



Meeting Minutes

COVID-19 Mitigation and Mangement Task Force

Attendance	DATE	April 14, 2021
	TIME	10:00 A.M.
	METHOD	Video-Teleconference
	RECORDER	Tanya Benitez/Meagan Werth Ranson
Task Force Voting Member Attendance		
Member Name		Present
Caleb Cage		X
Richard Whitley		X
Terry Reynolds		X
Jaime Black		X
David Fogerson		X
Felicia Gonzales		X
Brett Compston		ABS
Meagan Werth Ranson		X
Chris Lake		X
Dagny Stapleton		X
Wesley Harper		X
Mark Pandori		X
Task Force Non-Voting Member Attendance		
Kyra Morgan		X
Lisa Sherych		ABS
Julia Peek		X
Melissa Peek-Bullock		X
Malinda Southard		X
Lesley Mohlenkamp		X
Samantha Ladich		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. Written public comment is attached. No public comment was provided.

3. Approval of Minutes

Chair Cage called for a motion to amend or approve the draft minutes from the April 1, 2021, Task Force meeting. A motion to approve the draft minutes as presented was provided by Dr. Christopher Lake, Nevada Hospital Association (NHA) and a second was provided by Director Terry Reynolds, Business and Industry (B&I). Motion passed unanimously.

4. Current Situation Report

Kyra Morgan, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), provided an overview of the current situation in Nevada as it relates to COVID to include the following (slides were also included in the meeting packet):

- Cases
 - 223 14-day rolling average cases daily
 - 216 cases per 100,000 over the last 30 days
 - 308,755 cumulative cases
 - 9,804 cumulative cases per 100,000
- Testing
 - 175 tests/day per 100,000 over the last 14 days
 - 5.2% test positivity rate over the last 14 days
 - 3,060,742 cumulative tests
- Hospitalizations
 - 336 confirmed and suspected hospitalizations
 - 71 total ICU
 - 30 total ventilators
- Deaths
 - 3 14-day rolling average deaths daily
 - 4 deaths per 100,000 over the last 30 days
 - 5,339 cumulative deaths
 - 170 cumulative deaths per 100,000

Ms. Morgan provided the group with an update regarding the slides provided in the handouts showing the trends of COVID-19 in Nevada. Ms. Morgan noted daily new cases are stable at approximately 223 new cases per day over the past two weeks. The test positivity rate is above the World Health Organization (WHO) threshold of 5.0%, at 5.2%. As of April 14, 2021, the test positivity is at 5.4%. This seems to be more driven by low testing than by high cases in the community. Daily hospitalizations are stable, with 336 confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases hospitalized in Nevada hospitals as of April 12, 2021. The average number of COVID-19 deaths per day remains at three over the previous two weeks. As of April 13, 2021, Nevada had administered 1,548,188 doses of vaccine to Nevada residents. This equates to about 31% of Nevadans having initiated vaccination and almost 20% of Nevadans being fully vaccinated. Based on current daily volume, DHHS is projecting that Nevada will reach 75% vaccination coverage by August or September. For the population 16 years and older, over 39% have initiated vaccination, and over 25% have been fully vaccinated. As of April 13, 2021, Nevada had administered 1,608,438 doses of vaccine total (1,026,239 initial doses and 647,758 doses completed). For Specimens collected March 15, 2021, through April 13, 2021, it has taken approximately one day after specimen collection for results to be reported. Carson City is the only county flagged for elevated disease transmission with high test positivity (>8%) and high case rate per 100,000 (>200). Excluding prison or inmate population does not significantly impact most counties' overall status for elevated disease transmission. Counties that have relatively high increases in testing and case rates after excluding prison inmate populations are due to having few to zero COVID-19 positive inmates. Since the number of tests and/or cases remain relatively constant and the population size (denominator) is smaller without the inmate population, DHHS would expect to see increases in testing and case rates.

