

ROAD TO RECOVERY: Moving to a New Normal



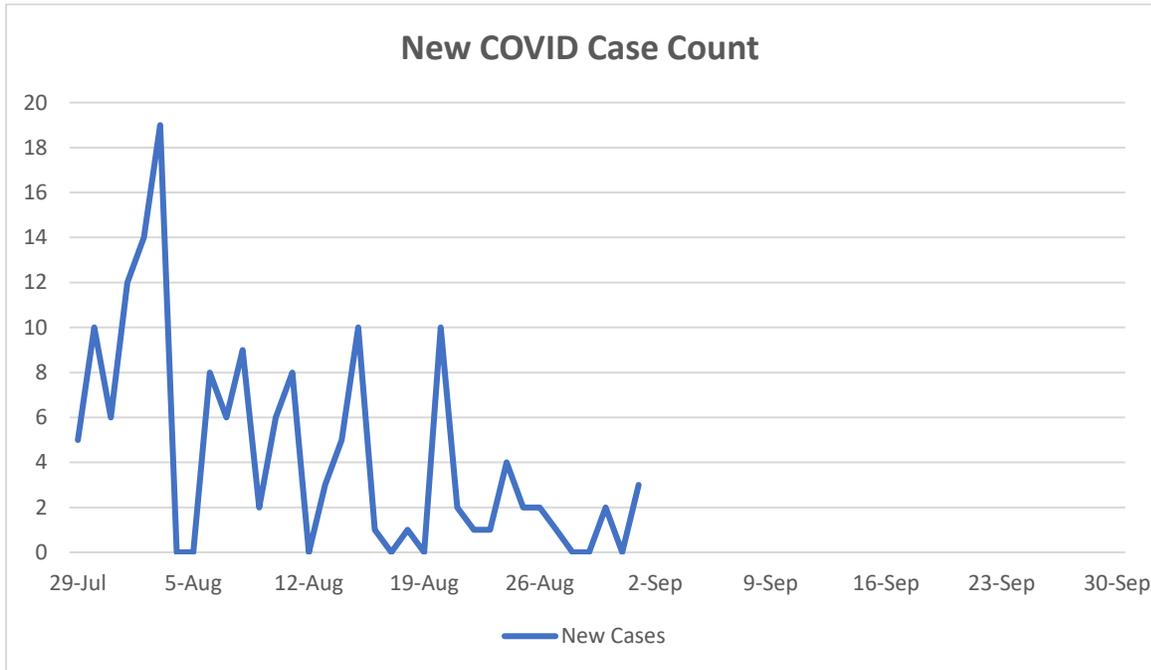
Nye County Jurisdictional Assessment,
Action Plan, and Request to Reopen
Bars, Pubs, Taverns, Breweries,
Distilleries, and Wineries



September 2, 2020

Overall Assessment:

Over the last few weeks, Nye County as a whole has shown a declining trend in COVID cases. Bars, pubs, taverns, breweries, distilleries, and wineries (“liquor establishments”) in rural areas of Nye County have been reopened for almost two weeks with no showing of an overall increase in COVID cases or any cases attributable to these establishments.



Liquor establishment owners and employees in Nye County are hurting. During yesterday’s Nye County Board of Commissioners meeting, the Board heard from numerous individuals who are unemployed, struggling financially, in danger of losing homes, vehicles, businesses etc. Some owners have poured their life savings into these establishments and are facing bankruptcy and the loss of their investments. While COVID’s health impacts need to be recognized and mitigated, the devastating economic effects of the pandemic must also be acknowledged and addressed.

Requested Action

Nye County respectfully requests that all liquor establishments¹ in Nye County be permitted to operate as outlined under Directive 021, Sections 25 and 26.

Justification

Nye County believes the above request is justified based on the following:

- Since the start of the pandemic, there have been no COVID cases attributable to bars, pubs, taverns, breweries, distilleries, and wineries in Nye County.
- As noted above, there has been a decline in COVID cases in Nye County during the last several weeks.

¹ Bars, pubs, taverns, breweries, distilleries, and wineries.

- Nye County is not seeking unrestricted reopening of liquor establishments. The guidelines in Directive 021, Sections 25 and 26 are sufficient to prevent the spread of COVID in the establishments.
- To the extent that the guidelines in Directive 021, Sections 25 and 26 are inadequate, the county's proposed enforcement plan below compensates for any deficiencies and minimizes any corresponding risk.
- Bar owners and employees have expressed willingness and capacity to abide by the guidelines set forth in Directive 021, Sections 25 and 26.
- Bar owners and employees were responsive to and compliant with Directive 021, Sections 25 and 26 for the brief amount of time it was in effect.
- During the most recent OSHA audit, Pahrump had a commendable 100% compliance rating. While this figure obviously did not include liquor establishments, it demonstrates a community-wide willingness to abide by the State's directives.
- Restaurants that serve alcohol are currently able to operate as "quasi-bars" with patrons simply ordering alcohol in food establishments. If this is permissible, there is little justification for disallowing actual bars, pubs, taverns, breweries, distilleries, and wineries to reopen.

