



# Meeting Minutes COVID-19 Mitigation and Mangement Task Force

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>DATE</b>	August 13, 2020
	<b>TIME</b>	10:00 A.M.
	<b>METHOD</b>	Video-Teleconference
	<b>RECORDER</b>	Meagan Werth Ranson
<b>Task Force Voting Member Attendance</b>		
<b>Member Name</b>		<b>Present</b>
Caleb Cage		X
Richard Whitley		X
Terry Reynolds		X
Justin Luna		X
Felicia Gonzales		X
Brett Compston		X
Meagan Werth Ranson		X
Chris Lake		X
Dagny Stapleton		X
Wesley Harper		X
Mark Pandori		X
<b>Task Force Non-Voting Member Attendance</b>		
Kyra Morgan		X
Lisa Sherych		X
Julia Peek		X
Melissa Peek-Bullock		ABS
Malinda Southard		X
Lesley Mohlenkamp		X

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Caleb Cage, Governor’s Office (GO), called the meeting to order. Roll call was performed by Meagan Werth Ranson, GO. Quorum was established for the meeting.

### 2. Public Comment

Chair Cage opened the discussion for public comment in all venues. No public comment was provided.

### 3. Overview of Road to Recovery: Moving to a New Normal

Chair Cage provided an overview of the “Road to Recovery: Moving to a New Normal” document. There have been numerous meetings with Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) and county partners to provide input on the process of this new plan. The process for this document is for this body to identify the three criteria that will be monitored for the counties. If a county meets two or more of the criteria in a single week there will be an initial discussion on a potential action plan and what the self-assessment plan should look like. That action plan would then be submitted the following week and assess the counties numbers based on data gathered from the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). If the county has a two-week duration of elevated criteria, then there will be a discussion regarding implementing that action plan. This past week, there were eight counties that met the two or more of the criteria. Conversations were had with each of the eight

counties from the State, GO, DHHS, NACO, and other partners to discuss what being on this list mean and what implementation would look like.

#### 4. Current Situation Report

Kyra Morgan, DHHS, provided an overview of the current situation in Nevada as it relates to COVID to include the following:

- 727, 283 molecular tests
- 58,650 confirmed cases
- 1,030 total deaths
- 14.6 tests per 1,000 per week
- 14.2% daily positivity rate
- 10.5 Cumulative positivity rate
- 763 confirmed hospitalizations
- 219 Suspected hospitalizations
- 260 patients in intensive care units

Ms. Morgan spoke to more of the slides provided in the handout that show trends in the daily new tests reported, daily new cases, and daily deaths. The takeaway here is that Nevada is experiencing a decline in new cases since the middle of July. Death data is still increasing; however, this is due to the lag time in the reporting of a death. Hopefully by next week there will be a visible decrease in deaths being reported. Ms. Morgan went on to explain the turn around times for the labs in the state. The average turn around time from specimen collected since August 1, 2020 is averaging around three days. Nevada is starting to experience faster specimen turnaround times. Richard Whitley, DHHS, noted the contrast between Nevada and California. From the very beginning, Kyra has been pulling specimen out by lab. One of the most recent issues that California had was the inability to know when a lab did not report. Kyra has done a great job of monitoring by laboratory and being able to have a pulse of what is happening within the state. If a delay is noted it can be acknowledged and decisions can be made on that. Ms. Morgan spoke to a significant decrease in hospitalizations for the past nine days. Also, the test positivity rate has been stable at 10.5% for the past five days and the cumulative positivity rate has been stable for the last 12 days with very slow increases.

Ms. Morgan spoke to the updated COVID-19 County Tracker slide. This data is current as of August 13, 2020 and shows both Carson City and Lincoln County have fallen of the list for not being the criteria for elevated disease transmission. Justin Luna, Division of Emergency Management (DEM), asked if any conclusions can be made regarding Churchill County and Eureka County moving from zero criteria to one criterion this week. Ms. Morgan noted that Churchill County is being flagged as having a high case rate. Churchill county does have a low-test positivity rate and are conducting an adequate number of tests. Eureka County is being flagged as having an insufficient number of testing. There is no concern with an outbreak, the county is just not testing at the level that the state would like to see.

