



October 22, 2020

For immediate release

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### **Contact tracing intended to slow disease spread**

**Panhandle total: 1,631; Active: 534; Recovered: 1,086; Deaths: 11**

Contact tracing is an effective disease control strategy that involves identifying cases and their contacts then working with them to stop or slow the disease spread. This is critical to prevent the spread of COVID.

Disease investigators are well-trained in how to conduct this confidential process and have been working hard to slow the spread of COVID. Community members are asked to do their part as well.

How can you be proactive with contact tracing?

- Practice critical COVID prevention:
  - Wear a mask
  - Stay at least six feet away from others
  - Frequently wash or sanitize your hands
  - Monitor for symptoms and immediately get tested and quarantine until results are received.
- If you are confirmed COVID positive, when you are contacted by a trained investigator, please carefully identify anyone who is a close contact, less than six feet for a total of 15 minutes in the two days prior to symptoms starting. Please isolate at home until you are released from isolation.
- If you are named in a disease investigation as a close contact and asked to quarantine, please follow this critical order and get tested immediately if you start to experience symptoms.

We all must do our part to slow the spread of COVID, especially for our most vulnerable populations.

Unified Command confirms 235 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Monday, October 22. Reporting tables have changed due to the rapid influx of cases and the ability to report accordingly. The investigations are underway, all close contacts will be quarantined.

**Children 19 & Under: 46**

County	Cases
Banner	1
Box Butte	16
Cheyenne	1
Dawes	2
Deuel	1
Scotts Bluff	23
Sheridan	2

**Adults: 189**

County	Cases
Box Butte	32
Cheyenne	7
Dawes	8
Deuel	2
Garden	1
Kimball	4
Morrill	1
Scotts Bluff	121
Sheridan	11
Under Investigation	2

Unified Command confirms 76 more recoveries in the Panhandle.

**Recovered: 76**

County	Cases
Banner	1
Box Butte	11
Cheyenne	6
Dawes	6
Deuel	2
Garden	1
Grant	0
Kimball	3
Morrill	4
Scotts Bluff	33
Sheridan	4
Sioux	5

### Testing information and access for the Panhandle area:

- You can sign up for the following free testing at [Testnebraska.com](https://www.testnebraska.com) or 402-207-9377:
  - Box Butte General Hospital in **Alliance**: Monday-Friday, 9-10am
    - Ambulance Bay on the east side of the emergency department, watch for the green arrows
  - **Chadron** Community Hospital: Mondays & Fridays, 7-9am
    - Collections are at 821 Morehead Street (Old Hospital ER Entrance next to Wilson Park)
    - **Other testing opportunities for symptomatic patients may be available through the hospital as ordered by your Primary Care Practitioner, call the hospital at 747-2466 with questions.**
  - **Gordon** Memorial Hospital: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2-4pm
  - Regional West Health Services in **Scottsbluff**: Mondays & Fridays, Noon-4pm; Wednesdays, 2-6pm
  - **Sidney** Regional Medical Center: Tuesdays & Thursday, 7-9am
- Community Action Health Center in **Gering**: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays, 7-8am
  - Testing is free, sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/yydxr5mc>
- Alliance Community Pharmacy in **Alliance**: Monday-Friday, 7:30am-6pm; Saturday-Sunday, 9am-5pm
  - For people experiencing symptoms, same day results. Call 308-629-1045 for appointment, fee is \$105.
- Morrill County Community Hospital in **Bridgeport**: Daily
  - Call 308-262-1616 for testing, same day results, insurance can be billed.
- Contact your local hospital or clinic for information on testing access.

### March 2-October 22, 2020

- **Total Tests Conducted: 17,739**
- **Positive: 1,631**
- **Cumulative Positivity Rate: 8.5%**
- **Recovered: 1,086**
- **Active Cases: 534**
- **Deaths: 11**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 24**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 126**

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.

For the most up to date information from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

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).