Chair Cage noted an increase in positivity rates over the last two weeks. The hospitalization numbers are stable. Chair Cage requested Ms. Morgan speak to what is being seen currently, what can be expected in the future,

and what the state is looking at with these numbers. Ms. Morgan noted the State is seeing numerous things occurring at the same time. Case numbers are increasing slowly, not significant enough at this point that it causes a lot of alarm. As the State opens, the anticipation is the numbers will increase. The increase has been slower and steadier than expected. Ms. Morgan noted the vaccination roll out has had a lot to do with that. Ms. Morgan had a discussion with Dr. Lake about the NHA numbers and those increases. A lot of that has to do with hospitals returning to a more standard admission process. In November, December, and January hospitals were reaching capacity. Now the hospitals are comfortable admitting less severe cases. Small increases to hospitalizations could be due to providers having capacity to admit patients. As far as the impact on positivity, Nevada is seeing less asymptomatic people seeking testing for COVID-19. There is a pool of people who will not be seeking testing. There is also less demand for testing as community spread goes down, people feel more comfortable, and feel less of a threat related to testing. Nevada has seven counties flagged for not meeting the benchmark for testing. There is concern if it is paired with the other two metrics. Nevada does not want to push testing for the sake of pushing testing. It is an issue when communities with low testing numbers paired with a high case rate, which would imply transmission in the community and/or low testing numbers paired with a high-test positivity, meaning the community is not testing very many people and the people being tested are coming back positive at a higher rate, which would imply the community needs to test more people to contain the spread. In looking at these measures across the spectrum, there is very minor movement across the board. Dr. Lake noted one other hypothesis is there is a higher degree of comfort currently with the population going to the hospitals. People are more inclined to be seen if they are feeling symptoms or feeling sick, as opposed to December when the news was constantly discussing how overrun the hospitals were and the alternative care centers being set up. There is a higher degree of comfort with people coming into the Emergency Room (ER) to be seen. This can contribute to the admissions bouncing around. The NHA is not seeing anything that is materializing into a new wave. Dr. Mark Pandori, Nevada State Public Health Lab (NSPHL), noted over the last 30 days, there has been a considerable shift in the lineages of the viruses that are seen in positive cases in Nevada. Over the last 30 days, B117 (UK variant) makes up 32.6% of the cases that are sequenced at the NSPHL. Over the last 14 days, that number is 31.5%. That lineage is trailed only by another variant of concern, also known as the California variant. These variants are being seen at a higher proportion. The variants are associated with higher infectivity and are also associated phenomenologically with large outbreaks and spread in Europe and in parts of the United States. It is a theoretical concern that if cases are in fact going up there is a rationale for that from a biological perspective with regard to the viruses that are now circulating at a higher proportion in the community. It does not necessarily mean that the increased test positivity is being driven by this, but only that this is a thing to consider.

5. Update on Nevada’s Roadmap to Recovery Transition Plan

Chair Cage provided an update on Nevada’s Roadmap to Recovery Transition Plan. Chair Cage noted on April 13, 2021, there were changes to the process based on Nevada’s current situation. The Governor announced that while the transitional local authority plans, will be in effect on May 1, 2021, the goal is to completely reopen as much as possible by June 1, 2021. Chair Cage noted the Task Force has received some updated plans. If there are parts of the plan that do not align with the Governor’s current or anticipated directives, such as the mask mandate or otherwise, the Task Force will not take any action to disapprove the plan. The Task Force will note for the record, that specific portion of the plan does not align with the Governor’s directive as outlined.

a. Carson City

Nancy Paulson, Carson City Manager, provided an overview of the plan from Carson City. Ms. Paulson noted there are minimal changes to the plan. The City’s draft plan was presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 1, 2021. The suggested revisions have been incorporated into the plan submitted today, April 14, 2021. Changes were made to public gatherings and events, limited to 250 individuals prior to June 1, 2021. This is a change from June 30, 2021. The Board of Supervisors requested that ten persons be allowed per table for outdoor