Julia Peek, DHHS, provided an update on contact tracing. Based on conversations at the county level regarding needs, an additional 100 individuals were hired as case investigators for Southern Nevada Health District. This will assist in the backlog of cases. This will also assist in ensuring every Nevadan who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by a contact tracer within 24 hours of the confirmed lab report being received by the health authority. Staffing will also be increased in Washoe County through the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) at University of Nevada Reno (UNR). Currently there are 844 contract staff that have been brought on to assist in supporting at both the state and local level. Ms. Peek noted there is great efficiency found through automation of processes and digital solutions. Salesforce is a tool on case investigations. Ms. Peek spoke to themes related to case investigations and contact tracing is that exposures to COVID-19 are occurring from

social gatherings outside of businesses, household exposures, and exposures at business and community exposure to include hotel/resort, food establishments, or healthcare settings. Ms. Peek also spoke to a smartphone application that is being developed from DHHS Division of Public and Behavioral Health in conjunction with Apple and Google. This proximity-based app should be released next week or the following week.

Chair Cage spoke to this part of the agenda item being for the review of the self-assessment and action plans that were submitted for six out of the eight counties that were on the list as having met two or more of the established criteria:

#### **Carson City Self-Assessment and Action Plan**

Chair Cage provided a high-level review of the plan submitted by Carson City. It was noted the Carson City is not on the list for implementation of this plan as of this morning. Not only did Carson City do a good job in putting this plan together, the plan references collaboration between the city government and state government in working together to meet the critical needs of the local response. The first category is with hospital capacity. The hospital capacity roughly matches the statewide hospital capacity. Carson City also noted in the plan they were confident with staffing levels, stock of Remdesivir, and personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders and city employees. It was noted in the plan, that one million dollars of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funds were put forth in the community regarding PPE and the distribution priority remains the same as it was in the beginning of the pandemic. As far as testing capacity, the quad counties have a robust testing plan that has been in place from the beginning with three priority areas. These priority areas are for symptomatic individuals, contacts with symptoms, and asymptomatic individuals. The plan includes a section for testing efforts for high risk populations and outbreak interventions. Carson City has been working with the prisons and skilled nursing facilities to ensure there are outbreak management plans. Abbott machines have also been deployed to assist in testing for the homeless population. The contact tracing piece outlines where Carson City stands with personnel, turnaround times, and case-study information. The enforcement piece of this will be left up to the county to implement as Carson City did not meet two or more of the criteria for two weeks. The action plan provided by Carson City includes conducting outreach and continuing with the education. It was noted in the testing portion, the Nevada National Guard is a crucial part of the testing system. DPBH has identified funding to assist Carson City moving forward. It was noted that state and federal resources that are needed are access to testing data for those tests conducted by Carson City Health and Human Services and requesting access to all data that is used to determine the City's rate for the three criteria for elevated disease transmission. Nancy Paulson, Carson City, spoke to the important take away from this is the need to receive test results in a timely manner to prevent the spread of the virus. Carson City is focusing on outreach via social media as most cases are increasing from large family gatherings. Nicki Aaker, Carson City, noted she looks forward to working on improvements and moving forward with those opportunities. Chair Cage advised the next step from this meeting is to follow up directly with Carson City on recommendations moving forward.

#### **Nye County Self- Assessment and Action Plan**

Chair Cage began the discussion on this plan by noting Nye County met two of the criteria last week and two of the criteria again this week. Tim Sutton, Nye County, provided an overview of the plan and what is occurring at that the county level. Nye County is comprised of about 48,000 individuals within the county limits, with 43,000 specifically residing in Pahrump. It was noted this is where most of the COVID-19 cases are being documented. Mr. Sutton advised the county is not asking for any relief besides bars being able to open outside Pahrump. The plan Nye County put forth identifies the three main areas of community spread being due to large family gatherings, law enforcement and detention centers, and Las Vegas based employment. John Koenig, Nye County, expressed concern with the county being so large and if the outbreak is occurring in one specific area