If the request to reopen bars, pubs, taverns, breweries, distilleries, and wineries in rural areas is granted, the County intends to implement the following:

- Modification of contact tracing questions to ask all COVID-positive individuals if they have attended liquor establishments during the probable exposure period.
- Increased compliance auditing for liquor establishments to ensure risks are being properly mitigated and State directives are being followed.
- Upon determination that a liquor establishment was the actual point of exposure for a positive COVID case, the County will require that establishment to close.
- The County will continue to work in conjunction with the State to monitor COVID cases in Nye County and if a spike occurs there, discuss revoking or amending the granted approvals.

Critical Statewide Metrics:

Hospital Capacity:

1. Desert View Hospital is a 25-bed critical access hospital located in Pahrump. Currently there is no ICU or Med Surge beds occupied by COVID patients and the hospital remains at approx. 65-70% capacity. With no more than two COVID-19 patients admitted at any time with other co-morbidity related issues
2. The hospital is equipped with ventilators; however, none are in use by COVID patients.
3. Desert View reports staffing models that are adequate for provided services and they continue to assess their staff daily before entering the facility. They have further limited access of non-patients into the hospital.
4. Medications and treatments remain unremarkable with most patients released to self-quarantine at home.
5. Desert View reports that PPE supplies are adequate and without issue.

Access to Personal Protective Equipment:

- Nye County Department of Emergency Management continues to manage a sufficient supply of PPE with prioritization to emergency responders, medical providers, testing facilities, long-term, skilled and assisted living facilities, government operations, and target hot spots.
- Nye County Emergency Management is enacting a plan to train EMTs throughout the County to assist with potential COVID-19 vaccinations. We are also early ordering supplies in support of this mission.

Testing Capacity:

- Nye County continues to lead in the rural counties with approximately 6700 tests completed. The completed test reference does not include Nye County residents who have tested outside of Nye County.
- To help ensure accuracy of our testing results, Nye County conducts only deep nasal-pharyngeal tests with appropriate recommended swab kits.
- Our testing continues through private vendors by both appointment and a regularly scheduled drive- thru center located in Pahrump. Additional testing is completed at the hospital, medical clinics, and Doctor's offices.
- Nye County Department of Emergency Management regularly receives and distributes State supplied nasal-pharyngeal testing kits to the testing centers upon request.

Case Investigation and Contact Tracing:

- Contact tracing within the County continues to be performed through a cooperative effort between the State and Nye County Emergency Management. The resources had been stretched thin but have now caught up due to reduced surge in new cases over the past two weeks. The funding for additional tracers remains available but has not been utilized.

Protection of Vulnerable Populations:

- Nye County continues to monitor and support the Nye County Sheriff's Office Jail, long-term, skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, and other vulnerable populations located throughout the County. This is completed by providing testing kits, PPE, and other associated prevention resource materials.

Enforcement:

- Nye County continues to embrace a joint enforcement model which includes the Nye County Sheriff's Office, Nye County Code Compliance, the Nye County District Attorney's Office, and Nevada OSHA. The County continues to maintain and monitor a dedicated hotline for reporting violations of State directives.

Since August 26, 2020, Nye County has had 8 new positive COVID-19 cases with no new deaths. All eight reside in Pahrump. Through contact tracing, the County has identified one primary problem exposure over this past week: Core Civic Detention Center with three asymptomatic infected detainees.

Working with the State Epidemiologist office, Nye County has placed over 410 patients to recovered status with additional patients under review.

Law Enforcement, Detention Centers and Jails:

- Approximate Pahrump Cases: 3
- Approximate Rural Cases: 0
- Description: Over the past week, Core Civic, Nevada Southern Detention Center has had three confirmed detainee cases located in Pahrump. We are concerned about these exposures; however, we are confident that Core Civics management of the three cases will minimize spread.
- Action Plan:
 - Core Civic has implemented the following directives:
 - Enhanced cleaning measures for all Operational Divisions and the facility
 - Enhanced screening of all staff
 - Additional testing
 - Continue to seek State support with resource requests for testing kits and PPE.

Conclusion:

Nye County continues to make great strides in reducing the COVID-19 impact on our communities. Through testing and contact tracing, we continue to identify and understand community-specific risks and exposures. This in-turn allows us to take the necessary steps to minimize the influence and spread of COVID.

Submitted by:
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