



County of Malheur

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release

Malheur County moving to High Risk following 35 new cases, 3 deaths

Thirty-five new COVID-19 cases over the two-week period from April 18 through May 1 will push Malheur County into the High Risk level of the state's [4-tier risk assessment system](#) this Friday. There were three lives lost to COVID-19 during that period, bringing the county's total deaths to 61. The county's rising numbers prompted a warning from Director of Environmental Health Craig Geddes.

"We are saddened by the loss of three more Malheur County residents to this virus, which continues to threaten not only lives but livelihoods," Geddes said. "The current trend is extremely concerning. If our cases continue to climb and our vaccination rates continue to be low, we will continue to experience this kind of loss. We need everyone to take this seriously – continue to follow precautions and get vaccinated."

Malheur County is one of 15 counties moving into High Risk on Friday. Thirteen of those are moving down a level, from Extreme Risk. A Governor's Office [announcement](#) today stated that with the statewide seven-day average increase for hospitalized COVID-19-positive patients dropping below 15%, Oregon no longer meets the statewide metrics for the Extreme Risk level. In total, 24 counties will be at High Risk, four at Moderate Risk, and eight at Lower Risk. An Oregon Health Authority report showing two-week case counts and test positivity rates is available [here](#). A complete list of counties and their risk levels is available [here](#).

High Risk guidance allows for indoor dining at eating and drinking establishments, but occupancy can't exceed 25% or 50 people, whichever is smaller. Outdoor dining is limited to 120 people maximum. Seating per table is limited to six people from no more than two households. Closing time is 11 p.m. at the latest. Other restrictions beginning Friday:

- For faith institutions, the recommended maximum indoor capacity is 25% of occupancy or 150 people, whichever is smaller; outdoor is 200 people maximum.
- Indoor and outdoor shopping centers and malls are limited to 50% of maximum occupancy; curbside pick-up is encouraged.
- Indoor entertainment establishments are limited to 25% occupancy or 50 people, whichever is smaller. Closing time is 11 p.m. at the latest. Outdoor entertainment establishments are limited to a maximum of 15% capacity. Closing time is 11 p.m. at the latest
- Indoor recreation & fitness establishments are limited to 25% occupancy or 50 people, whichever is smaller; outdoor is 15% capacity.
- Retail stores are limited to 50% maximum capacity; curbside pick-up is encouraged,
- Social and at-home gatherings indoors are limited to a maximum of 6 people with a recommended limit of 2 households; outdoor is a maximum of 8 people.

(MORE)

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Malheur County's COVID-19 vaccination rate is second-lowest in the state, behind Umatilla County. As of May 3, 24.8% of Malheur County residents have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, and 20.9% have completed the series, meaning they have received a single dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or two doses of either Moderna or Pfizer. Respective statewide averages are 42.9% and 30.0%.

Since Sunday, May 2, after the reporting period that moved the county into High Risk, through today, an additional 14 cases have been reported.

More information on vaccination rates by county can be found [here](#).

The full selection of Oregon Health Authority's COVID-19 data dashboards is available [here](#).

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