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Douglas County rises in health rankings to 7th in Health Outcomes, 2nd in Health Factors in Kansas

LAWRENCE – Douglas County improved to the top 10 in Kansas in Health Factors and Health Outcomes, according to the [County Health Rankings](#) report released today by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

The county ranked 7th in Health Outcomes and 2nd overall in Health Factors.

The Health Outcomes rankings are based on length and quality of life. Here's how Douglas County fared:

- Length of life — No. 4.
- Quality of Life — No. 27, which includes residents reporting having days of poor mental and physical health and low birth weights.

Included in the Health Factors ranking are measures of health behavior, clinical care, social and economic status and physical environment. Of these, clinical care is ranked 2nd, and physical environment had the lowest ranking at 82.

“Even during a pandemic, it’s important to remember our health is bigger than any one virus,” said Dan Partridge, Director of Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health. “It’s where we live, where we work, and the social determinants of health that create conditions that affect everyone’s health in our community.”

Partridge said this year’s *Rankings* reflect Douglas County’s progress with community partners on the five-year Community Health Plan, which includes an encompassing focus on health equity and seeks to address behavioral health, safe and affordable housing, nutrition and physical activity and anti-poverty.

He added that a driving factor of Douglas County’s rise in the rankings this year was likely due to other counties dropping some in areas like rates of premature death and obesity, while Douglas County’s rates in those areas remained relatively stable. The community has also made progress in recent years with the City of Lawrence’s investment in policies pursuing safe and affordable housing and Douglas County investing in supporting behavioral health initiatives.

“We have been able to maintain and not slip in our strengths. We have done well in providing flu vaccines, and our community is relatively active. We have relatively good access to healthy foods and lower obesity rates, in part because of the nature of the

makeup of our community,” Partridge said. “Our weaknesses are also very consistent in the need to address housing, unemployment and the level of sexually transmitted infections.”

The report ranked Johnson County as the top Kansas county in both Health Outcomes and Health Factors. The report is available at countyhealthrankings.org. For more data and information about the health of Douglas County, visit ldchealth.org/communityhealthplan.

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health

The 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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