

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) IN MCPHERSON COUNTY**

COVID-19 data in McPherson County can be found on the home page of [mcpersoncountyks.us](https://mcpersoncountyks.us), under "McPherson County COVID-19 Dashboard." This data will continue to be updated Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. Public releases (like this one) will move to once a week on Thursdays and more frequently if needed.

As of this release, McPherson County is vaccinating Phase 3 and 4, and anyone included previously. Individuals in these categories can contact their primary care provider to be vaccinated or call MCHD to schedule at 620-241-1753.

- Individuals aged 16-64 (16-17 year old's can only receive Pfizer vaccine) with the following medical risks: cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, down syndrome, heart conditions, organ transplant recipients, diabetes mellitus, sickle cell disease, pregnant patients (should discuss with provider), asthma, cerebrovascular disease, immunocompromised state, neurologic conditions, liver disease, pulmonary fibrosis, thalassemia, and obesity.
- Critical manufacturing workers that perform indoors
- Utility workers
- Social service and government workers
- Logistics workers, such as truck transportation and couriers
- Shelter, housing and construction workers
- Finance workers
- Information technology and communications workers

School Guidance: KDHE has adopted new CDC guidelines regarding masking and distancing in schools.

- Universal and correct use of masks should still be in place.
- In elementary schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart.
- In middle and high schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart unless there is high community transmission.
- If an outbreak occurs in any school setting, students should be 6 feet apart until the outbreak is contained.
- However, 6 feet distance must continue to be maintained in the following settings:
  - Between adults (teachers and staff) and between adults and students. Studies have found that transmission between staff is more common than transmission between students in schools.
  - When masks cannot be worn, such as eating.
  - During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band, sports, or exercise. These activities should be moved outdoors or to large, well-ventilated space when possible.
  - In common areas like school lobbies and auditoriums.
- Quarantine and isolation protocol has not changed. A close contact is defined as someone within 6-feet for 10 minutes or longer of a positive, infectious case.

Isolation and Quarantine:

- If you are exposed to someone with suspect or confirmed COVID-19, you are not required to quarantine if you meet ALL of the following points:
  - If you have been fully vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine for at least 2 weeks (2 weeks after the second dose in 2-dose series like Moderna and Pfizer, or 2 weeks after the first dose in a single-dose vaccine like Johnson & Johnson)
  - If you are within 6 months of receiving your last dose in the vaccine series
  - If you are not having any symptoms since the identified COVID-19 exposure

- If you do not meet ALL of the above points, you should follow normal quarantine guidance, which includes a 10-day quarantine from date of exposure.
- If you meet ALL of the above points but then become symptomatic, you should immediately isolate and seek PCR or antigen COVID-19 testing.
- Vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings/long term care facilities are exempt from this fully vaccinated exemption due to unknown vaccine effectiveness in this population, the higher risk of severe disease and death, and challenges with distancing in these settings.

McPherson County Health Department (MCHD) recommends McPherson County practice Phase 3 Reopening Plans beginning February 10, 2021 and will be reviewed April 6, 2021. Reopening plan guidance is shifting to include case and recovery rates and population vaccination status. Phase 3 limits gatherings to 45 individuals when 6-foot distance is not maintained. More information on Phase 3 plans can be found on the McPherson County website, [mcpersoncountyks.us](http://mcpersoncountyks.us).

KDHE and MCHD continue to mandate a 10-day quarantine for Kansans if you have done any of the following:

- Traveled on or after March 12 to New Jersey or New York
- Traveled on or after March 12 to State of Palestine or Estonia.
- Traveled on or after February 26 to the countries of Mayotte, Czechia, San Marino, Montenegro, or Seychelles.
- 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.