



Panhandle Health District

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Panhandle Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kootenai, Boundary, and Shoshone Counties Move to Substantial (Red) Risk Category

NORTH IDAHO – Each Thursday, a team of Panhandle Health District staff and a representative from Kootenai Health meet to determine the county risk categories for our district based on our [Regional Gating Plan](#). We do this to determine where each county is currently in terms of community transmission. The county risk categories are determined using three key metrics, including:

- **Positivity Rate:** the percentage of all coronavirus tests performed that are positive (positive tests)/(total tests) x 100%.
- **Hospitalizations:** as of today Kootenai Health is reporting that they have 41 inpatients with COVID-19, of those 13 are in critical care. In the Spokane area, they have 64 hospitalized COVID-19 patients, of those 19 are in critical care. Kootenai Health has been operating at 90+% capacity for two weeks now, they have medical staff out due to illness, and have been unable to fill open positions for traveling nurses.
- **7-day Incidence Rate (IR):** new cases, per day, per county. We look at the 7-day incidence of these case in each county, so we can determine a trend instead of a dip or spike due to one day worth of cases.

Overall, PHD1 is in the red risk category, meaning we have substantial community spread. Today, we also determined each county's risk category:

- Kootenai – RED (7-day IR = 49.8)
- Shoshone – RED (7-day IR = 39.9)
- Boundary – RED (7-day IR = 57.2)
- Bonner – ORANGE (7-day IR = 14.1)
- Benewah – ORANGE (7-day IR = 15.4)

Regardless of the risk level throughout the remainder of the pandemic, everyone is asked to do the following:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Maintain physical distance of 6 feet from others
- Wear face coverings while at work and in public
- Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds

“All we have are these non-pharmaceutical preventive behaviors to keep ourselves and others safe,” said Katherine Hoyer, Public Information Office at Panhandle Health District. “There is not a vaccine yet for COVID-19 and treatment is limited, so let’s do what we can to keep our businesses open, children in school, and our healthcare facilities functioning.”

A full list of recommendations for the general public, for all risk levels can be found in PHD’s regional gating criteria plan at https://panhandlehealthdistrict.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/PHD-COVID-Regional-Gating-Plan_8.27.20.pdf.

If you have questions about COVID-19 in our area, call PHD’s COVID-19 hotline Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm, 877-415-5225.

Panhandle Health District provides over 40 different public health programs to families, individuals and organizations in northern Idaho. From food and drinking water safety to health education and disease control, public health services are critical to ensure our community is a safe and healthy place to live, work and play.

The PHD team is made up of nurses, nutritionists, environmental health specialists, health educators and many other dedicated professionals with a common goal to deliver vital public health services.

Panhandle Health District is one of seven health districts in the state of Idaho.

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