



LANDER COUNTY

County Manager
BARTOLO (Bert) RAMOS
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September 2, 2020

Office of the Governor,
State of Nevada
Via E-mail:
ccage@gov.nv.gov
jpeek@health.nv.gov

RE: Lander County Response to Road to Recovery

Office of the Governor:

This letter is in response to information relating to Lander County's being flagged for elevated disease transmission risk. This is Lander County's assessment and action plan as requested from the Governor for recommendations to curb the spread of COVID-19. Lander County is under the jurisdiction of the State Division of Public and Behavior Health but has largely assumed the State's responsibilities in doing community testing, contact tracing, reporting, public outreach, etc., in the county. Lander County will always remain on the "List" due to how the criteria is listed for rural communities.

Road to Recovery – Lander County

County Criteria

1. Average number of tests per day (per 100,000) <150

The demand is not present to meet the criteria to perform 9 COVID-19 tests per day. **This is due to properly tracing, isolating and stopping the spread of COVID-19 when positive cases present.**

The majority of lab testing in Lander County is performed at BMGH. At this time, Lander County has tested approx. 106 COVID-19 tests since August 1, 2020.

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2. Case Rate (per 100,000) > 200.

- Battle Mountain General Hospital performed 63 COVID-19 tests during the time frame of 8/10-8/23
- Lander County had 9 positive cases during 8/1-8/30. None of which share households

3. Testing

Many of the Lander Cases have been associated with mining and employed by various entities.

When an employer with a cluster of positives or symptomatic individuals is identified through BMGH, the HR department is immediately contacted by the Health Officer of Lander County of said entity to offer COVID-19 testing in the fashion of Community Based Testing. Said testing is performed at the location of choice made by the employer and is performed by BMGH. It is important to note that many of these individuals being tested reside in counties outside of Lander but work within Lander County or close by.

Testing has not been restricted due to location and has not been refused, all who want or need to be tested have been tested. This has been the case since the month of May when testing supplies became readily available.

Mitigation Level

Baseline Mitigation Level:

- Maintain the guidelines set forth in the Nevada State Report dated August 9, 2020, approved by the Lander County Commissioners on August 13, 2020.

Mitigation Level 1

- Community Based Testing being offered at Lander County Community Health on 9/4/2020
- Updated testing criteria recommending close contacts of positive COVID individuals be referred to testing, resulting in an increase daily testing
- Take targeted action to address spread based on data

Mitigation Level 2

- Continue the guidelines set forth in the Nevada State Report dated August 9, 2020, approved by the Lander County Commissioners on August 13, 2020.
- Updated testing criteria recommending close contacts of positive COVID individuals be referred to testing, resulting in an increase daily testing
- Take targeted action to address spread based on data
- Offer an additional CBT event

At this time there have been no outbreaks within the Lander County Detention Center.

The outbreak that previously occurred at Battle Mountain General Hospital prior was quickly identified and controlled. All the necessary mitigation is being performed at BMGH to prevent this from occurring again.

Lander County's response:

Contact Tracing:

Contact tracing begins in less than 12 hours, and contact testing done within 72 hours. It is the *goal* of the county hospital to contact the positive individual immediately to ensure they have received their positive results. Test submitted from community testing to the Nevada State Laboratory take an average of 7 days to be reported to the county via fax or the NBS data reporting system. The delays in receiving test results add to the workload of contact tracers and community spread. Efforts are being made to increase staff who are trained to do contact tracing.

Governor's Directives:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Lander County (including the Board of Health) has made every effort to comply with the Governor's directives. This has not changed. Lander County is actively encouraging citizens to follow these directives. Local officials, including law enforcement, have taken a proactive role in educating the public and business owners as to what is required of them under those directives and the potential repercussions for failing to comply. Local health officers are empowered to enforce quarantines of individuals who refuse to voluntarily self-quarantine. These officers are prepared, should the proper circumstances arise, to exercise these powers.

Lander County has not adopted standards more stringent than those issued by the Governor. The county will continue to monitor this situation and make adjustments as necessary.

Messaging:

Lander County has actively promoted social distancing directives, mask usage, prohibition on large public gatherings, Messages are tailored based on current phase and trends happening every couple of days.

Health Care:

Lander County continues to monitor the capacity of the local hospital (Battle Mountain General Hospital) to treat COVID-19 patients. There are currently 0 patients in the Hospital for COVID-19. There are 25 long term care resident beds with 2 currently available. There are 5 ER beds, 5 acute/swing beds (2 occupied). Lander County and the Battle Mountain General Hospital have done everything the Governor has mandated to help flatten the curve, as evidenced by our low numbers. At no point has our health care facility been overwhelmed or burdened with Covid patients.

County needs:

Lander County is not requesting anything at this time.

We hope this information is of assistance.

Sincerely,



Bartolo (Bert) Ramos
Lander County Manager

cc: Dagny Stapleton, Nevada Association of Counties