



December 7, 2020

For immediate release

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**Three COVID-related deaths in the Panhandle reported, Panhandle total deaths 82  
Panhandle readying for the first phase of COVID vaccine**

Three additional COVID-related deaths in the Panhandle are being reported. Two Dawes County females, one in her 80s and one in her 90s, and one Sheridan County female in her 80s have recently passed. This brings the total deaths in the Panhandle to 82.

“We wish to express our sincere condolences with the friends and loved ones in the loss of our fellow Panhandle residents. We wish you peace and comfort especially during this holiday season,” said Kim Engel, Panhandle Public Health District Director.

The Panhandle is readying for the first phase of receiving the COVID vaccine. It will be the Moderna vaccine. The first tier to receive vaccines will be:

- Healthcare Providers
- Long-Term Care Employees
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

There will be no cost for the vaccine; however, there may be an administration fee. Currently, studies show a very rare chance of serious adverse effects, but more data is being gathered. The US vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. You will not test positive for COVID after receiving the vaccine.

Unified Command confirms 260 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Thursday, December 3. Recoveries are available on the Panhandle dashboard at [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org). The investigations are underway, all close contacts will be quarantined.

All Ages: 260	
County	Cases
Banner	0
Box Butte	33
Cheyenne	37
Dawes	11
Deuel	5
Garden	2
Grant	2

<b>Kimball</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Morrill</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Scotts Bluff</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Sheridan</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Sioux</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>Exposure Type</b>	
<b>Community</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Close Contact</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Travel</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Under Investigation</b>	<b>45%</b>

### **March 2-December 7, 2020**

- **Total Tests Conducted: 27,573**
- **Positive: 6,527**
- **Recovered: 4,206**
- **Active Cases: 2,239**
- **Weekly Positivity Rate: 58.9%**
- **Deaths: 82**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 60**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 406**
- **Last week's cases: 501**
- **Doubling time (November 5-December 6): 31 days**

### **Avoid the Three Cs:**

- **Avoid Crowded Places** – Avoid gathering in groups where you cannot maintain 6-feet of distance from others
- **Avoid Close Contact** – Wear a mask over your nose and mouth or maintain 6-feet distance when you are spending more than 15 total minutes with people you don't live with
- **Avoid Confined Spaces** – Avoid enclosed spaces with poor ventilation

Current testing access can be found at [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org).

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.

The Panhandle COVID dashboard is updated weekdays at 4:30 pm MT and available at [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org). 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).