seating. The previous limit was six persons. Carson City met with the Carson City School District (CCSD) and added schools to the Carson City matrix to clarify that schools would continue to operate according to the requirements of the Nevada Department of Education (DOE) including large gatherings. Carson City added the social distancing guidelines that are in place while in school buildings and facilities. Carson City's plan received the endorsement of the CCSD and the NHA and it will be presented tomorrow at the Board of Supervisors meeting for final approval. Ms. Paulson noted Carson City thought the statewide social distancing protocols were going to be lifted on June 1, 2021 and requested clarification that this will happen on May 1, 2021. Chair Cage noted the directive which will come out this week, should lift Directive 021 social distancing requirements on May 1, 2021. Chair Cage inquired if Carson City anticipates any challenges at the Board of Supervisors meeting tomorrow. Ms. Paulson noted they may lessen the restrictions based on the new guidance released. Chair Cage inquired about resource needs from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA), or the Nevada National Guard (NVNG) partners. Chief David Fogerson, Division of Emergency Management (DEM) noted DEM can meet the resource needs, the source may change (other contract source) but DEM should be able to assist with the needs. Director Reynolds noted the plan is comprehensive and Carson City was able to incorporate the school district. B&I's Safety Consultation and Training Section (SCATS) is available for any technical assistance needs that arise. B&I is working on approving large gatherings during the transitional phase. B&I is working with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Labor on the workforce requirements for COVID. Chair Cage noted B&I has done a lot in terms of enforcement and education. Deputy Superintendent Felicia Gonzales, DOE, clarified that large gatherings do move over to the County as of May 1, 2021, for schools. Director Reynolds confirmed and noted B&I will continue to provide technical assistance to the school districts if necessary. There are a lot of events that have already been approved due to timing constraints. Director Richard Whitley, DHHS, noted this is a thoughtful plan. It illustrates the public health leadership throughout the pandemic. Dr. Malinda Southard, DHHS, appreciates the comprehensive nature of this plan, including the several organizations that are listed and the adherence to the emergency declarations. Director Nicki Aaker, Carson City Health and Human Services (CCHHS) requested clarification on social distancing. Directive 021 will no longer be in effect; however, the understanding is that the counties are to follow the CDC guidance. Chair Cage advised that was correct. Chair Cage requested to be advised on the outcome of the Board of Supervisor meeting.

b. Douglas

Douglas County will present on April 22, 2021.

c. Lyon

Jeff Page, County Manager, provided an overview of the plan from Lyon County. The Board of County Commissioners met this morning, and the plan has been revised. The changes to the original plan are Lyon County will open 100% on May 1, 2021, with face coverings being required. Any reference to size of public gatherings has been removed if the public gathering can be done safely. In the industry activity regarding adult activities, Lyon County added the word brothel to this section. Brothels will open as of May 1, 2021. The plan was approved as of 9:59 A.M. on April 14, 2021. Chair Cage inquired if Lyon County has the support and endorsement of the local entities required to approve. Mr. Page noted the approvals were included in the original plan. Mr. Page will follow up with the hospital association. Mr. Page noted when the Lyon County School District (LCSD) sent the endorsement email, LCSD requested expansion of the public gatherings to a larger crowd to address graduation. Lyon County understands the LCSD is under separate statues within DOE. Chair Cage requested confirmation be sent regarding rural hospitals. Deputy Superintendent Gonzales noted there seems to be some confusion on large gatherings. Large gatherings as of May 1, 2021, will no longer be under the DOE. Mr. Page advised that is correct. Dr. Lake inquired if there is any reference to social distancing or following CDC guidance in the plan or if it was silent. Mr. Page noted that aspect of the plan is silent. Ms. Morgan noted all counties taking advantage of opening at 100% should expect that cases will increase when this occurs. Whether

