

**THIS IS A RAPIDLY EVOLVING AND FLUID SITUATION. INFORMATION AND ACTION ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME. BE PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE AND PATIENT.**

**The situations, numbers, website links, data, and etc. described below were current as of Friday 10/16/2020 at 8:50 am.**

**PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS WIDELY**

**10/16/2020 Crowley/Otero COVID-19 Update #1**

**Please take the time to read and understand this entire message.**

**Internet links: Before I send out each update, I check the links to make sure they are active. However, links do change from time to time, so the links I sent out today may not be the same tomorrow. You may have to search around a bit.**

Hello to all, below are some COVID-19 updates for you:

1. **Colorado Increase In Cases:** Our state is seeing an increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has issued a press release on this, please read it here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/press-release/new-covid-19-modeling-report-shows-increased-hospitalizations-potential-holiday-bump>

This week on Tuesday, 10/13/2020, Governor's Office had this to say on the matter: "Today, Governor Polis shared some very concerning news. Colorado last week recorded more than 1,000 cases of COVID-19 in one 24-hour period, the most since March. Today the state saw another day with more than 1,000 cases, and alarmingly, the positivity rate is above 5%. On September 4, there were 132 confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state and on October 12 there were 288... We need to get this under control now because we are heading into a perfect storm this winter: flu season, holiday travel, and cold weather that keeps people indoors. And we know how to do it." Yep, we know how to do it and we can do it. It's up to us.

2. **New Local Cases:** Crowley and Otero Counties have likewise seen new cases during the last few weeks. In fact, Otero County is currently very close on the Dial (<https://covid19.colorado.gov/data/covid-19-dial/covid-19-dial-dashboard>) to the more restrictive Safer Level 2 Phase. Go to the Dial's website and click on Otero County, it will show us edging into the yellow area (which corresponds with Safer At Home Level 2, Concern) regarding the two week cumulative incidence. There is a process to move on the Dial, and it is not instantaneous. The process is currently in draft form, and CDPHE hopes to finalize it soon. We can absolutely do something about this increase, but it will take an "all hands on deck" approach that includes all of us! The good news is the things we can do to make a positive difference are really simple and straightforward:

- ✓ PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE wear a mask in public if age appropriate and if you can medically tolerate it.
- ✓ PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE socially distance yourself at every opportunity.
- ✓ PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE thoroughly and frequently wash your hands.
- ✓ PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE stay home if you are running a fever and/or have COVID-19 symptoms. Don't share your illness with family or others.

If our local cases continue to increase unabated, we are increasing the risks to our health from this deadly virus. This is especially true for our high risk individuals (i.e. the elderly, those with chronic diseases, etc.). It may also mean that we will be moving to a more restrictive phase, which will negatively impact our local businesses and economy. Nobody wants that. We've already paid that undesirable price months ago. George C. Scott said in the WWII movie Patton, "I don't like to pay for the same real estate twice". He, of course, was referring to battleground previously won and then lost. This same concept applies to our battle against COVID-19, we've already paid a steep price battling the virus back during more restrictive phases, we don't want to pay it again on that same battleground. It's up to us. Read about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/prevention>

**3. Local Update Sent To CDPHE:** Below is an update I sent to CDPHE this morning:

*Happy Friday Elle! Below is an update from OCHD for Crowley and Otero Counties as of 10/16/2020 at 7:50am. The data is from the CDPHE COVID-19 LPHA Data Reports:*

- ✓ Two week cumulative incidence rate: We have crossed the Level 2 threshold of 75 cases per 100K at 78.15, or 19 total new case in the past two weeks. Our numerical threshold is 18.2343 cases.
- ✓ Two week average positivity: Currently we are at 1.98%, still below the threshold of 5%.
- ✓ Tests per 1,000 people: Our 7-day moving average as of 10/14/2020 was 1.792 tests per 1,000 people, still above the threshold of 0.75/1,000 population. On 10/14/2020, we had 2.84 tests per 1,000 population.
- ✓ Stable or declining hospitalizations: We are currently stable at zero hospitalizations.

