

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Positive Case of COVID-19 in Southwest Nebraska

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) announced today that a person from SWNPHD's health district has tested positive for COVID-19.

SWNPHD is working with healthcare providers and DHHS to identify additional people who came into close contact with this person. These people will be self-quarantined and actively monitored twice daily by public health officials for fever and respiratory symptoms. SWNPHD wants to reassure the public that steps are being taken to protect community members and healthcare workers and to decrease the spread of the illness.

The person testing positive is a male in their thirties in Red Willow County. They are currently self-isolating at home.

The best way to reduce the risk of becoming infected with a respiratory virus, such as COVID-19 or influenza, is to practice good hygiene:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching facial areas, such as eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes using a tissue and throw it away immediately after; wash hands after using a tissue to wipe your nose or mouth.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces like handles, counters, and cellphones.

What to do if you think you are sick:

- Self-isolate - Stay at home and limit contact with other members of your household. Most individuals who become ill will have mild to moderate symptoms that can be treated at home with pain and fever reducers like acetaminophen (Tylenol). It is the most helpful to remain at home and avoid spreading the virus to others.
- Household members who live with someone who is suspected to have COVID-19 should self-quarantine, which means staying at home and not having visitors. Limit time spent within 6 feet of the sick person to ten minutes or less and disinfect surfaces frequently.

- For those who experience more severe symptoms, call ahead to your medical provider so they can ensure the safety of medical staff and other patients and put proper protocols in place to reduce the risk of spreading illness to others prior to your arrival.

What to do when you are well again:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided the following guidance to know when to end self-isolation and quarantine.

- Self-isolation ends when it has been at least 7 days since symptoms first appeared AND no fever for at least 72 hours (3 full days of no fever without fever reducing medicine) AND all other symptoms have improved (e.g., cough has improved).
- After home isolation ends, all members of the household should continue quarantine for 7 days after the sick person has been released from isolation AND then continue 7 more days with self-monitoring for symptoms.

For general information on COVID-19 call the DHHS hotline at 402-552-6645, or visit the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services website at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>.

For more information on COVID-19 in southwest Nebraska, visit www.swhealth.ne.gov. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook and Twitter. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook or at 501 Broadway in Imperial (5th St. entrance). 308-345-4223.

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