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For immediate release

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## **Nebraska infection control expert equates a COVID vaccinated person to wearing a fireproof suit**

Kate Tyner, BSN, RN, CIC with Nebraska Infection Control Assessment and Promotion Program (ICAP) joined the Monday, May 24 Panhandle briefing to provide additional understanding and recommendations for fully vaccinated people.

“People that have received their COVID vaccine are similar to wearing a fireproof suit,” Tyner explained. “For those that have their fireproof suit, it’s become a lot safer to go to restaurants, bars, and public places. For anyone that hasn’t gotten vaccinated, they still have the risk of getting COVID.”

While people are trying to embrace moving forward, the vaccine is a huge part of safely returning to normalcy.

Things are starting to look a lot safer for people that are vaccinated but there are still certain restrictions in healthcare settings and through Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for nursing homes for the safety of patients, residents, and elders living in congregant living settings. This is due to people in these settings being in closer proximity to one another and at higher rates of living with chronic health conditions. COVID remains a risk through an unvaccinated person bringing it in.

“We hope that as community cases continue to go down and vaccination rates continue to go up, the federal requirements from CMS will continue to loosen,” Tyner concluded.

Governor Ricketts announced today the ending of the Governor’s Directed Health Measure effective at 11:59pm. Throughout the Panhandle, the same processes for contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation will continue as it remains needed to stop the spread of COVID.

Pfizer is available in the Panhandle and anyone 12 and older can get vaccinated! There is no charge for the vaccine.

- **Box Butte/Grant:** <https://tinyurl.com/25mwaapu> | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com)
  - *Walk-ins welcome* Dave's Pharmacy Hemingford & Alliance, Monday-Friday
  - Moderna or Johnson & Johnson 8a-5:30p | Pfizer 2p-5:30p

- Alliance Community Pharmacy, Monday-Friday
- Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson 7:30a-6p
- **Cheyenne/Deuel:** <https://tinyurl.com/5b5uac8p> | [walmart.com](https://walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://safeway.com)
- **Dawes/Sioux:** <https://tinyurl.com/x5d5nnbn> | [walmart.com](https://walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://safeway.com)
  - *Walk-ins welcome* Western Community Health Resources, Monday-Friday, 12:30p-1:30p
  - Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson
- **Garden:** sign up at [vaccinate.ne.gov](https://vaccinate.ne.gov) - provider will call you
  - *Walk-ins welcome* Regional West Garden County Clinic Front Desk, Monday-Friday, 8a-5p
  - Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson
- **Kimball:** <https://tinyurl.com/d2u8txrs>
  - *Walk-ins welcome* Kimball Health Sevices, Monday-Friday, 8a-4:30p
  - Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson
- **Morrill:** <https://tinyurl.com/sb8mvumm>
  - *Walk-ins welcome* Morrill County Hospital Clinic, Wednesdays, 8a-4p
  - Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson
- **Sheridan:** <https://tinyurl.com/cvrmkv38>
- **Scotts Bluff/Banner:** <https://tinyurl.com/w6b84fkf> | [walmart.com](https://walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://safeway.com) | [walgreens.com](https://walgreens.com)
  - *Walk-ins welcome* Click on <https://tinyurl.com/w6b84fkf> to see availability.

People who are fully COVID vaccinated will not be required to quarantine due to close contact. If you have lost your COVID vaccine card, go to <https://tinyurl.com/2zh7uhhu>.

Unified Command confirms 38 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Monday, May 17. The investigations are underway, all close contacts will be quarantined.

All Ages: 38	
County	Cases
Banner	0
Box Butte	6
Cheyenne	1
Dawes	1
Deuel	8
Garden	0
Grant	0
Kimball	6
Morrill	4
Scotts Bluff	7
Sheridan	5
Sioux	0

Exposure Type	
Community	32%
Close Contact	63%
Travel	0%
Under Investigation	5%

**March 2, 2020-May 24, 2021**

- **Total Tests Conducted: 38,926**
- **Positive: 9,101**
- **Last 14 days (active) cases: 57**
- **Last week's cases: 39**
- **Last week's positivity rate: 9.5%**
- **Deaths: 196**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 2**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 550**
- **Doubling time (November 15, 2020 – May 24, 2021): 190 days**

Current COVID testing access can be found at [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org).

The Panhandle COVID dashboard is now being updated on Mondays only prior to the 3:30pm MT briefing and available at [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org). For the most up to date information from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

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.

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](http://www.pphd.org).