

Dear Community Members,

We recognize that there are varying outlooks and perspectives about the COVID-19 virus. Still, we must do our part to protect each other as a community.

Our community remained close to a 9% average positivity rate throughout the summer, which meant we were still above the goal of less than 5%. When a positivity rate is over 5%, it is labeled as a wide-spread community transmission and shows insufficient control of the virus. However, in the last few weeks, we have seen a higher increase in community spread. There are times when our daily positivity rate has reached above 25%. This is alarming.

With the rising number of cases in the community, there is a significant impact on our area hospitals. It overloads their resources--for example, the availability of beds, medications, staff, and supplies. When community spread is this wide, our workforces are inevitably affected due to illness or exposure. In the Dakota County area, our healthcare resources have done, and are doing, all we can ask of them. We are asking everyone in our community to support them.

The virus is especially harmful to our vulnerable and elderly community members. Most of our community members have older family members and know people with chronic disease. We want them all to be safe and able to seek the care they need.

We need all members of our community to come together to help slow the spread of COVID-19. By reducing the spread, we can help keep local businesses and schools open. Recently, the state of Nebraska began the "Avoid the Three C's" campaign. The basis of the campaign is the following:

- 1). Avoid Crowded places.**
- 2). Avoid Close contact.**
- 3). Avoid Confined spaces.**

There are additional measures everyone can take to help slow the spread of the virus.

- Practice frequent handwashing
- Proper cleaning and sanitizing high touch areas in your homes and businesses
- Physically distancing of at least 6 feet
- Wearing a face mask when not able to distance 6 feet or more
- Consider if your activities or trips out of town are necessary

Additionally, we strongly encourage the community to wear masks/face coverings in public. Masks/face coverings should **NOT** be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

While we are all eager to return to pre-pandemic life, it is important to continue practicing caution to avoid further spread of the virus in Dakota County. We must decrease the positivity rate to keep our health care workers healthy, hospital beds and resources available, our kids in school, and local businesses open. The time to act is now. We will get through this, but it will take all of us working together to achieve that goal.

Rod Koch, Mayor of South Sioux City
Dave Faldmo PA-C, Medical Director, Siouxland Community Health Center of NE
Family Healthcare of Siouxland- South Sioux City
Gregg Cruickshank, Superintendent/Elementary Principal, Homer Schools
Chief Ed Mahon, South Sioux City Police Department.
Jason Allen, City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer, Dakota City
Shawna Kubik, Clerk/Treasure, Village of Homer
Teri Harris, Trustee, Village of Homer
Deanna Hagberg, Dakota County Emergency Management, Director
Dakota County Health Department

Jerry Yacevich, Mayor of Dakota City
Unity Point Health – St. Luke's, Sioux City
Sandy Williams, Principal, St. Michael
Todd Strom, Superintendent, SSC Schools
Lt. Steve Heide, SSC Police Department
Chief Chin, Emerson Police Department
Matt Raveling, Trustee, Village of Homer
Michael Stoos, Chairman, Village of Homer
Dakota County Health Board