

## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

### **COVID-19 Update for Southwest Nebraska**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) is seeing continued increases in positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations due to the spread of the Omicron variant in the health district.

There are local employers that are providing an incentive for their employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19. There is ARPA funding available that may be used for COVID business response plans such as protecting employee's health and reducing lost work hours due to illness. SWNPHD encourages residents to take advantage of any available incentives to get their COVID vaccine to protect themselves, their families, workplaces, and local healthcare systems.

Home test kits for COVID-19 are being used more widely across the area. For a positive test with an at-home kit, follow the isolation guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which is available at [swhealth.ne.gov](http://swhealth.ne.gov) and [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov). It is not necessary to notify the health department of at-home test results.

SWNPHD had 280 new cases of COVID-19 reported from January 18 to January 23, 2022. A breakdown by age includes: 0 to 19 – 45; 20 to 29 – 36; 30 to 39 – 62; 40 to 49 – 41; 50 to 59 – 36; 60 to 69 – 25; 70 to 79 – 22; 80 and over – 13. These numbers reflect a change to reporting case numbers from Monday to Sunday. The average number of cases per week in the last 30 days was 195. The total number of COVID-19 cases is 7,016.

Hospitalizations for COVID-19 and other illnesses remain high across the health district and Nebraska. SWNPHD strongly recommends residents take precautions against the spread of viruses by avoiding crowds, wearing a mask indoors when in public, frequent handwashing, disinfecting surfaces often, staying home when sick, and vaccination for eligible ages.

SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook and can be reached by calling 308-345-4223. The website [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov) contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties.

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