

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) IN MCPHERSON COUNTY

During September 2021, 422 new cases were detected and in comparison, during September 2020, there were 67 new cases. During October 1-6, 2021, there were 67 new cases detected and in comparison, during October 1-6, 2020, there were 18 new cases. During October 7-13, 2021, there were 74 new cases detected and in comparison, during October 7-13, 2020, there were 26 new cases.

Out of the new cases so far in October, 27% of them have been 0-17 years old and 25% of them have been 60 years or older. The population younger than 18 is continuing to see similar new case rates when compared to the population 60 and above. During the same dates in October 2020, 36% of the cases were 60 years or older and 16% of the cases were younger than 18.

It is pertinent those who are eligible get vaccinated, individuals stay home when sick and individuals take necessary precautions when gathering. Flu season is approaching. Be proactive and protect yourself from influenza by getting your flu shot as well. McPherson County Health Department (MCHD) recommends all individuals 2 years old and above mask in indoor settings when 6 foot distance cannot be maintained while community transmission is high.

KDHE is now reporting case and vaccine data per school district. Visit <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/160/COVID-19-in-Kansas> and go to "COVID-19 Metrics" then select "New Case and Vaccination Rates by School District" for more information. KDHE also continues to report outbreaks which can be found at the same website link above under "Cluster Summary." As a reminder, "cluster" and "outbreak" are interchangeable terms.

As of this release, there are 35 confirmed variant cases out of 45 tested specimens. At this time, these identified variants do not require additional quarantine or isolation precautions outside of what is already done for non-variant cases. More information regarding COVID-19 variants can be found at <https://www.who.int/.../tracking-SARS-CoV-2-variants/>.

- Variant B.1.1.7 (Alpha): 6
- Variant B.1.617.2 (Delta): 15
- Variant AY.3 (Delta): 11
- Variant AY.4 (Delta): 3

After FDA, ACIP and CDC review, the third booster dose of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized. Those who have received Moderna or Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine are not eligible for booster doses at this time. Individuals who have completed the two-dose series of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months ago and meet the following criteria are eligible for a third booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine:

- People 65 years and older
- Residents of long-term care settings
- People aged 50-64 years old with any of the following underlying medical conditions: cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic lung disease like COPD, asthma, interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension, dementia or other neurological conditions, diabetes, down syndrome, heart conditions like heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies or hypertension, HIV infection, immunocompromised state, liver disease, overweight and obesity, pregnancy, sickle cell disease or thalassemia, current or former smoker, solid organ or blood stem cell transplant, stroke or cerebrovascular disease, or substance use disorders
- People aged 18-49 years with underlying medical conditions mentioned above may receive a booster based on their individual benefits and risks
- People aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting may receive a booster based on their individual benefits and risks

- Occupational or institutional settings may include: healthcare workers, teachers, grocery store workers, retail workers, first responders, residents and staff of congregant settings like corrections, homeless shelters, group homes, etc., and others who are in close contact with people less than six feet apart on a ongoing basis

Individuals who have completed the two-dose series of Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and meet the following criteria are eligible for a third additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine:

- Active treatment for solid tumor or hematologic malignancies
- Receipt of solid-organ transplant and taking immunosuppressive therapy
- Receipt of CAR-T-cell or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within 2 years of transplantation or taking immunosuppression therapy)
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge, Wiskott-Aldrich syndromes)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids (i.e., greater than or equal to 20mg prednisone or equivalent per day), alkylating agents, antimetabolites, transplant-related immunosuppressive drugs, cancer chemotherapeutic agents classified as severely immunosuppressive, TNF blockers, and other biologic agents that are immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory

You may call MCHD at 620-241-1753, your local healthcare provider, or pharmacy for an appointment. You may also search for locations using vaccinefinder.org. McPherson County is vaccinating anyone 12 years old and above.

- As of October 14, 2021, according to the CDC COVID Data Tracker (<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>), 47.5% of McPherson County's population has been fully vaccinated. 55.5% of the population 12 years old and above are vaccinated, 58.3% of the population 18 years old and above are vaccinated, and 83.7% of the population 65 years old and above are vaccinated. More information can be found on their website.

KDHE and MCHD continue to mandate a 10-day quarantine for Kansans. **This quarantine does not apply if you have been fully vaccinated for at least 2 weeks and are asymptomatic.** The travel and exposure related quarantine list can be found at <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/175/Travel-Exposure-Related-Isolation-Quaran>.

A vaccine breakthrough case is defined as the detection of COVID-19 via antigen or PCR testing from a person that is at least 14 days past completing all recommended doses of a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized COVID-19 vaccine. McPherson County vaccine breakthrough case data can be found on the McPherson County COVID-19 Dashboard.

COVID-19 data in McPherson County can be found on the home page of mcpersoncountyks.us, under "McPherson County COVID-19 Dashboard." This data will continue to be updated Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. Written releases like this one will be posted once a week on Thursdays, unless needed otherwise.