*Today around 4pm 3 cases from 10/1/2020 should drop off, and **if** none are added that will result in a two week numerical count of 16, which should drop our rate per 100K to 65.81, moving us back to Level 1. Here's to hoping that happens!*

**4. Bent, Crowley, and Otero (BCO) Counties Protect Our Neighbors (PON)**

**Application Submission**: As you have no doubt surmised from the preceding information, our PON application is currently on hold until we see a decrease in local cases. Read more about PON here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/protect-our-neighbors>

**5. Halloween COVID-19 Guidance**: Halloween is coming up quickly, and we want our trick or treaters to stay safe! Before heading out for treats, please make sure to take a look at this information first:

- ✓ CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html#halloween>
- ✓ CDPHE: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/halloween-tips-and-tricks>

**6. School Webpages:** Please visit these websites for school-specific information and updates regarding COVID-19.

- a. Cheraw: <https://www.cheraw.k12.co.us/>
- b. Crowley County: <http://www.cck12.net/>
- c. Fowler: <http://www.fowler.k12.co.us/>
- d. La Junta: <https://www.lajuntaschools.org/>
- e. Manzanola: <https://www.manzanola.k12.co.us/>
- f. OJC: <https://www.ojc.edu/>
- g. Rocky Ford: <https://www.rockyfordk12.org/>
- h. Swink: <https://www.swinkk12.net/>

**7. Summaries**

- a. CDPHE COVID-19 Data Webpage: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/data>
- b. Crowley County (numbers are cumulative)
  - ✓ Total Cases: 78
    - Change from last Friday's update: 4 cases added.
  - ✓ Total COVID Related Deaths: 1
  - ✓ Facility Outbreaks
    - Crowley County Correctional Facility
      - Status: Resolved
      - Number of prisoners positive for COVID (lab confirmed): 66
      - Number of staff positive for COVID (lab confirmed): 4
- c. Otero County (numbers are cumulative)
  - ✓ Total Cases: 114
    - Change from last Friday's update: 7 cases added.
  - ✓ Total COVID Related Deaths: 6
  - ✓ Facility Outbreaks
    - Lewis Bolt and Nut
      - Status: Active
      - Number of staff positive for COVID-19 (lab confirmed): 3
      - Number of staff with probable COVID-19 (NOT lab confirmed): 11
    - Pioneer Healthcare Center
      - Status: Resolved
      - Number of residents positive for COVID (lab confirmed): 20
      - Number of staff positive for COVID-19 (lab confirmed): 14
      - Number of COVID related deaths (lab confirmed): 5
    - Swink High School
      - Status: Active
      - Number of staff with probable COVID-19 (NOT lab confirmed): 1

- Number of attendees who are positive for COVID-19 (lab confirmed): 2
  - Number of attendees with probable COVID-19 (NOT lab confirmed): 9
- d. State of Colorado (numbers are cumulative) (<https://covid19.colorado.gov/data>)
  - ✓ 81,918 cases
  - ✓ 8,127 hospitalized
  - ✓ 64 counties
  - ✓ 1,050,566 people tested
  - ✓ 2,162 deaths among cases
  - ✓ 2,029 deaths due to COVID-19
  - ✓ 916 outbreaks (view outbreak data: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/outbreak-data>)
  - ✓ COVID-19 Dial Dashboard: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/data/covid-19-dial/covid-19-dial-dashboard>
- e. United States (numbers are cumulative)
  - ✓ Total Cases: 7,894,768
  - ✓ Total Deaths: 216,025
  - ✓ Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
    - Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>
- f. Global (number are cumulative)
  - ✓ Confirmed Cases: 38,619,674
  - ✓ Deaths: 1,093,522
  - ✓ Data Source: Who Health Organization (WHO)
    - Website: <https://covid19.who.int/>

## 8. **What can you do RIGHT NOW?**

- ✓ Read, understand, and comply with public health orders! Public health orders can be found here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/prepare-protect-yourself/prevent-the-spread/public-health-executive-orders>
- ✓ Prevent the spread of COVID-19: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/prevention>
- ✓ Limit workplace violence: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/business-employers/limit-workplace-violence.html>
- ✓ Stay home if you are sick and, if needed, call your medical provider.
- ✓ Wear an appropriate mask if you must go out for an essential activity.
- ✓ If you are in a high risk group, take extra precautions.
- ✓ Cover your cough and/or sneeze.
- ✓ Keep your fingers and hands away from your face.
- ✓ Wash your hands a lot.
- ✓ Stay informed by trusted and reliable sources. Be careful about believing what you read on social media sites. Trusted sources/websites:
  - Otero County Health Department (OCHD): <https://www.oterogov.com>
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov>
  - Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE): <https://covid19.colorado.gov/>
- ✓ Do these things so you will be prepared, and not scared.

✓ And remember, “This too shall pass.”

It is up to us. Enjoy your weekend!

Richard Ritter, Executive Director  
Otero County Health Department  
13 West 3rd Street, Room 111  
La Junta, Colorado 81050  
719-383-3045 (Office)  
719-383-3060 (Fax)  
[ritter@oterogov.org](mailto:ritter@oterogov.org)