



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Clear Creek County, Georgetown, CO

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Stay Healthy. Stay Informed.

Contact: Christine Crouse, Clear Creek County
COVID-19 Public Information Officer

Phone: 303-679-2424 / 970-389-8724

Email: christine.crouse@colostate.edu

CLEAR CREEK COUNTY "STAYS THE COURSE" DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In March of this year, a global pandemic was declared and in order to reduce disease transmission we were staying at home, except to conduct essential activities. Now, nearly six months later, with science-based public health guidance, phased re-opening of businesses and services continues and the overall economy is in a paced recovery mode. The virus is still here, though, and extremely contagious. In the United States alone, more than 5.8 million people have contracted the disease and over 180,000 people have died due to COVID-19.

As of today, the Clear Creek County Public Health staff has conducted over 1,300 COVID-19 tests. The total number of positive COVID-19 cases in the county is 34. We have had one death and no community outbreaks. There have been six positive cases in the month of August; two of those are still in isolation and 10 families are in quarantine. Due to the two-week timeframe for reporting, quarantine and contact tracing, the County's business-related variance and current operating procedures have not been impacted. More information on the County's positivity rate and other statistics can be found on the VIEW THE NUMBERS page at www.clearcreekcounty.us/covid19.

According to Dr. Timothy Ryan, County Public & Environmental Health Director, "Clear Creek continues to have relatively low case numbers because of community-wide diligence in following the science-based disease prevention strategies of social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing. Following these basic hygiene rules is our best defense against spreading COVID-19 and other viruses as schools open, our summer tourist season comes to a close with an influx of Labor Day holiday visitors, and as flu season begins."

Masks are critical to continued success in minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Says Dr. Ryan, "Our case numbers will not stay low if we stop wearing masks. Cloth face masks that securely and completely cover the nose, mouth and chin are best. If you can see light through the mask, it is not providing sufficient protection."

TRANSITIONING FROM RESPONSE TO RECOVERY

On March 5th, the County activated the Emergency Response Team and established Incident Command, and soon after issued its initial Emergency Declaration. Since being activated, the team has worked diligently to meet all emergency response objectives, including:

- acquiring a 5-month supply of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and developing a distribution policy
- obtaining 4,500 COVID-19 test kits
- coordinating community drive-through test sites and on-site testing of vulnerable populations
- scheduling and conducting nasopharyngeal swab tests and coordinating lab analyses
- reporting results and conducting contact tracing
- managing positive cases, including provision of meals, medication and other essential if required for isolation/quarantine
- coordinating volunteer efforts and food/supply distribution
- developing and distributing public information

After nearly half a year of intense logistical planning and operations, the team is transitioning out of emergency response to support the recovery phase. "In Clear Creek County, we are cautiously progressing into long-term recovery and resiliency. Businesses, restaurants, places of worship and now schools have re-opened with protective health measures in place," says Suzanne Boccia, County Office of Emergency Management Director. "We have gained

significant knowledge and first-hand experience dealing with these unprecedented circumstances.” Monitoring of global, national, state and local situations will continue and the team is ready to re-mobilize if needed.

In June, the Policy and Grants committees received \$831,775 in CARES grant funds. These committees have merged to form the Clear Creek Resiliency Collaborative (CCRC), which is obtaining community input to help set program goals and determine how to best disperse the funds. A Clear Creek Cares About Business Grant is currently available with a September 11th deadline to apply. The County Housing Department recently received a \$25,000 grant and has implemented a COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program. CCRC, managed by Alyssa Dinberg, recently submitted an additional COVID Relief Fund request for \$100,000 to increase local mental health resources, among other things.

BEST WAYS TO STAY HEALTHY

There are currently no verified medical cures or preventative vaccines for COVID-19. There are, however, many ways you can reduce your chances of catching the virus and help mitigate community spread of COVID-19. We recommend people protect themselves and others by practicing these actions:

- Wear a mask in public and wash daily if it is a reusable mask.
- Practice social distancing. Keep six feet of physical distance between all people at all times. The “6-foot rule” does not apply to people who live in the same house as you -- in other words, your roommates and family. But if you, your family, or your roommates get sick, you or they must [self-isolate](#).
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water. Ensure you are washing your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds. You may also use alcohol-based hand sanitizers as long as the alcohol content is at least 60%.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, throw the tissue away and then wash your hands. If no tissue is available, make sure you cough/sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands.
- Avoid touching your face including your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, like door knobs and your phone. Make sure the disinfectant you are using is listed on the [EPA List N: Disinfectant List for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#).
- Avoid being around anyone with cold- or flu-like symptoms.
- If you’re sick, stay home and away from public places.
- Make healthy lifestyle choices. The healthier you are overall, the better your immune system will be at fighting off all viruses, including COVID-19
- Get a flu shot when they become available.

Explains County Public Health Nurse Crystal Brandt, “There are rumors of a COVID-19 vaccine possibly being available this fall. If that comes to be, there will be very limited quantities for those at extremely high-risk.” Several phase three trials of vaccinations are taking place in the United States. These vaccines will require refrigeration at -80°, which poses a logistical challenge for many public health agencies.

Seek testing immediately if you experience symptoms. Clear Creek County Public Health continues to offer free COVID-19 testing for Clear Creek County residents. The September schedule can be found on the COVID-19 TESTING INFORMATION page at www.clearcreekcounty.us/covid19. Please call the COVID-19 HEALTH LINE at 303-670-7528 to schedule an appointment.



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