or not it will be called a surge and whether that precipitates into hospitalizations and mortalities are the unknown at this point because of the role vaccinations are playing, specifically in the vulnerable populations. Chair Cage noted that is an important point. Mr. Page inquired what the States triggers are for the State to pull back and mandate more restrictions. Mr. Page noted this is a concern of most of the leadership in Nevada. Mr. Page inquired what is the State doing to push vaccinations. Chair Cage noted this question came up on April 13, 2021. The Governor’s response on April 13, 2021 was there are no specific triggers set up for rollbacks at this time. Chair Cage noted it is the intent to keep the State open and not return to the mitigation measures that have been seen. The State would like to continue to responsibly reopen. The metrics will continue to be monitored. The best tool is the vaccine and the second is the face coverings and social distancing. Ms. Morgan noted DHHS will continue to monitor the County Tracker for the three-key metrics. It is a good idea to keep a pulse on the County Tracker at the county level. DHHS is monitoring and doing internal projections around when Nevada will hit certain levels of vaccination. Right now, as vaccinations open, it is easier to fill the spots due to the backlog of those wanting to get vaccinated. One unknown is when the interest in vaccinations will decline. Projections currently being worked on show complete vaccination (75%) in August or September. This leaves a large gap until then. DHHS currently is projecting 37% to 47% of the population will be vaccinated by June 1, 2021. There are a lot of unknowns. Chief Fogerson noted the continued vaccination effort is that two-way street between the State and locals. Chief Fogerson noted the collaborative efforts in vaccinating the migrant farm communities in the Quad Counties utilizing the Mobile Vaccination Unit (MVU). Part of the role at DEM is to ensure the vaccinators are there for the health agencies to be able to do the vaccinations, that the funding is there from FEMA, and then the partnership with Immunize Nevada to ensure the process continues. Mr. Page concluded his presentation noting Nevada has never faced a situation like this where all 17 Counties, however many Cities, 17 School Districts and all the small GID special districts have had to pull together and work together. It is important to opening the State of Nevada on June 1, 2021, would not have happened had it not been for the forethought and planning of folks on this Task Force meeting, and folks like Mr. Whitley, who ten plus years ago, along with his boss signed off on a document that allowed CCHHS to provide public health preparedness services to Douglas, Lyon, Storey, and Carson City. Mr. Page appreciated Chair Cage and the Task Force. Mr. Page noted there will be bumps in the road after the June 1, 2021 reopening. Mr. Page noted the measures taken in March 2020 were difficult and if Nevada must do that again it will be even more difficult. Mr. Page inquired what the worst-case scenario would be and how it gets addressed, so that all understand what it will look like if Nevada has to return to previous mitigation measures. Chair Cage noted he values the input noted work needs to be done, making sure there is clarity and transparency and ensuring the right pieces and support is in place in the event there is a surge that reaches emergency levels. Director Reynolds noted B&I is changing the scope of enforcement through Division of Industrial Relations (DIR). B&I Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and DIR are working with the Department of Labor on their National COVID Emphasis Program and is targeting large businesses and certain business categories. DIR sent letters out to all the stakeholders and will follow up through the SCATS group to offer services to those businesses. The emphasis will switch to looking at the National Emphasis Program business categories the Department of Labor wants looked at. A more traditional type of enforcement that has been done in the past. It is a voluntary, confidential, and free service. The business can work with SCATS regarding internal controls to protect their employees. This will help going forward on how the State can move through the next several months and for the next year. Ms. Werth-Ranson noted the updated plan from Lyon County has been sent out to the group and Counties and is in the process of being uploaded to the Nevada Health Response site as well. Dr. Southard noted this is another comprehensive plan. Dr. Southard appreciated Lyon County outlining the enforcement agencies that will oversee that aspect of the plan as well as the required and recommended different aspects of social distancing.

d. Storey

Austin Osborne, County Manager, provided an overview of the plan from Storey County. Storey County has put together a Task Force led by the County Emergency Manager, Tourism Director, Community Relations Coordinator, a business member, a resident of the community, and others. Storey County has worked with this

Task Force along with the Quad County group in development of this plan. The plan, as submitted, has been approved by the school district and the Board of County Commissioners on April 6, 2021. Some key aspects of this plan include phasing in to 100% reopening and pushing for mitigation measures around town. These mitigation measures include promoting face coverings, social distancing, use of hand sanitizer locations in outdoor locations, pushing out personal protective equipment from the county stockpile, businesses continuing to operate by appointment only, plexiglass in county offices, and working with businesses around the county to provide guidance on compliance. Storey County is continuing to work with the Tourism Director on county events. The county will continue to look at each event individually. Public health outreach efforts will also continue in terms of education for businesses and public partners. Director Terry Reynolds noted the Tahoe Regional Industrial Park (TRI) will be included as part of the National Emphasis Program. B&I is working on sending out letters to offer assistance through SCATS to ensure best practices are being followed and businesses are able to institute controls on their own. Chair Cage noted the Storey County plan captures the balance of social distancing ideas well. Chair Cage noted Directive 021 had very specific mitigation measures in place. While the measures were valuable, the feedback from local partners, advised there were always going to be exceptions to these rules. This is in line with what has been seen nationally as well. There will be a new directive in the coming days to remove the strict standard based requirements while still adhering to CDC social distance guidelines. Mr. Osborne noted the county will continue to monitor the available data and trends in coordination with the Quad County partners. Mr. Osborne concluded his presentation by thanking Director Nicki Aaker with CCHHS. Director. Aaker has done a phenomenal job with the testing and vaccination efforts out at TRI and the county as a whole. This has been a monumental effort all around and is very much appreciated.

