



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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

November 18, 2020

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) IN MCPHERSON COUNTY

McPherson County Health Department reports 1150 total cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in McPherson County. 592 of the total cases have now met recovery guidelines set forth by the KDHE or have passed away. There are four current hospitalizations and eight deaths.

As cases continue to rapidly increase, McPherson County Health Department is experiencing a delay in response time to begin investigations and contact tracing. KDHE is experiencing similar delays. Please know our team of 8 are working tirelessly to contact cases, close contacts and answer questions coming in. Please be aware that if you or someone you know has been tested, they may receive a call from KDHE Epidemiologists as they help us manage our case load. While waiting on notification from our team or KDHE, please continue your isolation and notify the people that have been within 6 feet of you for 10 minutes or longer, including those that meet that criteria in the 48 hours prior to your symptom onset. If you are not symptomatic, please include close contacts 48 hours prior to your positive test date.

Our communities are going to be making difficult decisions surrounding how to proceed as cases climb and the healthcare system is strained. Please note these decisions are not made lightly but are vital to the future of our communities. We want to keep “business as usual,” our children in schools, our workplaces functioning in person, and our healthcare system well-equipped. Each individual McPherson County resident plays an important role in our communities, part of which includes keeping our society healthy. If you fell lax or less cautious during Phase 3, now is the time to be more cautious and diligent in the choices we make. Stay home, stay safe, and wear a mask.

Updated case data includes:

- **New cases since last public release: 87**
- Asymptomatic: 35
- Cases with unknown exposure: 541
- Cases 60 years old and above: 338
- Cases 50-59 years old: 163
- Cases 40-49 years old: 147
- Cases 30-39 years old: 143
- Cases 18-29 years old: 241
- Cases under 18 years old: 118
- Female cases: 607
- Male cases: 543
- Hospitalized cases (may not represent current hospitalizations): 40
- Ventilated cases (may not represent current ventilated cases): 5
- Deaths: 8

McPherson County Health Department is working closely with key partners to evaluate the school year. It is our goal to continue to keep the community informed. The data reported below are not the only data that influences the recommendation to move to more or less restriction. Criteria that will influence the recommendation to move schools to more or less restrictive measures can be found on mcpersoncountyks.us on the home page, under “COVID-19: Reopening McPherson County.” Each week a Risk Assessment will be completed on each district and two private schools in the County. Those can also be found on mcpersoncountyks.us. Data that has been updated to reflect the above-mentioned changes includes:

Date	# of New Positives Reported to MCHD	# of Tested	% Positive	% Positivity without Pre-Ops
6/19 to 7/12	22	449	4.89%	5.47%
7/13 to 7/26	30	312	9.61%	11.49%
7/27 to 8/9	32	311	10.28%	12.64%
8/10 to 8/23	20	282	7.09%	8.62%
8/24 to 9/6	38	321	11.83%	14.39%
9/7 to 9/20	38	419	9.06%	10.10%
9/21 to 10/4	21	394	5.32%	6.12%
10/5 to 10/18	62	446	13.9%	N/A
10/19 to 11/1	184	575	32.00%	N/A
11/2 to 11/15	521	1227	42.46%	N/A

*Numbers may fluctuate as more results are reported to MCHD.

McPherson County is in Phase 2 of Reopening Kansas. Updated documents can be found on mcpersoncouteys.us on the home page, under "COVID-19: Reopening McPherson County." McPherson County Health Department recommends McPherson County remains in Phase 2 at least until **November 23rd, 2020.**

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

- Traveled to or from South Dakota between November 4 – November 17
- Traveled to or from Belgium and Czechia between November 4 – November 17
- Traveled to or from North Dakota between October 21 – November 17
- Traveled to or from the country of Andorra between October 21 – November 17
- Attended/traveled to a mass gathering event (out-of-state) of 500 people or greater where individuals did not 6-foot distance and wear masks
- Traveled on a cruise ship or river cruise

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

- Following Phase 2 of Reopening Kansas and McPherson County (mcpersoncountyks.us).
- Maintaining social distancing.
- Avoiding gatherings in groups greater than 15-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.

####