



DOUGLAS COUNTY COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM

**JOINT INFORMATION CENTER PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 28, 2020**

DOUGLAS COUNTY COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM - DAILY LOCAL UPDATE

(Douglas County, Ore.) The Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team, your Douglas County Commissioners and our local health professionals want to remind you that it is important to not delay needed health care and doctor visits. While many of us are worried about the COVID-19 crisis, other medical conditions such as appendicitis and heart attacks still happen, and they can be deadly if not treated appropriately. If you have a serious health condition, do not hesitate to seek care at a hospital or urgent care.

- Emergency care can and should still be sought – this includes, but is not limited to, possible strokes, heart attacks, bleeding that won't stop, broken bones, etc.
- If you have an emergency, do not hesitate to dial 9-1-1 for an ambulance response.
- If you have medical concerns or questions, do not ignore them, contact your healthcare provider. If you don't have a healthcare provider, contact an urgent care clinic or hospital.
- Some routine services such as preventive screening procedures were delayed. Call to see about rescheduling now that some elective procedures can resume.
- Some routine services can be provided by telehealth, so long as this type of visit is offered by your health care provider. Ask your health care provider about your appointments and if the telehealth option is available.

Please don't delay needed care, doctor visits etc. Soon our hospitals and clinics will start to schedule and perform some previously scheduled procedures. Our local hospitals, as well as medical clinics and urgent care clinics have instituted additional safety and screening procedures to make access to needed care as safe and convenient as possible for people during this pandemic.

Local COVID-19 Test Results

As of 12:00 pm, April 28, 2020, there are no new cases of COVID-19 in Douglas County. For the twelfth day in a row, the total number of positives in Douglas County remains at twenty-three*. Of the twenty-three, fifteen have recovered. There have been zero deaths and 983 negative tests for COVID-19 in the county. Two of the twenty-three people that have tested positive are still hospitalized in different hospitals. Douglas Public Health Network continues their epidemiologic investigations, identifying individuals who may have had close contact with individuals that have tested positive for COVID-19 and advising quarantine. Fifteen of the individuals who tested positive earlier have now recovered. DPHN defines recovery as an end to all symptoms after a positive test for COVID-19.

Get Tested

There is a drive through clinic today, Tuesday, April 28, 2020, in Roseburg. If you are having symptoms of COVID-19 including cough, fever, shortness of breath, muscle aches and pains, diarrhea, sore throat or decreased sense of smell and taste, talk to your health care provider about being tested for COVID-19.

Given the growing availability of commercial labs and the improving availability of testing supplies and PPE DPHN has revised their guidelines to providers on testing. DPHN has sent out communications to the local health care community alerting them of the increased availability of testing for their patients. DPHN also announced Wednesday that Quest labs is now offering the IgG antibody test for COVID-19 locally. Both tests must be ordered by a health care provider and currently, testing without a provider order is not yet available.

The first drive thru testing site was piloted in the county on March 17, 2020, there have been 370 people tested in the drive through clinics alone, additional testing continues in hospitals, urgent cares and clinics simultaneously. The drive through clinics are led by DPHN, in conjunction with partner agencies including; Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team, Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Douglas County Public Works, local volunteers and local health professionals.

Oregon COVID-19 Case Update

Oregon Health Authority reports new cases once a day on its website at www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus. The Oregon Health Authority is also releasing the daily situation status report, which is produced jointly with Oregon Office of Emergency Management. It details the overall picture of the COVID-19 outbreak within the state and the response across government agencies. [Read more here about the daily situation status report.](#)



DCCRT Partner Spotlight: Mercy Medical Center

Mercy Medical Center has been at the core of Douglas County's COVID-19 response from the beginning, with Mercy officials and partners working hard to ensure the hospital is prepared to manage a surge of coronavirus patients, should that need arise. The hospital has set up a 36-bed COVID-19 unit, but has not yet used it, as the number of local patients requiring hospitalization has remained very low. Collaborating with Douglas Public Health Network (DPHN), Douglas County Commissioners and other partners through the Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team (DCCRT) has enabled Mercy to keep the community informed while focusing on its core mission of providing high-quality care to its patients. Mercy representation on the DCCRT includes CEO Kelly Morgan and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Jason Gray. Even before joining DCCRT, Mercy began having internal meetings about COVID-19 in early February.

At the time, there were projections that Mercy would need up to 150 medical beds and 38 critical care beds, so the hospital began working to set up its COVID unit. Early on in the COVID-19 crisis, Mercy also started screening all hospital visitors. The number of visitors per patient was restricted, and later no visitors were allowed at all, with few exceptions. Staff are also screened on a daily basis, and the hospital has implemented a universal masking policy, following CDC recommendations. There was a big need for personal protective equipment (PPE), which is in short supply nationwide. With already-established strong community ties, Mercy Foundation launched an extensive outreach campaign seeking donations of masks, gloves, gowns and other equipment – and people stepped up in a big way, from individuals to businesses and government agencies.

