

In recent weeks, the Southeast Health District has seen an increased rate of confirmed cases of COVID-19. The recent transition to phase four of the Directed Health Measure has given some hope of returning to normal life activities. However, this perception of hope is misleading as COVID-19 has embedded itself within the district, which may lead to future disruptions during the fall and winter months. Southeast District Health Department and the district's healthcare system highly encourages citizens to stay vigilant. As a community, we must take ownership to protect ourselves, our family, and those at most risk. Simple steps can be taken to limit the spread of COVID-19 without jeopardizing the economy and halting day-to-day activities. These steps include:

- Monitor your health daily.
- Stay home when you are ill.
- Wear a mask when in public settings.
- Practice social distancing.
- Avoid large indoor gatherings.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home.
- Wash your hands often.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

If you are exposed to someone with COVID:

- Stay home until 14 days after the last exposure and maintain physical distance from others.
- Self-monitor for symptoms: Check your temperature twice a day. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste and smell, or any other symptoms.
- Avoid contact with people who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

These simple and proactive strategies are proven to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 within communities. By following these recommendations, southeast Nebraska communities will limit the burden of COVID-19 and be in good standing this spring.

