

**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.**

**PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS WIDELY**

**4/27/2020 #2 Crowley/Otero COVID-19 Update: New Positive Otero County “Probable” Case**

**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.**

### **New COVID-19 positive case**

Hello to all. We have had another case added to our case count for Otero County, and unfortunately this person died. First and foremost, our sincerest condolences go out to the family and friends of the deceased.

This case was added many days after this individual died, and the case was listed as “probable”. The reason for this is that the state is now reviewing death certificates, and looking for causes of death related to COVID-19. In this particular case, this individual died in a facility outside Otero County and was not tested for COVID-19. The fact that they were not tested is why it is listed as “probable”. Below is state information detailing the information I just shared (I have highlighted in yellow the information explaining probable cases).

Out of respect for patient privacy, we will only release the following information (No other information will be released at this time):

- ✓ The patient
  - was in the high risk category.
  - was a resident of Otero County.
  - age: 50s
  - is deceased.
  - has been listed as a “probable” COVID-19 case.

**Crowley/Otero case numbers updates:** Our current COVID-19 laboratory-confirmed case counts for Crowley and Otero Counties are as follows (as of the time of this writing Monday, 4/27/2020):

- ✓ 2-Crowley County case (1-deceased)
- ✓ 8-Otero County cases (1-deceased)
- ✓ TOTAL Crowley/Otero Cases: 10

**State of Colorado** (Note: this summary only includes data through 4 pm 4/25/2020 and does not reflect cases since then)

- ✓ 13,441 cases
- ✓ 2,438 hospitalized (view hospital data: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/hospital-data>)
- ✓ 57 counties
- ✓ 63,274 people tested
- ✓ 672 deaths

- ✓ 143 outbreaks (view outbreak data: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/outbreak-data>)
- ✓ Thanks Dr. Monaghan, of the state health department, for keeping us informed!

**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/covid-19-in-colorado/public-health-executive-orders-resource>
- ✓ 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:
  - OCHD: <https://www.oterogov.com>
  - Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov>
  - CO State Health Department: <https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe>
- ✓ Do these things so you will be prepared, and not scared.
- ✓ And remember, "This too shall pass."

Until next time,

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)

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE**

The information contained in this communication and any attachments hereto is strictly confidential and is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the addressee(s). If you, as the reader of this message, are not an intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, use, distribution, or copying of this communication and any attachment(s) is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately at 719-383-3040 and shred and/or delete the original message.



**COLORADO**  
**Office of Communications**  
Department of Public Health & Environment

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT:  
COVID-19 MEDIA LINE: 303-900-2849 (Please leave a message)  
Email: [media\\_info@state.co.us](mailto:media_info@state.co.us)

## **State continues to enhance COVID-19 data Additional death certificate data will affect Colorado mortality count this week**

DENVER, April 22, 2020: Starting this week, visitors to the state health department's COVID-19 web site will notice new data points and additional deaths that had previously not appeared in the state's mortality count.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment will now provide COVID-19 death data by date of death. Previously, the department reported deaths based on the day it received the information. The state does not always receive death data on the day a person dies.

The state obtains death data from a variety of sources. Health care providers, coroners, and local public health all report directly to the state's epidemiology and surveillance team. The state also receives data through death certificate information. After a death, the state generally receives death certificate information within three days.

Starting this week, CDPHE epidemiologists began to review the cause of death information on death certificates and began to enter COVID-19 caused deaths into the state's database if those deaths had not previously been reported to the state. Due to the lag in time between when a person dies and when the state receives the death certificate information, there could continue to be a short delay in getting and reporting some of the data to the public.

This data entry will include adding "probable" COVID-19 deaths. A death is classified as "probable" if the decedent was a Colorado resident who had no known positive laboratory test for COVID-19 but the death certificate lists as a cause of death "COVID-19" or an equivalent. Because of this review and data entry of death certificates by epidemiologists, we anticipate an increase in the total number of COVID-19 deaths in Colorado by about 130 this week. This is not because those individuals died this week, but because their deaths have now been recorded in the state system.

In addition, the state has been collaborating with the Colorado Hospital Association to share data that helps provide a picture of the level of demand that the pandemic disease is placing on hospitals across the state. Starting today, the state's [hospital data dashboard](#) will display information on current ventilator usage and availability across all Colorado hospitals, as well as the number of hospitalized patients who are suspected -- but not confirmed -- of having COVID (known as "patients under investigation"). This information is requested from Colorado hospitals on a daily basis and shared by the state with permission from the Colorado Hospital Association; any questions about the data should be directed to the Colorado Hospital Association.

The department also issued a [public health order](#) to provide guidance to hospitals regarding what information to provide to the state.

Additional changes to data in the next few days include:

- An increase in the number of cases identified due to widespread targeted testing in specific communities or facilities.
- A decrease in the case counts at the county level due to the removal of out-of-state cases from Colorado's data. In the early stages it was important to include these cases, as it was an indication of the transmission in a particular community. As more widespread transmission has occurred, this information is no longer needed. Removing out-of-state cases also ensures cases are not counted twice (e.g. in both states). In addition, international cases will be moved to a separate category, but still included in Colorado case counts.
- Additional changes in case counts will occur due to the general updating of data. This includes entering positive cases not previously reported from out-of-state labs, and additional reporting of cases related to outbreaks.

Continue to stay up to date by visiting [covid19.colorado.gov](https://covid19.colorado.gov).