access for the Panhandle area:

- You can sign up for the following free testing at [Testnebraska.com](https://www.testnebraska.com) or 402-207-9377:
 - Box Butte General Hospital in **Alliance**: Monday-Friday, 9-10am
 - Ambulance Bay on the east side of the emergency department, watch for the green arrows
 - **Chadron** Community Hospital: Mondays & Fridays, 7-9am
 - Collections are at 821 Morehead Street (Old Hospital ER Entrance next to Wilson Park)
 - **Gordon** Memorial Hospital: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2-4pm
 - Regional West Health Services in **Scottsbluff**: Monday-Friday, Noon-4pm
 - **Sidney** Regional Medical Center: Tuesdays & Thursday, 7-9am
- Community Action Health Center in **Gering**: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays, 7-8am
 - Testing is free, sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/yvdxr5mc>
- Morrill County Community Hospital in **Bridgeport**: Daily
 - Call 308-262-1616 for testing, same day results, insurance will be billed
- Contact your local hospital or clinic for information on testing access.

March 2-August 18, 2020

- **Total Tests Conducted: 9,971**
- **Positive: 517**
- **Cumulative Positivity Rate: 5.2%**
- **Recovered: 439**
- **Active Cases: 72**
- **Deaths: 6**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 4**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 55**

Panhandle Public Health District, Region 21, 22, and 23 Emergency Management, and Scotts Bluff County Health Department are working as a unified command on this evolving situation. Essential updates will be regularly communicated to the public and community partners.

For the most up to date information from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website www.pphd.org.