



**Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 18, 2020**

Current COVID-19 case count

Scott County – 16 new cases since Thursday for a total of 309
(4 on Friday; 4 on Saturday; 6 on Sunday; 2 on Monday)

Total deaths in Scott County: 8

Rock Island County – 14 new cases for a total of 641. 15 patients are in the hospital.

One new death: a man in her 90s who had been hospitalized

Total deaths in Rock Island County: 21

Today's call

A video recording of today's media call can be found at
<https://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/covid19/news>

Not back to normal

Remarks from Ed Rivers, director of the Scott County Health Department

As our communities reopen, as the Iowa Quad Cities did in part last week, we must guard against the temptation to get back to normal and stop doing all of the important things that have helped us lower the impact of the coronavirus in our community. This is not a new message, and we know this will not be a welcome message. It is, however, a message that must be delivered. It is the responsibility of those in public health practice to safeguard the community and provide accurate and timely information.

It is tempting to slide back into a sense of normalcy. We are all tired of having to social distance. But can we afford to relax now? No. We risk moving from slowly increasing cases of COVID-19 to a large increase in spread of the virus if we return to normal activity. As a community, we can't afford that.

Since our community is starting to reopen, does that mean that life should feel like it's getting back to normal? It shouldn't if you're doing what we are asking of you.

So, we'll emphasize again how you can avoid contracting COVID-19:

- Use caution and plan how and when you'll go out.
- Avoid large gatherings of people. Those still run the risk of spreading the virus. Also, you should not increase the number of people you're having over for a social gathering to more than 10. Even then, you still run the risk of spreading the virus.
- You should keep at least 6 feet of physical distance between yourself and others anywhere you go. The virus is spread when we are close to one another.

- Don't take trips to see relatives since you and the kids have more time at home right now. The risks are simply too great.

Life is not getting back to normal right now and it won't be getting back to normal for a long time. Please heed this message: be cautious about where you go, with whom you come into contact, and how you interact when you're out.

Caution is key to controlling, and, hopefully, eventually eliminating this threat.

Striving for Phase 3

Remarks from Nita Ludwig, administrator of the Rock Island County Health Department

We're starting to see lower positive COVID-19 tests, and we are hopeful that this is a beginning of a trend. Illinoisans remain under Gov. Pritzker's stay-at-home order until at least May 29. Staying the course now gives us a better chance to move into Phase 3 of his "Restore Illinois" plan. All regions in the state are on track to move to Phase 3 on May 29, just 11 days from now.

Phase 3 will loosen some restrictions. Manufacturing, offices, retailers, and barbershops and salons can reopen, with capacity limits and other restrictions. Face coverings still would be required, but fitness and health clubs can offer one-on-one training and outdoor classes. Limited child care and summer programs could operate, but working from home still will be strongly encouraged. The best tool we have — social distancing — still will be in effect with no gathering allowed with more than 10 people.

We've been talking to you for months now that we want to "flatten the curve." That whole concept is to keep cases below health care capacity to care for those patients. It does not mean that we reach that milestone and then are ready to go back to normal.

We've done a good job across the board of flattening the curve. Hospitals here have not been overwhelmed. The consequence of flattening the curve, through, is a prolonged time with a lot of cases. We have seen that, as the governor said last week that metrics show our peak could be in June.

We understand that it's been a long two months for people. It's been a long two months for me, too. I'm crushed that I won't get to watch my son walk across the stage this month as he graduates from Rock Island High School. My daughter missed most of her second semester at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. I miss going out to eat. I'm tired of cooking. Frankly, I'm just tired. I know you are, too.

But that's why we're asking you to hang in with us for just a little bit longer and follow Gov. J.B. Pritzker's phased-in reopening. We're trying to keep from a surge happening down the road.

Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center

Media release is here:

<https://www.bloodcenter.org/about/news/news-releases/appointments-required-during-covid19-pandemic/>

More information

- www.TogetherQC.com
- coronavirus.iowa.gov/
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- Flattening the Curve Resource: <https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america>

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