



**NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha,  
Knox, Pierce and Rock Counties

Dear North Central Nebraska area Agency on Aging and area Senior Center Directors:

In light of the expanding COVID-19 pandemic, and the recommendations released on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the limitation of gatherings and groups, and given that the elderly are at an extreme disproportion when it comes to morbidity and mortality of this virus, it is my recommendation that senior citizen centers in the NCDHD health district begin a recess for an indefinite period of time. This closure recommendation includes fundraisers, gatherings, social activities, group meals, and any other activity that requires patrons to be physically present. However, it is our recommendation that Meals on Wheels programs continue during this time, with measures in place to limit exposure between the patron and delivery.

In addition, I recommend the following measures:

- Staff and/or meal delivery volunteers only may continue to report to work, however, measures must be put into place now to eliminate mingling and blending of staff members. This would include limited or no access to the staff lounge, a strict strategy for disinfecting commons areas—such as the restrooms, offices, etc.
- Any staff member and/or volunteer reporting to work should have a symptom screen prior to being admitted. This includes temperature and assessment of cough and/or shortness of breath. Please note, that with any respiratory virus, viral shedding can occur before a person becomes symptomatic or realizes that he/she is sick. Because of this, social distancing (ten feet apart) of staff and volunteers continuing to work is recommended for optimum impact. Any staff member and/or volunteer that feels sick to any extent before arriving at the center, or begins to feel sick after already arriving at the center, must immediately leave the premises. The doors should be locked to anyone other than essential staff and volunteers.
- All staff/volunteers reporting to work during the closure should be ordered to wash their hands upon arrival at the center, and before leaving the center.
- Meetings should take place by way of technology to limit exposure to others.
- Meals on Wheels drivers should hand sanitize before each household meal delivery and again after each individual meal delivery. There are zero exceptions to this. Deliveries should be arranged in a way so as to avoid persons coming in direct contact with each other, such as leaving outside the home or leaving in an entryway.
- Finally, of utmost importance, we ask for your assistance in supporting and encouraging strict social distancing during this time of closure. This would include encouraging patrons to stay home, and limit time with people from outside of their household. Keeping interactions to a bare minimum will help in disrupting the exposure period and periods of contagiousness. This includes card clubs, church services, hair appointments, coffee groups, etc.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in proactively assisting us in keeping our most vulnerable population safe. Should you have any questions, please call our office at 402-336-2406. Or our 24/7 emergency line at 402-961-1718.

Sincerely,

Roger Wiese, Health Director  
North Central District Health Department