

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Two Counties Report First Cases of COVID-19**

**LINCOLN** – Two more Nebraska counties reported their first cases of COVID-19 to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on Monday.

Two cases were reported in Cedar County (Northeast Nebraska Public Health Department - <https://www.facebook.com/nnphd/>), the first for the county, and Valley County (Loup Basin Public Health Department - <https://www.facebook.com/lbphd.org/>) reported its first case.

Local health departments are reporting deaths and cases in their jurisdictions. In the event of a discrepancy between DHHS dashboard data and deaths or cases reported by local public health officials, data reported by the local health department should be considered the most up to date.

The total number of COVID-19-related deaths in the state to date is 55, according to the DHHS data dashboard. Yesterday's count of 56 included a death erroneously entered into the electronic system. It was removed from the total count.

Today's state case total, as of 5:45 pm Central Daylight Time, is 3,358. Nebraska's COVID-19 case totals are updated daily at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/coronavirus>.

All 93 Nebraska counties are now covered by state Directed Health Measures (DHMs). <http://dhhs.ne.gov/coronavirus>. It's critical that Nebraskans follow these enforceable state Directed Health Measures to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the state. These measures help protect each other and those who are more vulnerable to severe illness and death, and help hospitals and clinics from being overwhelmed so they can continue to provide care to families, friends and neighbors who need it.

In addition to the state-issued DHM, some Local Health Departments have issued additional restrictions - <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Directed-Health-Measures.aspx>

Governor Pete Ricketts recently unveiled [TestNebraska](#), a public-private partnership designed to increase testing capacity and #CrushTheCurve in Nebraska. The Governor is urging all Nebraskans to take the assessment provided on the TestNebraska website to help identify cases of COVID-19 in the state. After taking the assessment participants

who fit the criteria will be notified via phone or email that they qualify to be tested for COVID-19. Nebraskans can take the assessment at <https://www.testnebraska.com/>

DHHS supports Governor Ricketts in urging Nebraskans to follow the **Six Rules to Keep Nebraska Healthy**.

1. **Stay home.** No non-essential errands and no social gatherings. Respect the ten-person limits.
2. **Socially distance your work.** Work from home or use the six-foot rule as much as possible in the workplace.
3. **Shop alone.** Do this only once a week and do not take your family with you.
4. **Help kids social distance.** Play at home, no group sports and no playgrounds.
5. **Help seniors stay at home.** This can be done by shopping for them. Do not visit long-term facilities.
6. **Exercise daily.** Do your best to stay as healthy and safe as you can.

Recent studies show that a significant portion of people with COVID-19 lack symptoms and those who eventually develop symptoms can pass the virus to others before showing symptoms, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC now recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html>.

Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for social distancing. Public health officials continue to emphasize that maintaining 6-feet social distancing is crucial to slowing the spread of the virus.

Here's where to find tools and resources for individuals and families, schools, communities, businesses, healthcare facilities, and first responders on the DHHS website - <http://dhhs.ne.gov/coronavirus> and CDC's website - <https://www.cdc.gov/covid19>.

DHHS opened a statewide COVID-19 information line to help answer general questions and share the latest information and resources with Nebraskans to help keep them informed. The number is (402) 552-6645; hours of operation are 8 a.m.-8 p.m. CDT, 7 days a week.

DHHS will continue to update Nebraskans through the DHHS website and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) as we have new information. The CDC's website is also a good resource for COVID-19 information - <https://www.cdc.gov/covid19>.