



Lawrence · Douglas County
PUBLIC HEALTH
Advancing Health for All



NEWS RELEASE
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Weekly Community Scorecard update includes first COVID-19 outbreak in Douglas County

Community still meeting target on remaining metrics

LAWRENCE – We update our Smart & Safe Reopening Douglas County [Community Scorecard](#) every Friday to give the public information about metrics Douglas County’s COVID-19 Recovery Coordination Team.

In this week’s update, you will note we have our first outbreak in Douglas County since the pandemic began.

This situation met the definition of an outbreak because we had two or more cases (not in the same household) with the same identified source of exposure at a place of business. Due to patient privacy restrictions, we will not release further potential identifying information about the business, but for members of public, we are confident we have identified and communicated with everyone who was there. Our epidemiology team has worked closely with the organization to identify close contacts who did hear from us and were offered testing.

One thing that is important to note, KDHE testing protocol was expanded because it’s an outbreak and in a setting with long, sustained contact, day after day. The expanded protocol allowed us to offer testing even to those who are asymptomatic. Under current regular testing protocols, we are only able to test symptomatic patients, though there are other avenues in the community for people to get testing through their providers, such as through private insurance.

With this outbreak, of the individuals tested so far, we have identified four positive cases. We do believe the organization in this case followed proper guidelines including structuring activity to keep groups small to minimize the circles of potential close contacts.

Due to our success in recent months of the COVID-19 pandemic and having a relatively low case count compared with other counties and no outbreaks until now, we know this news can be somewhat alarming. With our community opening up more in recent weeks as we currently are under phase 3 (through at least June 21) of the reopening plan, this is a reminder the coronavirus is still present in our community and that we all need to continue to be vigilant, smart and safe in following recommended guidelines to contain the spread of the virus

and protect those who might be most vulnerable. This includes keeping your circle of contacts small, wearing a mask in public and maintain proper social distance from others outside of your home.

This also illustrates the importance of having a strong public health infrastructure in place to conduct testing and disease investigation to help identify those who might be at risk of a potential content so they can be tested and isolated if needed to help contain the coronavirus. We are confident in the procedures we have in place to help manage additional outbreaks in the future.

The Recovery Coordination Team will take this into account as well as other metrics in the scorecard in deciding whether to move forward from phase 3, which currently runs through June 21.

About Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health

Nationally accredited Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 130 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

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