of the county, the whole community should not have the same mitigation consequences. There was discussion from the Task Force regarding implementing geographical, targeted approaches to this plan and the new *“Road to Recovery: Moving to a New Normal”* document provides the opportunity to move in that direction. Brett Compston, Nevada National Guard, inquired if in respect to wanting to reopen the bars outside of Pahrump, if the Task Force has the authority to comply with that request. Chair Cage noted the Directive should grant the Task Force the ability to make those decisions. On the other side, if there is an increase in cases, other mitigation levels will need to be considered. Dagny Stapleton, NACO, agreed with taking a targeted approach with Nye County and it would be appropriate to support Nye County to roll back the additional mitigation regarding bars. Justin Luna, DEM, inquired if Nye County has put in any measures to get above the average number of tests per day per 100,000 or started to look at ways to increase the testing capacity threshold. Mr. Sutton advised the county has tested everyone that wants to be tested but was willing to work with the state in any way to increase the capacity. Chair Cage suggested the county work with the state to put together a planning team, increase public service announcements, and conduct targeted testing. The discussion continued around the resources that have already been developed that could easily be implemented in Nye County regarding messaging. Chair Cage noted the plan was good but there are a few areas for additional development.

#### **Lander County Self- Assessment and Action Plan**

Chair Cage advised the plan submitted by Lander County identified opportunities to work with the state. It was noted in the plan that nine households were infected, six are in Battle Mountain, one in Kingston, and one in Elko with a Lander County address. Two residents were Tribal members. Chair Cage noted these items fall under the special consideration item. The plan is to continue to conduct contact tracing, promote messages with local health officials enforcing quarantine. No other mitigation measures are to be taken at this time. Outreach and promotion are tailored to the county’s specific needs. The county has a total of 14 COVID-19 cases and the criteria states the county can not have more than 12. This puts the county on the fence. Kyra Morgan noted Lander County is not flagged as having an elevated case rate as of August 13, 2020. The county is being flagged for high test positivity and having a low average number of tests per day. Chair Cage noted there are opportunities to identify state and local partnership areas to help increase testing locally.

#### **Washoe County Self- Assessment and Action Plan**

Kevin Dick, Washoe County, the overall assessment is Washoe County is seeing a high level of disease transmission caused by community spread. This includes commerce, places of employment, and recreational activities. Washoe County has been hampered with the delay in turn around times from the labs. Washoe County is working on hiring more staff for disease investigation and working with the Deloitte contact tracing staff. As far as the lab turnaround time and lab capacity issues, Washoe County has entered into an agreement with Charles River Labs to use all available lab capacity. This will allow for specimen collected at the POST location to be submitted to Charles River Lab, hopefully increasing lab turnaround time. This will also help reduce the turnaround times for the Nevada State Public Health Lab (NSPHL). The county has identified that private gatherings are an area of concern. Outbreaks are occurring from birthday parties, weddings, and graduations. The other place of outbreaks is related to households and multigenerational households. Hospital capacity remains good. Hospitals also advised they are in a good status with PPE. As far as alternative care sites, Renown created a buildout location in the parking garage with an additional 700 beds. This is not currently being used. There is also a build out the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. The county is also in a good status for PPE for distribution priorities. The health districts have also been engaged with acquiring PPE. As far as testing, the drive through post operation is now back to operating five days a week at the Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center with the extension of the Nevada National Guard. There are 15 National Guard Medics at this post. Testing is moving forward with testing of symptomatic and asymptomatic symptoms. The capacity at the post is for 525 individuals to be tested a day. Washoe County has also assisted in distributing test kits to assisted living locations, first responders and have conducted mobile post operations. Washoe County is beginning to

