



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

From: Shalei Shea, RN BSN
McPherson County Health Department Director and McPherson County Health Officer

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) IDENTIFIED IN MCPHERSON COUNTY

McPherson County continues to have a tremendous uptake in coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases. An alarming amount of cases are asymptomatic, meaning they do not have any signs or symptoms. A portion of these positive cases report attending gatherings at local lakes, parties, or traveling sport tournaments while contagious. These are events both inside and outside of McPherson County. If you are notified by the Health Department of being a contact of someone who is positive for COVID-19, you **MUST** quarantine at home for 14 days. This means that a negative test will not return an exposed person to work/sports/daycare/etc. sooner than 14 days. If you are a contact, decide to be tested, and it comes back negative, you **STILL** have to finish your 14-day period because you may become contagious anytime during the rest of the 14 days. We do **NOT** routinely recommend testing contacts unless symptoms arise or a high risk individual is involved. People who have not had direct exposure to someone with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine and are not excluded from work/sports/daycare/etc.

If you are being tested for COVID-19, you are considered a Person Under Investigation (PUI). The PUI **MUST** isolate while waiting on results. The PUI should isolate away from anyone in their household. If they are not able to isolate away from the household members by staying in their own room, the entire household must quarantine while awaiting results to reduce exposure.

If a person in quarantine does not develop any COVID-19 symptoms, then they are released from quarantine at the end of 14 days. If symptoms do develop during those 14 days, the person is to contact their primary provider for further evaluation and/or testing. People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 may be released from isolation at the direction of the Health Department when it has been 10 days since the onset of symptoms **AND** 72 hours since symptoms have resolved. This symptom-based method of returning people to work is preferred to a testing-based method of returning people to work because tests can still remain positive long after the virus is no longer active.

These are challenging days for groups and businesses. They are responsible for providing a safe environment for their employees and participants. They are severely affected when their employees and participants are excluded due to exposure. Much of this exposure is occurring outside of work. The best way to keep our businesses open and functional and keep our social interactions available is to maintain a 6-foot physical distance between people and wear a mask when in public when physical distancing may be difficult to maintain.

McPherson County Health Department reports 89 total confirmed cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in McPherson County. 79 of the total confirmed cases have now met recovery guidelines set forth by the KDHE. There are zero current hospitalizations and zero deaths.

- Positive case #89 is a symptomatic female in her teens with unknown exposure and is recovering at home.

We are in Phase 3 of Reopening Kansas. Updated documents can be found on mcpersoncountyks.us on the home page, under "COVID-19: Reopening McPherson County." McPherson County Health Department recommends McPherson County remains in Phase 3 at least until July 20th, 2020. This decision is based off of the current investigations, increases in positive cases over the last 14 days, and the recommendation from KDHE.

McPherson County Board of Health (County Commissioners) passed a resolution to opt out of Governor Kelly's Executive Order 20-52 on July 2nd, 2020. McPherson County Board of Health recommends the McPherson County communities still follow the recommendations from McPherson County Health Department and McPherson County Health Officer, which includes wearing face masks while in public when 6-foot of distance cannot be maintained between individuals. Mask wearing can and will significantly decrease the amount of COVID-19 spread in our communities, both from asymptomatic and symptomatic individuals.

KDHE and MCHD continue to mandate a 14-day home quarantine for Kansas if you have done any of the following:

- Traveled within the United States to any of the following states with known widespread community transmission:
 - On or after June 17: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas
 - On or after June 29: South Carolina, Florida
- Traveled internationally on or after March 15
- Traveled on a cruise ship or river cruise on or after March 15

McPherson County residents are encouraged to help slow the spread of coronavirus by:

- Following Phase 3 of Reopening Kansas and McPherson County (mcpersoncountyks.us).
- Maintaining social distancing.
- Avoiding gatherings in groups greater than 45-persons.
- Wearing cloth face coverings or homemade masks when in public.
- Practicing cough etiquette and washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

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