



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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More than 11,000 respondents participate in COVID-19 survey

One percent of respondents self-reported symptoms in past two weeks that had not resolved

LAWRENCE – About 1 percent of 11,405 Douglas County respondents to a recent online survey reported experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 that had not resolved in the past two weeks.

Dee Vernberg, Senior Analyst with Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health, said with 114 Douglas County residents reporting symptoms that include fever, persistent cough and shortness of breath, it's a good reminder for everyone in the county to continue to take social-distancing measures seriously and to follow Governor Laura Kelly's stay-home order which runs through May 3.

Through 1 p.m. April 23, Douglas County had 44 lab-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic started, and among those cases, 38 had recovered.

"If some people are thinking we don't have very many positive cases and the numbers right now aren't going up very high or very quickly, according to this survey data, we would say at the moment, we are not symptom-free," Vernberg said, "so it's important to keep following the stay-home order and practicing social distancing, including wearing a mask or cloth-face covering if you go out in public."

Unified Command partners — Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health, City of Lawrence, Douglas County and LMH Health — asked all Douglas County residents to take the online survey from April 17 to April 20, and a second wave of the survey is planned for early next week. It will be available in English, Spanish and Chinese.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began earlier this year, more than 1,100 people have been tested in Douglas County, largely under Kansas Department of Health and Environment protocols, which have been in place to help preserve available testing resources, which has been a challenge nationally. This week the governor announced expansions to the criteria to qualify for COVID-19 testing. Along with all our partners, we anticipate that this will increase the number of tests performed.

Vernberg and Senior Analyst Aihua Zhu said the preliminary analysis of the survey results also showed:

- Among the 1 percent who reported their symptoms had not resolved, they were residents who lived in all four cities, Lawrence, Eudora, Baldwin City and

- Lecompton and unincorporated portions of the county.
- About 600 other respondents reported they had recently experienced symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, persistent cough or shortness of breath) that could not be explained by other conditions, but they also reported those symptoms had resolved or had not occurred within the past two weeks.
 - The No. 1 concern among most respondents was that not everyone was taking the pandemic seriously in following health orders, which could harm others, including those in vulnerable populations.
 - 59 people in the group self-reported they had been tested for COVID-19. Of those five reported positive results, 50 negative and four were unknown.

“We believe our social distancing and things people are doing by staying at home have really made a difference, but people are still getting the disease, so it’s important for everyone to keep up these practices for now,” Vernberg said. “We will do this survey again, and if you’ve completed the survey once, we do want to hear from you again in addition to others. We want to hear from as many Douglas County residents as possible.”

When it is available, the second wave of the survey will be posted at douglascountyks.org/coronavirus and ldchealth.org/coronavirus as well as shared on social media channels. Anyone with questions about the survey can call the Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health Coronavirus Hotline at 785-856-4343 or email info@ldchealth.org.