“Our community has just been amazingly responsive in the way it always is here,” Mercy Communications Director Kathleen Nickel said. “People in Douglas County are so supportive and generous.”

Mercy has also worked with locally companies to create a local supply chain of reusable PPE. For instance, Oregon Serigraphics and their team of “Sewing Warriors” have made thousands of homemade masks; FCC Commercial Furniture has sourced specialized fabric and is cutting fabric for 500 reusable gowns; and 15 local seamstresses and tailors have stepped up to sew the gowns. Additionally, the Roseburg VA has begun sanitizing Mercy's N95 masks using an ultraviolet-light disinfecting process, allowing each mask to be used up to four times, which expands the PPE supply. With the Governor lifting restrictions on non-urgent medical procedures and elective surgeries starting this Friday, Mercy is planning to gradually resume procedures and surgeries, making sure the hospital maintains an adequate PPE supply and the capacity to care for any additional COVID-19 patients. “Through a partnership with the Cow Creek Tribe and with Providence, we can prescreen everyone who is set for surgery to ensure that they have a negative COVID test prior to surgery,” Nickel said.

This isn't Mercy's first pandemic; the Sisters of Mercy opened the hospital in 1909, nearly a decade before the Spanish Flu hit. Mercy was Roseburg's first hospital, located at the corner of Harvard Avenue and Madrone Street, with 25 beds. Mercy is one of two hospitals in the county with an Emergency Department; the other is Lower Umpqua Hospital in Reedsport.

Residents of Douglas County have helped ensure that the local health care system could handle a surge in COVID patients by following the Governor's #stayhomesavelives efforts, and now it's time to take care of themselves. Nickel wants residents to be aware that Mercy has put in place a number of safeguards to ensure patient and staff safety, and that the organization is ready to serve our community's health care needs.

“From our outpatient services, lab, imaging, heart center and therapy to the ED and inpatient care units, we want the community to know that we are safe and ready to care for them. Patients who have had to delay needed care due to COVID, should speak with their health provider about rescheduling exams and surgeries.”

Douglas County Parks and RV Parks Will Reopen May 1

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners announced today that effective May 1, 2020, Douglas County operated Parks and RV Parks will reopen to the public on a limited basis. Despite the reopening, they continue to encourage residents to stay home and follow the [Governor's Executive Order #20-12](#), ‘Stay Home, Save Lives.’ However, we do understand the role our outdoor recreational sites provide in keeping our residents mentally and physically healthy. Our parks do have the capacity to allow you to get out and rejuvenate, while remaining dispersed. **But, be prepared, if the use restrictions are not followed, it could lead to the re-closing of our park facilities.** [Click here for the complete story and limited use guidelines.](#) Reminder: A good portion of your safety relies on you, since any public facility is only as clean as the last person who touched it. Please use all our facilities with caution and at your own risk. And make sure you are following the physical distancing and limited use guidelines, so we can continue to keep our parks open.

What Would Restaurants Reopening Look Like?

There was an Oregon Restaurant Sector sub-committee last week to assess what a Phase One reopening would look like for food service establishments. As a result of that meeting, [several draft public health recommendations were issued.](#) At this time, there is no clear timeline for a Phase One reopening, and the decision to reopen ultimately is in the hands of the Oregon Governor. The state is still working on:

Gating criteria: Symptoms – declining numbers; cases – declining numbers and Hospital capacity –regular procedures and adequate testing.

Plans around core state preparedness: robust testing and contact tracing; healthcare system capacity, including PPE and surge capacity and plans for health and safety.

We know that there is still a sense of uncertainty and fear amongst our workforce as we move forward. We are continuing to work on supporting the supply chain for PPE/face covering/gloves so workers can stay safe.

