

## NEWS RELEASE

February 16, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Myra Stoney, Health Director, [director@swhealth.ne.gov](mailto:director@swhealth.ne.gov), 308-345-4223

### **Increase of COVID-19 Vaccine for Southwest Nebraska**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) received 1100 doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine last week, which was more than double the amount received in previous weeks for the health district. The extra doses were quickly put into use and allowed SWNPHD and their partners to make good progress on getting vaccine to those on the waiting list. The number of names on the waiting list has gone from nearly 6,000 to approximately 2,500 since early January. SWNPHD and the six local hospitals in the health district have been joined by certain area pharmacies that are now able to give COVID vaccines, with the focus still on essential workers and high-risk individuals.

The waiting list for Phase 1A and 1B in southwest Nebraska is located at [swhealth.ne.gov/featured/1](https://swhealth.ne.gov/featured/1) or via the state's online registration system for the general public at [vaccinate.ne.gov](https://vaccinate.ne.gov). Those without a computer or internet access are encouraged to reach out to a friend or family member for assistance. The DHHS COVID-19 hotline is also assisting with the sign-up process and is available at (833) 998-2275. The hotline is staffed daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CT. Call volumes may be high, and patience is appreciated.

Please do not call SWNPHD to verify your registration or to be added to the waiting list as this prolongs the process. Please know that it may be several weeks or even months before you receive notice to schedule your vaccination. Appointments are made from the waiting list as vaccine is available. Those interested in registering will need to provide basic information to determine their eligibility and will be notified when community vaccination clinics will be held in their area. Also, it is not necessary to call SWNPHD to get off the waiting list if you have already received your vaccination.

The statewide COVID-19 Risk Dial, based on the amount of hospital capacity used for COVID patients, is currently in the green level. SWNPHD continues to recommend wearing a mask in public, washing hands and surfaces often, and avoiding the 3 C's: crowded spaces, close contact, and confined spaces.

SWNPHD had 27 new cases of COVID-19 reported February 9<sup>th</sup> to February 16<sup>th</sup>. A breakout by county includes: Chase – 3; Dundy –3; Frontier – 0; Furnas – 4; Hayes – 1; Hitchcock – 4; Keith – 3; Perkins – 1; Red Willow – 8. This brings the totals for the health district to 3658 cases. Testing for COVID-19 has decreased across the area, with medical providers reporting that individuals are being treated for COVID-19 symptoms without being tested.

COVID-19 information can be found at [dhhs.ne.gov](https://dhhs.ne.gov) and at [swhealth.ne.gov](https://swhealth.ne.gov). You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. 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.

###