

Wednesday, April 8, 2020 Local Briefing Notes

As of the time of this email, Dr. Lee Norman is reporting 1,008 positive cases including 38 deaths, spanning 57 of Kansas' 105 counties. This is up from 900 positive cases and 27 deaths reported yesterday.

Early today, Kansas Attorney General Derrek Schmidt provided written guidance regarding Executive Order 20-18, where he, in part states, "To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Office of the Attorney General advises Kansans to adhere to the limitations on religious and faith-based gatherings set forth in Executive Order 20-18. However, for the reasons set forth above, the provisions of the governor's order that purport to criminalize certain gatherings for religious services or activities likely violate both state statute and the Kansas Constitution, which would render them void and unenforceable. Because no Kansan should be threatened with fine or imprisonment, arrested, or prosecuted for performing or attending church or other religious services (which even during the current state of disaster emergency remain an "essential function" recognized by EO 20-16), **law enforcement officers are advised to encourage cooperative compliance with the new provisions of EO 20-18 and to avoid engaging in criminal enforcement of its limitations on religious facilities, services or activities.** I am attaching a copy of the AG's Memo provided to Kansas law enforcement.

During the 1:00p.m. conference call with statewide partners, the Department of Labor reported an additional 50,000 claimants filed for benefits over the past week. They continue to train additional call-takers to handle the high influx of calls.

The Kansas Department of Emergency Management sent a survey to all county Emergency Managers which will need to be completed each week, showing the PPE supply and burn rate. This form will need to be completed in order to obtain PPE assistance from FEMA.

Brian Caskey, Administrative Assistant with the Kansas Secretary of State's Office, reported they are working on contingency plans regarding how the COVID response may impact upcoming elections. He stated at this time it's still too early and fluid to provide final guidance, but they are working on potential scenarios. He also mentioned, in Kansas, those who are ages 16 and above are able to serve as election board members.

It was asked again if cruise nights were allowed. As in the past, according to the state, the issue is one of local responsibility and is not determined by the state.

At 2:00 p.m., the Kansas Legislative Coordinating Council met to review Governor Laura Kelly's Executive Order 20-18, which she issued on April 7, 2020. As a result of that review, there were 5 votes to revoke the Governor's Executive Order. A minimum of 5 votes were needed and as such, the Executive Order has been revoked.

If you need anything, let me know.

Thanks,

Sheriff David Groves

