

White Pine County
Office of Public Health

PRESS RELEASE

July 2, 2020

Three unrelated and symptomatic individuals were tested positive in our community this week. All appear to have contracted the disease outside our borders. There are additional two cases under high suspicion where results are pending. Two cases from June recovered and have been released from quarantine.

Contact tracer received information of exposure to at least couple dozen people; therefore a reasonable probability of community spread exists. Confirmation is pending as investigation unfolds.

If you had contact with an unmasked COVID-19 infected person, symptomatic or not, for more than 10 minutes within 6 feet of distance, you meet criteria for qualified exposure. If that is the case, quarantine yourself. **Get tested 5-7 days AFTER the date of last exposure.** Testing earlier than that can result in false negative as the virus has not replicated sufficiently for detection.

The hospital's hotline **866-800-1262** is being updated and will answer a lot of questions. If you meet criteria for qualified exposure, or if you are symptomatic, call ahead to arrange a drive-thru sample collection. The hospital also offers walk-in testing for asymptomatic individuals without known exposure.

In response to the continuing upslope of COVID-19 cases in Nevada, the Governor recently issued Directive 026 extending Phase 2 Reopening Plans through July 31, 2020. While the Governor allowed some directives to expire, Directives 006 and 007 remain in effect until July 31 unless amended otherwise in subsequent directives. For updates, visit Nevada Health Response at <https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov> The increase in White Pine County cases appears to be in line with current state trends.

The common denominator in all cases in White Pine County appears to be related to travel and a lapse in preventive measures. Businesses are in a unique position of enforcing face coverings and social distancing within their establishment to protect their patrons. There are a minority of individuals who are incapable of wearing face coverings; but if enough people wear face coverings or masks, then we as a collective essentially create a **herd protection** just like we create herd immunity with vaccines. Protecting patrons makes business-sense. A healthy population makes economic sense.

Please bear in mind that, despite the best efforts, our hospital was not able to acquire anti-viral medication used in larger hospitals because the way drug manufacturers prioritize distribution. Furthermore, larger hospitals in critical census have been from highly selective to not receiving patients from smaller hospitals.

Avoid any and all of the three Cs: CLOSED SPACES, CROWDED SPACES, CLOSE CONTACTS.

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Until we have a working vaccine, the only preventive measures in existence are social distancing, face covering, and hand washing.

The Office of Public Health will no longer issue a press release for every new case of COVID-19 in White Pine County unless the case(s) poses a significant change in the status of the county. For active counts in White Pine, visit William Bee Ririe Hospital's website at <http://wbrhely.org> or the Nevada Health Response.

**FIGHTING A PANDEMIC REQUIRES EVERYONE'S PARTICIPATION.
IN A COLLECTIVE SOCIETY, IT IS A CIVIC DUTY.**