



Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment

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MEDIA RELEASE

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COVID Data for March 22 – 29

There continues to be COVID infections circulating in Kit Carson County. For the week of March 22 – 29, 125 people were tested and 16 of those were positive for a weekly positivity rate of 7.8%. For the month of March from March 1 – 29th, there have been 413 people tested and 45 were positive for a monthly positivity rate of 9.1%. The cumulative incidence rate for the month of March is 63:100,000. The past week's cumulative incidence rate is 22:100,000.

The hospital reports that for the time period of March 21st to March 28th, there has been a decline in new COVID-19 hospital admissions and referrals of COVID-19 patients to a higher level of care.

These numbers and statistics help local public health epidemiologists understand how much disease is currently circulating in the county. Based on the State's definition of low (less than 35 per 100,000), Medium (35-100 per 100,000), High (101-299 per 100,000) and very high (300 - 500 per 100,000), Kit Carson County is ranked "Medium" for the month of March and "Low" for the one week average, thus the move to Green on the Dial. The burden on the hospital is also taken into consideration when assessing next steps in the COVID response.

Kit Carson County Moves to Level Green on the COVID Dial

In a surprise announcement by CDPHE last week, Kit Carson County was moved to Level Green on the COVID Dial and the new Version Nine of the state Public Health Order was released. While it is obvious from the data described above, "Green" doesn't mean "COVID Free".

"Counties and regions certified for Level Green may allow any business, activity, or gathering within their jurisdiction to fully operate with no restrictions, except for those restrictions listed in this section and any local restrictions imposed by the county". There continues to be some restrictions associated with gathering size and social distancing in Level Green per State rules. Most restrictions have been removed with the following exceptions:

- All indoor venues including restaurants and gatherings must maintain the 6 feet social distancing requirement as prescribed by the CDC between tables and groups.

- Only Indoor events continue to have a 50% of posted occupancy up to 500 person (whichever is less) restriction. There are no limits on outdoor events in terms of number of people who can attend. This will be helpful as plans are being made for the County Fair and other favorite summer-time activities.
- Organized indoor recreational youth or adult league sports are limited to 50% of posted occupancy up to 500 persons (whichever is less).
- Indoor settings associated with outdoor events still need to follow all social distancing rules and orders including 6 foot distance between tables, seating and family groups.
- Restaurants have no capacity limits, however, they must still maintain 6 feet between tables per CDC guidelines.
- The State Indoor mask order continues to be in place for the next two weeks.

Although the recent move on the Dial to Green and the eventual phasing out of the Dial is welcome news, it is important to remain alert and to use caution when interacting with large crowds in indoor spaces. Using personal responsibility will continue to be important. The best defense against spreading COVID is good hand washing, covering your nose and mouth with your elbow when you sneeze or cough, avoiding large indoor crowds, spending more time outdoors and staying home from work, social gatherings and school if you don't feel well. The COVID Vaccine is also a powerful tool to stop the spread of the disease.

COVID Vaccine Distribution Phase 2 - Begins Friday, April 2, 2021

The COVID Vaccine is now available for ***all individuals*** age 18 and older for the Moderna and Johnson and Johnson Vaccine and age 16 and older for the Pfizer vaccine. COVID vaccine has not yet been approved for children younger than 16.

The Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Kit Carson County Memorial Hospital continue to offer the Moderna COVID Vaccine. It is not known when the Johnson and Johnson (J & J) COVID Vaccine (one shot only) will be made available to local public health agencies or medical clinics. Currently, all J & J vaccine coming into Colorado has been prioritized by CDPHE decision-makers for mega vaccine sites in the front-range and metro areas.

As soon as J & J is available to local public health, KCCDPHE plans to conduct drive-through clinics. The first one is being planned on Saturday, April 10th from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the health department on a first-come-first-serve basis and only 100 doses have been ordered for this event. It will be announced next week if the vaccine was approved for Kit Carson County. If you are interested in receiving the J & J vaccine, please call 719-346-7158, ext. 432 so KCCDPHE has an understanding regarding how much interest there is in it.

All appointments currently available on-line are only for the Moderna Vaccine (two doses 28 days apart). Vaccine clinics are held weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays at the health department in Burlington and on Thursdays at the hospital. Additional clinics in Flagler are also being scheduled on an as needed (by demand) basis. To schedule your appointment go to <https://kitcarsoncounty.colorado.gov/> or call 719-346-7158, ext. 432.

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