



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Shawnee County Health Department

**Shawnee County Health Department**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Shawnee County COVID-19 Cases Increasing; Causing Delays in Contact**

**Topeka, Kan.** – Shawnee County is experiencing a sharp increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. A provisional count for the week starting October 25 indicates that over 270 cases have been reported. On Friday, October 30, 2020 there were over 90 cases reported. This is an all-time daily record.

The cases are widely distributed among multiple settings; including nursing homes and schools.

In many cases an exact source of infection cannot be identified; additional evidence shows that several cases may be the result of infections acquired during small and large social gatherings.

The high workload generated by this increase results in the health department inability to call newly diagnosed individuals in a timely manner and provide advice on precautions to take to avoid further transmission of the virus.

Individuals who are notified of a positive laboratory test for COVID-19 should take the following precautions:

1. If you have severe symptoms immediately call your primary care provider and follow their directions. **DO NOT GO TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE OR THE EMERGENCY ROOM** unless you are instructed to do so by a healthcare provider. **Always call ahead.**
2. Isolate yourself in your house. Isolation means that you should not come in contact with anyone, should not leave your house and should not allow visitors to enter your house. Isolation should last at least 10 days from the date the symptoms appear, or if there are no symptoms from the date the laboratory test is performed.
3. Consider isolating yourself from your other household members, where possible. Transmission within the household is very common, but it may be prevented if sick individuals or those with a positive coronavirus test immediately isolate themselves in a different part of the house and have no direct contact with other household members.
4. Make a list of everyone that you had a close contact with (10 minutes within 6 feet) starting two days before symptoms appeared; or if not exhibiting symptoms, two days before the date the laboratory test was performed. Contact each individual and tell them that they have been exposed to the virus and they need to remain in quarantine in their home for 14 days from the date they were exposed. Individuals in quarantine should not leave their house, except for emergencies; and should not go to work or school.

What can people do to protect themselves and to reduce the spread of the virus?

1. Avoid close contact with other individuals outside your household. Close contact is defined as contact within 6 feet that lasts 10 cumulative minutes or more.
2. Always wear a mask when in a public place.
3. Avoid large gatherings of people.



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4. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Additional information can be found from the following resource pages:

Shawnee County Health Department: <http://www.snco.us/hd/>

Kansas Department of Health and Environment: <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

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*Shawnee County Health Department is committed to working in partnership with our community to promote and protect the optimal health of all people by bridging gaps to eliminate health inequities, respecting the diversity of our community, through adaptive and innovative processes.*

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