



August 2, 2021

For immediate release

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**Health Director shares on Monday briefing: *The trajectory we are on may feel a lot like last year, but the fact is, it is different. We have the answer this year that we didn't last year.***

Effective July 30, 2021, county-specific data can only be reported for populations of 20,000 or greater. PPHD will no longer maintain a risk dial. Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is looking at other ways to inform risk.

“We understand that this is frustrating and disappointing and we are working at alternative ways to inform the public. We also understand that many sectors of our communities rely heavily on the risk dial to determine which preventive steps should be taken. Our hope is that plans can still be developed with the new solution,” said Kim Engel Panhandle Public Health District Director.

Hospitalizations are up from four last week to seven this week. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID Data Tracker is showing some Panhandle counties are at a high level of community transmission. This tracker is accessible here <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>.

“We’ve all learned so much in the last year and a half, we can’t just put our arms up and shut our doors and keep this virus out. What we’ve been seeing around us is likely to happen here too. The trajectory we are on may feel a lot like last year, but the fact is, it is different. We have the answer this year that we didn’t last year,” Engel shared.

She added, “We have three vaccine options that are working and this is the best prevention step that can be taken. Prevention for you and prevention for those that are too young to be vaccinated. Most of the people who are hospitalized or who are dying have not been vaccinated. Please, I can’t stress enough to you, get vaccinated.”

Engel shared other datasets that compared the Panhandle to other health districts throughout the state. Statewide, the Panhandle has the highest case rate per 100,000 for the last 14 days and one of the lowest vaccination rates. This is similar to what other states are seeing in the nation, the lower the fully vaccinated rate is, the higher the case rate is going to be.

Another dataset shared was the COVID vaccination breakdown by age group. Both datasets will be shared with the public as they are made available.

Vaccinations have protection against all known variants, including Delta. For any youth age 12 and older preparing to return to school, make sure getting your COVID vaccine is on the list. COVID vaccine is available across the Panhandle. 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, 8 AM - 5:30 PM (Pfizer 2 PM- 5:30 PM)
  - Alliance Community Pharmacy, Monday-Friday, 7:30 AM - 6 PM
- **Cheyenne/Deuel:** <https://tinyurl.com/5b5uac8p> | [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com)
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - During COVID clinic hours visit <https://tinyurl.com/5b5uac8p> for days and hours
- **Dawes/Sioux:** <https://tinyurl.com/x5d5nnbn> | [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com)
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - Western Community Health Resources, Monday-Friday, 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
- **Garden:** To schedule an appointment visit [vaccinate.ne.gov](https://www.vaccinate.ne.gov) - provider will call you
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - Regional West Garden County Clinic Front Desk, Monday-Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM
- **Kimball:** <https://tinyurl.com/d2u8txrs>
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - Kimball Health Services, Monday-Friday, 8 AM - 4:30 PM
- **Morrill:** <https://tinyurl.com/sb8mvumm>
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - Morrill County Hospital Clinic, Wednesdays, 8 AM - 4 PM
- **Sheridan:** <https://tinyurl.com/cvrmkv38>
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - Gordon Rural Health Clinic, Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM- 9:30 AM
- **Scotts Bluff/Banner:** <https://tinyurl.com/hkw7wk2p> | [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com) | [walgreens.com](https://www.walgreens.com)
  - *Walk-ins welcome*
  - Gering CAPWN Health Center, Monday-Friday, 9 AM-12 PM & 1 PM-4 PM
  - Scottsbluff County Immunization Clinic, Monday-Friday, 9:40 AM-12:30 PM & 1:30 PM-5:30 PM
  - Morrill Clinic, Morrill, June 30, July 21, August 11, September 1, 5:30 PM-6:30 PM

If you are homebound or have a condition that makes it hard for you to access a COVID vaccine, please call Kim Engel at 308-633-2866 ext 101.

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 55 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Monday, July 26.

<b>All Ages: 55</b>	
<b>County</b>	<b>Cases</b>
<b>Scotts Bluff</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Greater Panhandle</b>	<b>31</b>

<b>Exposure Type</b>	
<b>Community</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Close Contact</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Travel</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Under Investigation</b>	<b>22%</b>

**March 2, 2020-August 2, 2021**

- **Total Tests Conducted: 40,969**
- **Positive: 9,388**
- **Last 14 days (active) cases: 78**
- **Last week's cases: 47**
- **Last week's positivity rate: 21.1%**
- **Deaths: 197**
- **Deaths Pending Verification: 5**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 7**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 565**

Nebraska ended the state testing program Test Nebraska on July 18, 2021. Current COVID testing access can be found at <http://pphd.org/COVID-19.html>.

The Panhandle COVID dashboard is updated on Mondays only 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).