Stores Given OK to Decline Bottle Returns Through May 31

Many grocery stores have chosen to temporarily stop accepting bottle returns during the COVID-19 crisis to help protect the health and safety of their staff and customers. Stores have permission from the state to decline returns, and the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) has just extended this permission until May 31. “The temporary period of non-enforcement began March 15, at a time when grocers and supermarkets were overwhelmed with an unprecedented volume of customers,” the OLCC said in a press release. The surge in shoppers sparked concern about stores having sufficient staffing and cleaning supplies to properly disinfect items and maintain appropriate social distancing. If your local store is not accepting beverage-container returns, local officials recommend keeping your containers until stores resume accepting them. Eligible beverage containers will still be worth 10 cents each when bottle drops reopen. The Roseburg BottleDrop Redemption Center at 740 NE Garden Valley Blvd. currently remains open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

How to Check the Status of your Stimulus Check

Many people have already had their federal Economic Impact Payments deposited into their bank accounts. These direct deposits have been made for [eligible](#) 2019 or 2018 federal tax return filers who received their past refunds through direct deposit. If you didn’t receive a refund for 2019 or 2018 via direct deposit, you can visit the IRS’s [“Get My Payment”](#) page, which allows you to provide your banking information on your return so you can receive payments right away. You can also use this site to track the status of your payment. The first wave of paper checks has already been mailed. For those who didn’t file a federal return in 2018 or 2019, you can visit the [“Non-Filers”](#) IRS site and get set up for direct deposit. This site also contains information on eligibility for stimulus payments. More information on Economic Impact Payments is available on the [IRS website](#).

Declining Social Invitations in the Time of COVID-19

Despite official guidance to stay at home to stop the spread of COVID-19, you may encounter a friend or family member who invites you to hang out in person. It can be awkward to decline such invites; we want our loved ones to know we care about them, but we also want to protect ourselves, our friends and the community at large. Don’t feel bad for saying “no”; you are doing the right thing by setting boundaries in order to protect others’ health and your own. Here are some tips from Oregon Health Authority on how to say “no” to a social invitation:

- “I believe it’s important to stay home and keep the virus from spreading.”
- “In our household, we’re keeping a healthy distance from others to help reduce the spread of coronavirus.”
- “I look forward to seeing you when we can all safely get together again.”
- “We would love to visit with you online or over the phone.”

Daily Tips: Outreach Tuesday

Today is a good day to check on a friend or family member you think may be struggling or feeling isolated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have kids at home, or a busy household, you may be craving quiet time – but for others, the down time can be lonely. Give your loved one a call and see how they’re doing. Send them a text message, or email them a link to a funny video. Chat with them by video and get them to smile. Even small amounts of contact can brighten someone’s day. An added bonus: Focusing on making others feel good helps reduce your own stress!

Local Mask Efforts

If you would like a homemade mask please contact [Douglas County Helpers](#) via their Facebook page or email at douglascountyhelpers@gmail.com. The [Umpqua Sewing Warriors](#) is also making homemade masks and may be reached on their Facebook page. The group [The Timber Faller’s Daughter](#) is working in Reedsport on this effort. You can also find them on Facebook. If you would like to make your own mask, the pattern that many organizations locally have been using can be found [here](#).

Give Blood and Help Your Community

Blood supplies are seriously low and leaving home to donate blood is considered a lifesaving need. If you are healthy and feeling well, then giving blood is a safe and great way to help your community. The Red Cross has implemented sanitizing and social distancing policies to ensure you’re safe while making a lifesaving donation. Anyone interested in donating must make an appointment by visiting www.redcrossblood.org or calling (800) 733-2767.

4/29/2020	10:00 pm - 03:00 pm	Glendale High School, Glendale (Sponsored by Special People's Depot)
4/29/2020	10:30 am - 03:30 pm	South River Community Health Center, Winston
4/30/2020	9:00 am - 2:00 pm	North Bend High School, North Bend
5/01/2020	1:00 pm – 6:30 pm	Roseburg Blood Donation Ctr, 1176 NW Garden Valley Blvd., Roseburg
5/01/2020	10:30 am - 04:00 pm	Sutherlin Community Center, Sutherlin

Stay Informed with the Accurate Information

Your Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Douglas County Public Health Officer, Dr. Robert Dannenhoffer and the Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team have been working hard to cooperatively provide accurate and timely information and a response to Douglas County residents. **If you have questions about resources available, call the COVID-19 hotline, staffed by local volunteers at (541) 464-6550.** Stay up to date on COVID-19 in Douglas County on the DPHN website at www.douglaspublichealthnetwork.org. Find additional information on state, federal and international COVID-19 response from the following websites: [Oregon Health Authority](#), [Centers for Disease Control](#), [World Health Organization](#) and by calling or logging onto [211Info](#).

**Local case data includes all tests done in the county, and are not exclusive to DPHN testing. Further, reporting numbers are accurate as of time listed on this release. These numbers may not match other organizations, who report at different times of the day.*

###

Contact [Tamara Howell](#), Public Information Officer, Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team, (541) 670-2804 cell/(541) 957-4896 tjhowell@co.douglas.or.us
Contact [Vanessa Becker](#), Public Information Officer, Douglas Public Health Network, (541) 817-6552 cell / (541) 440-3571 vanessa@douglaspublichealthnetwork.org