look ahead at the upcoming flu season and partnering with other local resources for Point of Distribution (POD) for vaccinations. Mr. Dick referenced the current contact tracing workforce is now up to 54 disease investigators, with approximately 25 working on any given day. It was noted that there are an additional 32 individuals who have been brought on to assist from the University of Nevada Reno Public Health Training Center. Washoe County is looking to hire 16 more disease investigators soon. Washoe County is also working with regional partners to prevent outbreaks in the homeless population. The Reno Event Center has been utilized to provide social distancing and spacing. Mr. Dick also noted that with the closing of bars in the county, this eliminates a place for folks to gather and individuals are no gathering outside of bars where enforcement of directives are difficult. Chair Cage inquired if bars were to open in Washoe County, what that would like. Mr. Dick advised this is a discussion that can be had moving forward. Terry Reynolds, Nevada Department of Business and Industry, wanted to put on the record that he was thankful for the collaboration that is occurring at the county level with the enforcement piece. It is important to build these relationships and the communication has been incredible.

### **Elko County Self-Assessment and Action Plan**

Rob Stokes, Elko County, provided a brief overview the self-assessment and action plan that was provide for review. Mr. Stokes noted that hospital capacity remains in a fairly good status with a total of seven unoccupied beds, 6 ventilators not in use, staffing remains at a good level, PPE status is sufficient, and there is the ability for the hospital to surge if necessary. Elko County has experienced a low number of hospitalizations throughout the pandemic. Elko County has continuously been working on purchasing PPE for a regional stockpile for the surrounding counties. Regarding contact tracing, it is the goal to contact confirmed cases within 24 hours and close contacts of those cases within 48 hours. Elko County has also been working closely on contingency plans with the Elko County Jail and the Juvenile Detention Center. It was also noted that OSHA was in Elko County the past few days conduction compliance investigations. Terry Reynolds advised he would share the findings with Mr. Stokes once they were available. A few items that were listed as part of the action plan were to ensure that DHHS is receiving all testing data from private labs that local providers are engaging with, continue to work on contact tracing, increase testing, and monitor PPE status. Chair Cage asked if Elko County has a plan dealing with bars and pubs reopening. Mr. Stokes noted the county is waiting on further direction from the Governor's Office. Dagny Stapleton noted it is important to look at Elko County the same way the Task Force is looking at Nye County. Elko County is geographically unique. Chair Cage noted the great work that has been done in Elko County including the collaboration with Great Basin College.

### **Lincoln County**

The action plan for Lincoln County was received. This action plan was not presented as Lincoln County is not meeting two or more of the criteria to be included on the list as of August 13, 2020.

## **5. Appointed Department Updates**

### **a. Department of Business and Industry – Enforcement – Director, Terry Reynolds**

Mr. Reynolds provided a brief overview of the work being done by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding enforcement measures. Not only is Division of Industrial Relations (DIR) conduction site inspections, working with counties conduction their own inspections, they are also managing a hotline. As of August 13, 2020, more than 10,000 calls and inspections have been conducted. DIR is working closely with the Nevada Gaming Control Board (GCB), other divisions within Business and Industry and county partners.

### **b. Division of Emergency Management – PPE Status – Incident Commander, Brett Compston**

No update to provide currently.

- c. Fiscal Update – Work Program Status –Executive Budget Officer, Lesley Mohlenkamp

No update to provide currently.

- d. Nevada Department of Education – School Opening Plans – Deputy Superintendent of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Felicia Gonzales

Ms. Gonzales noted the Nevada Department of Education (DOE) has received all Outbreak Response Plans from all the health districts around the state. This is extremely important as schools are beginning to reopen. Ms. Gonzales also noted the DOE is in the process of completing a work program to provide COVID testing to all educators before the beginning of the school year.

- e. Nevada Association of Counties – Executive Director, Dagny Stapleton

No update to provide currently.

- f. Nevada League of Cities – Director, Wesley Harper

No update to provide currently.

**6. Action Items for next Week**

Chair Cage noted that there was a list of follow up items produced from this meeting that would occur offline to include conversations with the local partners in each county.

**7. Public Comment**

Chair Cage opened the discussion for public comment. No public comment was provided.

**8. Adjourn**

Chair Cage called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned.