



**Immediate Release – October 16, 2020**

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**District Case Count Update**

Burwell, NE – As of Friday, October 16, 2020, four hundred and sixty-three (463) COVID-19 cases have been reported by Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD). Cases counts continue to increase at an alarming rate across the district. One hundred and eighty-nine (189) cases, or 41% of the district’s total cases, have been reported in the last three weeks.

The breakdown by county below shows the number of positive tests since the start of the pandemic, the number of those considered to be recovered and the number of deaths attributed to COVID-19. Two additional deaths were reported last week, both individuals in their 70s (one from Sherman and one from Valley counties).

County	Positive Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Active Cases
<b>Blaine</b>	3	1	0	2
<b>Custer</b>	170	118	4	48
<b>Garfield</b>	15	10	0	5
<b>Greeley</b>	39	32	0	7
<b>Howard</b>	130	109	5	16
<b>Loup</b>	6	5	0	1
<b>Sherman</b>	37	30	3	4
<b>Valley</b>	59	50	1	8
<b>Wheeler</b>	4	3	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>92</b>

According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services dashboard, available bed and ICU capacity has wavered between 30-38% in the past week. At the start of the pandemic response in Nebraska, Governor Ricketts implemented the State’s Directed Health Measures (DHMs) to preserve hospital capacity. Due to the decline in bed availability in the past weeks, the Governor has revised the DHMs to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the state and protect hospital capacity.

The statewide DHMs go into effect on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 with the following changes:

- **Elective Procedures/Surgeries**
  - In order to continue elective procedures, hospitals must maintain at least 10% of their staffed general and staffed ICU beds as reserve capacity to treat COVID-19 patients.
  - Hospitals must continue to accept and treat COVID-19 patients and must not transfer COVID-19 patients to create capacity for elective procedures.
- **Bars & Restaurants**
  - Patrons will be required to be seated while on premise unless they are placing an order, using the restroom, or playing games.
  - 100% of rated occupancy continues.
  - Maximum of eight (8) individuals in a party (groups larger than eight (8) will need to split into multiple tables).
- **Gatherings**
  - INDOOR Gatherings will be limited to 50% of rated occupancy (not to exceed 10,000).
  - OUTDOOR Gatherings will remain at 100% of rated occupancy (not to exceed 10,000).
  - Gatherings include but are not limited to Indoor or Outdoor Arenas, Indoor or Outdoor Auctions, Stadiums, Tracks, Fairgrounds, Festivals, Zoos, Auditoriums, Large Event Conference Rooms, Meeting Halls, Indoor Theaters, Libraries, Swimming Pools, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space.
  - Groups shall be no larger than eight (8) individuals.
  - Plans for reopening or expanding to new capacity limits must be submitted to the local health departments and approved for all indoor and outdoor locations/venues that hold 500 or more individuals (1,000 or more in counties over 500,000 population) before reopening is permitted. The reopening plan must contain planned number of guests, how the location will meet social distancing guidelines, and sanitation guidelines.
- **Wedding & Funeral Reception Venues**
  - Maximum of eight (8) individuals in a party (groups larger than eight (8) will need to split into multiple tables).
  - 100% of rated occupancy continues.
  - Limited dances or other social events requiring guests to gather outside of their respective tables in guidance.

Loup Basin Public Health Department serves nine counties including Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Howard, Loup, Sherman, Valley and Wheeler.