



LoupBasin
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Loup Basin Public Health Department Not Tracking “Probable” Positive Cases

Burwell, NE – As of this press release (03/25/2020 at 9:30 a.m.) Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) does not have a laboratory confirmed positive case of COVID-19 within their jurisdiction (Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Howard, Loup, Sherman, Valley and Wheeler counties). The lack of a lab-confirmed case does not mean there is not COVID-19 within the jurisdiction.

Lab testing occurs through two avenues, commercial and public health laboratories. At this time, testing through both routes are limited. Because of the limited testing, State guidelines allow for medical providers to consider patients who have symptoms and a clear exposure through travel or close contact that have tested negative for influenza and other respiratory illnesses to diagnosis that patient as “probable” case. “Probable” case numbers are not reportable, therefore LBPHD will not comment on these cases. State and local health officials continue to track influenza, respiratory illness and COVID-19 lab-confirmed cases for surveillance and monitoring.

LBPHD is encouraging those living within our jurisdiction to practice strict social distancing. Public and social gatherings should be limited to 10 people or less. All non-essential travel should be avoided at this time.

People can help protect themselves from COVID-19 and other respiratory infections by:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with sick people and stay home if you are sick.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

For the latest information, visit the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services website at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx> or LBPHD on Facebook by searching Loup Basin Public Health Department.