



**NEVADA
HEALTH
RESPONSE**

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COVID-19 Press Bulletin for 11-30-2020

Carson City, NV — Today, Caleb Cage, Nevada COVID-19 Response Director and Julia Peek, Deputy Administrator of Community Health Services were joined by Dr. Stephanie Woodard, Senior Advisor on Behavioral Health for the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services to provide updates on Nevada's ongoing COVID-19 response and the emotional and psychological impacts of COVID-19, during a call with members of the media.

This bulletin provides facts, figures, and informational items from the call. As a reminder, data is provided in a dashboard on the home page of the [Nevada Health Response](#) website and can be accessed 24 hours a day.

SUMMARY:

- The County Criteria Tracker is released every Monday and can be found on the NV Health Response dashboard. All counties in Nevada, with the exception of Storey, have been flagged for elevated disease transmission.
 - All flagged counties met the criteria of a high case rate per 100,000.
 - All counties had a high test positivity rate.
 - Lincoln was the only county flagged for low testing, with an average number of 84 tests per day per 100,000.

- Due to the state's current "pause" status, the task force will be addressing mitigation efforts at this Thursday's meeting through ongoing informational updates and briefings rather than through individual county plans.
- As of today, Nevada has logged 152,169 cases, an increase of 1,642 new cases since yesterday.
- The state has completed a total of 1,638,099 molecular tests since the beginning of COVID-19.
- For the most recent 7-day period, cases are growing at a rate of 1.6% or 2,277 new cases per day – nearly double the seven-day case average between July 15 and July 21.
- The test positivity rate over the last 14 days is 17.3% -- the highest 14-day test positivity rate since the start of the pandemic in Nevada.
- According to the Nevada Hospital Association, Nevada continues the upward trajectory in COVID-19 hospitalizations.
 - There are currently 1,545 COVID-19 hospitalizations (1,405 confirmed; 140 suspected) -- a new record high in Nevada.
 - In the south, cases continue to climb but, according to the NHA, the health care infrastructure has enough elasticity to absorb the increased cases for the time being. The south has experienced a 275% increase in confirmed hospitalized cases over the past 30 days.
 - In the north, they have experienced more than a 250% increase in confirmed hospitalized cases over the past 30 days. According to the NHA, the Northern Nevada health care infrastructure is now showing signs of serious strain with

patients being treated in alternative care sites and hospitals functioning under crisis standards of care.

- More information on hospitalization trends can be found on the [Nevada Hospital Association](#) website.
- At this point, it is too soon to determine the impacts from the Thanksgiving holiday.
 - It is possible there may be an increase in testing numbers within the next week if people chose not to seek testing over the holiday, or because locations were limited over the holiday weekend.
 - It's similar to what is seen on the weekends, where testing and reporting tend to go down, then catch up a few days later -- and similar to what has been experienced as a result of holidays in the past.
 - This is why many of the metrics emphasize using seven or 14-day averages, to smooth out any one-day increases. Focusing on trends remains critical.
 - As mentioned in the past, due to the incubation period, the soonest we are likely to assess any impacts from the Thanksgiving holiday would be a couple of weeks from now.
 - According to federal and state health officials, with the current growth rate and case rate, and several factors such as colder weather leading to more indoor activities and back-to-back holidays, numbers are likely to surge in the coming weeks.
 - As the Governor mentioned before the holiday, the actions of Nevadans on Thanksgiving and over the long weekend will be a major factor as to whether we see a surge or not.
 - We continue to urge Nevadans to follow all current mitigation measures, including staying home when you can, limiting your interactions with others to reduce the risk of exposure and

reduce the risk of unknowingly spreading the virus, wash your hands frequently and practicing social distancing.

Dr. Stephanie Woodard, Senior Advisor on Behavioral Health for the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services discussed the emotional and psychological impacts of COVID-19 and the importance of fostering resilience and healthy coping to support Nevadans facing unprecedented times.

- COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our day to day lives and required everyone to adapt to changing circumstances.
- Since the beginning of COVID, Nevada has seen a 3 to 4-fold increase in adults indicating they are struggling with significant emotional distress.
 - Grief of loss of loved ones, financial instability, job loss, housing and food insecurity, social isolation, concern over exposure to COVID, managing working from home and schooling children are all very real examples of significant stressors facing our fellow Nevadans.
- The Department of Health and Human Services developed a COVID-19 Behavioral Health Recovery Plan in May of 2020. The plan highlights the importance of promoting emotional wellness, preventing behavioral health issues, and the need to intervene early when people are struggling.
- Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly. It is the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and chronic stressors that accompany COVID and it has never been more important for our communities.

- Healthy coping, gaining additional support and finding a sense of stability can prevent diseases of despair, such as addiction, depression, and anxiety in the months and years to come.
- The [Nevada Resilience Project](#) was launched earlier this year to support those goals.
 - In partnership with community programs, Resilience Ambassadors are available to support the development of personalized Resilience Plans, provide education on coping and managing stress, and connects individuals and families with the resources they need.
- Nevada's youth are also experiencing high levels of stress and, for some, significant distress.
 - Parent/caregiver stress, prolonged isolation from peers, changes in routine, concerns about COVID, grief and loss, and educational challenges have all contributed to children being exposed to chronic levels of stress.
 - Youth are seeking care for behavioral health emergencies at higher rates than in 2019, an indication that the emotional and psychological needs of our children must be attended to as we continue to work to mitigate the pandemic in our communities.
- Resources for youth and families who need help are available in communities across Nevada, including the Children's Mobile Crisis Teams operated by Divisions in DHHS. Additional behavioral health and crisis resources can be found at the [Nevada Resilience Project](#) under the Behavioral Health Resources tab.
- Additional CARES funding has also been allocated to raise awareness for behavioral health resources, suicide prevention and psychological

first aid training, improved data collection, and a program focused on reducing access to lethal means.

- And finally, it is important to note that suicide is complex and requires careful consideration.
 - These practices include recognizing suicide as a public health issue, avoiding the use of terminology or data to sensationalize suicide, including information on the availability of crisis support and hotlines, describing warning signs of suicide, and providing guidance on what someone should do if they believe someone is experiencing thoughts of suicide.
- Additional information on best practices when reporting on suicide can be found at [ReportingonSuicide.org](https://reportingonsuicide.org) and at the [Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention's webpage](https://www.nv.gov/health-services/behavioral-health/office-of-suicide-prevention/).

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