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COVID-19 Mitigation & Management Task Force adjusts criteria used to monitor elevated risk of transmission of COVID-19 in Nevada counties

CARSON CITY, NV - Today, the COVID-19 Mitigation and Management Task Force, chaired by Nevada COVID-19 Response Director Caleb Cage and created via Directive 030, adjusted thresholds used to monitor Nevada's 17 counties for an elevated risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Based on data and recommendations provided by the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, the Task Force agreed to adjust the thresholds used to identify counties having an elevated risk of COVID-19 transmission. According to the State Biostastician, the change in the thresholds will help shift the State to a more sustainable new normal at this time.

Counties will continue to be measured against the same three criteria, looking at the average number of test per day, the case rate of COVID-19 and the case rate paired with the test positivity rate. A county is flagged for elevated risk, if they meet two of three criteria.

On Thursday, the Task Force unanimously agreed to change the thresholds related to two of the three criteria.

Counties are measured against the average number of tests per day per 100,000 residents. Previously, counties were required to conducted an

average of at least 150 tests per day. The Task Force agreed to adjust that threshold to an average of 100 tests per day.

The Task Force also agreed to increase the test positivity rate from 7 percent to 8 percent before flagging a county for having an elevated risk.

The Task Force took no action on the threshold for the case rate. Counties with a case rate greater than 200 cases per 100,000 residents will continue to meet this criteria.

The two counties currently flagged for having an increased risk of COVID-19 transmission – Washoe County and Humboldt County – are still flagged under the new criteria, and no new counties are flagged this week based on the adjusted criteria.

Since it was the first time in recent weeks Humboldt County was flagged for increased risk, officials representing that community did not provide an update to the Task Force this week. If Humboldt is again flagged for an increased risk, county officials will need to come before the Task Force.

After being flagged for the last two weeks for having an elevated risk of COVID-19 transmission, officials from Washoe County provided an assessment summary to the Task Force. A summary of assessment is below.

WASHOE COUNTY

Assessment Summary:

- As of October 5, Washoe is experiencing a case rate of 412.2 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 8.4 percent. That's an increase from a case rate of 397.2 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 7.8 percent last week.
- Washoe County reported a continued increase in cases in the 10-19 year old, and 20-29 year old ranges.
- Washoe County officials reported actions taken by University of Nevada, Reno, to help mitigate the spread and decrease the

transmission, including the closure of an on-campus fitness center and increased communication to the university community.

- Chair Cage asked if WCHD is planning to review the Large Gathering Safety & Preparedness plans submitted to the Health District in line with the increased gathering sizes and process as laid out by the State last week in Directive 033. Mr. Dick of WCHD said they are currently evaluating the impact on the local public health system and would likely have an update later today.
    - *Directive 033 outlines a process for those who wish to host a gathering for more than 250 individuals in locations with more than 2,500 fixed seating capacity. A Large Gathering Preparedness and Safety Plan must be developed and submitted to the applicable local health authority for review and confirmation that it complies with all applicable health and safety standards and will not place an unacceptable burden on the local health infrastructure.*

Although not flagged for elevated risk this week, Clark County, Nye County and Elko County also provided updates to the Task Force. A summary of the assessment is below.

CLARK COUNTY

Assessment Summary:

- As of October 5, Clark is experiencing a case rate of 314.9 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 6.9 percent. That's an increase from a case rate of 301.5 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 6.7 percent last week.
- Clark County reported they will continue all current mitigation measures, as their data is trending in a positive direction.

NYE COUNTY

Assessment Summary:

- As of October 5, Nye is experiencing a case rate of 36.8 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 4 percent. That's an increase

from a case rate of 28.7 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 1.5 percent last week.

- As of October 5, Nye's testing is trending in the right direction at 51.6 per day, an increase from last week of average daily testing done of 48.5 per 100,000 residents.
- Nye County reported they will continue all current mitigation measures.

ELKO COUNTY

Assessment Summary:

- As of October 5, Elko is experiencing a case rate of 181.9 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 4.4 percent. That's an increase from a case rate of 178.2 per 100,000 residents and a test positivity rate of 4 percent last week.
- Elko County reported they will continue all current mitigation measures.

Any plans, and implementation dates, will not be considered finalized until action to approve is taken by the Task Force.

All counties -- regardless of risk level -- must maintain the statewide baseline mitigation measures, including wearing face coverings, limits on gathering sizes and capacity in businesses. Additionally, all counties must continue to follow the new criteria issued last week on gatherings and youth/adult sports outlined in Directive 033 and Directive 034, respectively. Accompanying guidance for these directives and safety requirements can also be found HERE.

More information about the task force can be found online on the Nevada Health Response page at nvhealthresponse.nv.gov, under "News and Information" and "COVID Task Force Assessment."

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