

Monday, March 23, 2020 Cherokee County Daily Briefing Notes

As of the time of this email, Cherokee County still has two confirmed COVID-19 cases, both of whom remain quarantined at their homes.

During our 1:00 p.m. phone conference with the Kansas Department of Emergency Management, the following was discussed:

- Fire Marshal's Office is able to work with Kansas Department of Health and Environment for daycares to increase their capacity, if needed (with emphasis on families of healthcare providers and first responder families). The turnaround on permitting has been as short as a few hours.
- Kansas Department of Labor is overwhelmed with call volume. They have hired and are training additional call-takers but are asking that traffic be routed to their website, if possible.
- There is no set number for when a community / county is designated "widespread transmission," but when that happens they decrease the testing because since there is no cure for COVID-19, the treatment is the same whether you have a positive test or not and are exhibiting mild symptoms.
- Kansas Department of Education continues to work with school administrators who are working out their plans for remote / online learning.

During our 2:00 p.m. video conference, the request was made for Health Department Administrator to look into a letter of authorization for schools to have regarding their ability to work with at risk students or students who may need physical therapy or have IP's.

In addition, it was requested the school superintendents be given a heads up if we anticipate severe storms and the potential for needing to open up a shelter.

Dr. Smith mentioned the potential need for emergency daycares, especially those who can provide services for parents in health care / emergency services.

Administrator Elliott stated Cherokee County had submitted 30 COVID-19 tests overall and she is in daily contact with Mercy Columbus Hospital as well as other in county doctors' offices and clinics.

I advised emergency service supervisors / department heads that the addresses of known positive cases are imputed into our Computer Aided Dispatch system so should EMS or other emergency responder be dispatched to the address; dispatch can provide them an alert before arriving so they can adjust their response / approach accordingly.

Following the local video conference, I viewed Governor Kelly's press conference and wanted to relay some of that, as I believe it sends a good indicator as to what we may see later in the week.

- Tomorrow rescind and revise Executive Order 20-04, and will issue a new Executive Order lowering the number in mass gatherings from 50 to 10 persons
- There are 89 of 105 counties which do not have a confirmed positive case at this time
- A state-wide "Stay at Home" order is not necessary at this time. However, a state-wide "Stay at Home" order may be necessary in the coming days.
- A "Stay at Home" order doesn't prevent people from getting medical treatment, food, essential services or fuel

- All counties will be required to follow the “Stay at Home” guidelines set forth in the new Executive Order issued tomorrow, IF and when they issue a “Stay at Home” order in an effort to maintain consistency
- Currently Johnson, Atchison, Wyandotte, Leavenworth, Douglas, Doniphan, Miami and Lyon Counties have issued “Stay at Home” orders

The Governor also stated the following:

“For now, the actions we are taking today will ensure as much consistency as possible as local communities make their decisions around these increased protections for their residents.”

“All of these actions, while disruptive and unpleasant are absolutely necessary to keep Kansans safe and healthy and to prevent overwhelming our emergency rooms and our larger healthcare system. We’ve all got to do our part and work together to protect our families and communities.

The most effective to slow the spread is to stay home and practice good hygiene techniques.

In addition, Doctor Lee Norman provided the following information and comments:

- 82 positive cases in the State of Kansas as of 10:00 a.m. Projected 300-400 cases by the end of the month
- KDHE will doing a different testing strategy at their lab, because the commercial labs coming on board have helped relieve some pressure from the state lab.
- KDHE lab criteria will change to include priority testing health care workers and first responders who have been exposed to or have COVID-19 symptoms, those in potential clusters of unknown respiratory illnesses – especially at long-term care facilities and other healthcare facilities, hospital facilities with no alternative diagnosis, individuals over age 60 who have symptoms of COVID-19, those with underlying health conditions.
- Kansas has not run out of test kits as he was concerned about last week. They received another shipment (500 kits) from the CDC over the weekend and put a request to colleges and universities who use similar equipment in their research labs and received another (200) from them, so the state is pretty stable on test kits this week.

Below you will find the daily KDHE Brief / numbers by county. In addition, I’m attaching a map showing the various policy impacts, such as “Stay at Home” orders, along with limitations of gatherings, across the state.

As always, if you need anything or have questions, please let me know.

Thanks,

Sheriff David Groves