e. Esmeralda

Ken Elgan, Sheriff of Esmeralda County, provided an overview of the plan from Esmeralda County. Sheriff Elgan noted the county will follow all CDC guidelines and the state recommendations. Approximately, 40% to 45% of the county population has been vaccinated. There is a mobile vaccination unit (MVU) event taking place in Goldfield today between 12:00 and 6:00 p.m. A second event is planned for April 29, 2021 for Dyer, Nevada. Sheriff Elgan noted things are going well in the county and the recovery plan as submitted is sufficient. The county will continue to follow guidance from the health department says along with the CDC. Chief Fogerson noted the MVU is in Goldfield. The transition from the Janssen (Johnson and Johnson) vaccine to the Pfizer vaccine went smooth. The MVU route scheduled has been adjusted to now allow for second dose visits based on the change in vaccine being used. The Janssen vaccine, once deemed acceptable, will also be offered so individuals attending the MVU will have a choice of vaccine available. The switch to the Pfizer vaccine also allows for 16 years and older to use the MVU as a vaccination tool. Chair Cage noted the significant amount of work that went in to ensuring the MVU was able to continue to be used by the counties. Chair Cage also thanked Sheriff Elgan for the plan submitted for Esmeralda County. Chief Fogerson took a moment to highlight the high percentage of the county that has been vaccinated. Chief Fogerson noted this is in part to the work being done by the Esmeralda County Sheriff's Office in promoting the resources and the messaging. It is neat to see the high percentages of vaccinations coming out of the rural counties.

6. Public Comment

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

7. Adjourn

Chair Cage called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn was presented by Chief David Fogerson and a second was provided by Deputy Superintendent Felicia Gonzales. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.

Meagan Werth Ranson

From: Sarah Dresevic <sdresevic923@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2021 5:56 PM
To:

Subject: Still No Equality in Youth Sports-Reclassification of Water Polo

Governor, NV Task Force, Department of Business & Industry,

This email is to implore you to reconsider your stance on reclassifying water polo in order to allow Nevada athletes to pursue the sport they love, safely. You and taskforce leaders have been shown our argument and supporting data for a safe return to play.

We cannot help but feel that we are not prioritized when it comes to youth sports. Is it because we aren't a casino? Maybe we don't know the right "people" or political figure? Perhaps we don't have a strong lobby or money to get noticed. We are, after all, just a non-profit sports team. However, we are water polo players with passion and love for this sport. We pride ourselves in coaching and teaching all levels of play from beginners in splash ball to sending our high school players to division one collegiate teams.

Sadly, your denial in today's meeting with the Coronavirus Response Director gave us no path to return to play. **No proof to refute that our sport is unsafe has been provided** and you are allowing other sports, in the same classification as water polo, the ability to play games and host tournaments. We are asking for the same consideration and consistency in the decision making process.

HOW CAN THIS BE APPROVED AND NOT WATER POLO!?! THIS IS HAPPENING NOW IN OUR TOWN. [CLICK HERE TO SEE A PACKED HOUSE AT THE POOL!](#)

Fact - Hockey is having games weekly and it even says on [their website](#) (scroll down to 2021 Schedule). I have seen these games and can send you videos to support my claim. Look at the first sentence on that page. It says MORE GAMES! Was their approval supposed to be a secret?

Fact - Department of Business and Industry has approved an application to [host a hockey tournament March 19-22](#). **How is a sport that is classified as prohibited under [current guidelines able to acquire such an approval?](#) [They are even noted here as being classified as high contact sport \(second paragraph\)](#).** Dept of B&I claims the tournament will not allow "checking" and that is how they were approved. Is that the only contact in hockey? What about faceoffs? Defense on the puck? Fighting for the puck on the boards? Can they guarantee all that will not happen at this tournament? And if it does happen, will the event be canceled. Doesn't sound like hockey if they can't do those things. Rest assured they will.

Fact - You mentioned you can't make an exception for a single sport. This statement is false. You just reclassified Lacrosse and you are allowing hockey games events without reclassification.

Fact - While I am happy for Lacrosse and Hockey, I have the same passion for my sport as they do. I hope to join them in their path to return to play.

Please explain to me why you can't approve our request to be able to have contact in our practices and the ability to have games while others in the Battle Born State of Nevada are?. We are soccer, basketball, football, lacrosse, and hockey (all approved) DIPPED IN CHLORINE! Chlorine is a disinfectant that kills the virus!

Our view, based on scientific data, is that water polo has been inaccurately classified as a "high risk of transmission" sport. In fact, since water polo is played in a highly chlorinated environment (which kills the COVID-19 virus), when combined with proper on-deck protocols, water polo is safe and represents an extremely low risk of transmission.

When playing water polo, faces and bodies are frequently submerged, immediately killing the virus. The positive effects of chlorine are not just limited to the water. Chlorine gas hovers above the water's surface acting as an additional disinfectant. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has reported that there is NO evidence of COVID-19 transmission through swimming pools, while the World Health Organization (WHO) has also identified only a limited risk of contamination and illness at well-managed facilities.

Please reach out to us so we can work this out together. We need your leadership on this Governor.

Thank You,

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Sarah Dresevic