



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact:**  
George Diepenbrock  
Communications Officer  
785-856-7360  
[gdiepenbrock@ldchealth.org](mailto:gdiepenbrock@ldchealth.org)

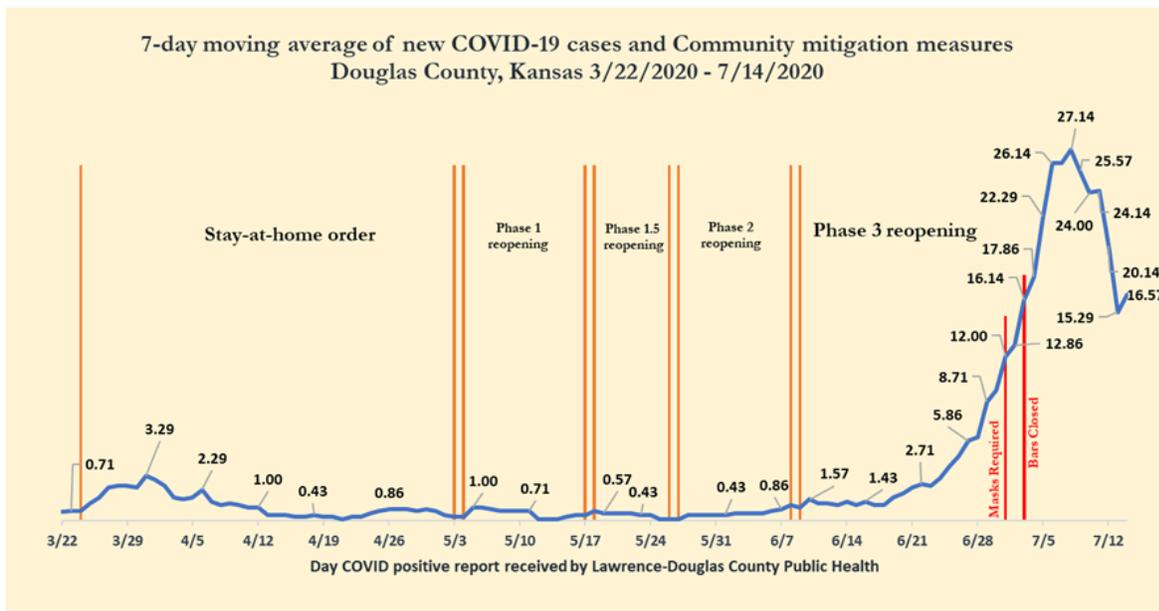
## Douglas County health order closing bars to remain in place

*County will remain in Phase 3*

**LAWRENCE** – Douglas County’s local health officer will keep in place the [health order](#) that has closed bars and nightclubs in the county as a mitigation measure to help manage the spread of COVID-19.

“Since the bar closing order and the [masking order](#) both took effect in early July, we have seen the number of new cases come down, so we believe these have been effective measures to help slow the spread of the virus,” said Douglas County’s Local Health Officer Dr. Thomas Marcellino. “However, the disease investigation process has connected a large number of our recent cases directly or indirectly to individuals who congregated at bar environments in June. The number of cases in the community is still higher than it was in earlier months of the pandemic, and LMH Health currently has seven in-patients positive for COVID-19, the highest since the pandemic began.”

The county will also remain in Phase 3 of the Smart & Safe Reopening plan for now.



Through 3 p.m., July 15, Douglas County has 482 COVID-19 cases (315 individuals have recovered) since its first lab-confirmed case on March 17, but 312 of the total cases have come

since July 1. Disease investigators to this point have identified 108 confirmed cases tied to bar environments in Lawrence since bars were allowed to initially re-open on June 8 through their closure on July 3.

The local health order keeps bars and nightclubs closed but allows them to operate curbside and carryout services of beverages to be consumed at home and not on the bar's premises.

A separate order requires people to wear masks when inside any public space or in situations where social distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained. Guidance regarding specific places or situations in which masks are required is [outlined within the order](#).

Anyone with questions about compliance of a public health order can email [phorders@ldchealth.org](mailto:phorders@ldchealth.org), where LDCPH staff will follow up on specific complaints.

"It is clear mask usage slows the spread of the virus," Marcellino said. "We appreciate the cooperation of the public and businesses in the implementation of the mask order as we believe this will help us keep more of our community open and limit the spread of the virus."

Other important ways to reduce transmission of COVID-19 are:

- Practice social distancing, staying at least 6 feet apart from others when in public or outdoors;
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not immediately available;
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow and avoid touching your face;
- Keep your home and office surfaces clean;
- Stay home as much as possible and keep your circle of contacts small.

Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health maintains the Coronavirus hotline, 785-856-4343, and there are [options in the community for COVID-19 screening and testing](#). Always call a healthcare provider to let them know of your symptoms before showing up.

Members of the public can also check [douglascountyks.org/coronavirus](https://douglascountyks.org/coronavirus) or [ldchealth.org/coronavirus](https://ldchealth.org/coronavirus) for information about COVID-19 in Douglas County.