



# MALHEUR COUNTY

COUNTY COURT

251 B Street West #5, Vale, Oregon 97918 Phone (541) 473-5124 Fax (541) 473-5576

June 1, 2020

The Honorable Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon  
c/o Jennifer Andrew  
254 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown,

Malheur County has met the requirements listed below and requests to enter Phase II for Reopening Oregon during the COVID-19 pandemic beginning June 6, 2020. No substantial changes have been made to the Reopening Malheur County plan approved for Phase I. We are confident in our ability to safely enter Phase II with appropriate preparation. We will continue to serve our community and follow the State guidelines as we begin to recover.

1. Over the previous 14-day period, the percentage of emergency department visits for COVID-19-like illnesses (CLI) for the state as a whole must be less than the historic average for flu at the same time of year.

- OHA tracks these data and will confirm that the state meets this metric.

2. Over the previous 14-day period, a county must show stable or declining hospital admissions for COVID-19. (\*This metric only applies to counties with more than 5 hospitalized cases in the last 28 days.)

- This metric does not apply to Malheur County because we have had zero hospitalized cases.

3. A county must have an adequate Contact Tracing System, as previously defined.

- Yes. There are five newly trained contact tracers in addition to the team of four already active at the Malheur County Health Department. The total contact tracers trained and available is nine, above the previously defined need.

4. A county must continue to maintain adequate isolation/quarantine facilities, a Minimum Testing Regimen, sufficient health care capacity to accommodate a 20% increase in suspected or confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations, and sufficient PPE supply as reported to OHA's Hospital Capacity system.

- Yes, for each of the metrics:
  - Isolation/Quarantine: Malheur County has a plan in place, in partnership with the Ontario Homeless Provider Team, to provide hotel rooms for people who test positive for COVID-19 and who cannot self-isolate. The local Community Services Network agency will follow up with each case for housing services and provide needed referrals and resources for the individual and family.
  - Minimum Testing Regimen: To date, 746 COVID-19 tests have been completed for Malheur County. Testing has increased by both healthcare providers and through multiple drive-up specimen collection sites hosted by Malheur County Emergency Management. The drive-up sites are scheduled three times per month across the county through August. Surveillance testing is also scheduled through the Malheur County Health Department for food processing plants, long term care facilities, and the county jail. Malheur County also

has a reserve of testing kits. In the event of a positive test in a congregate care setting, the county is prepared to conduct immediate testing of all persons in the facility. Testing over the last three weeks has averaged 104 tests per week, well over the minimum testing regimen.

- Sufficient Health Care Capacity to accommodate a 20% increase in suspected or confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations: Ken Hart, Saint Alphonsus Medical Center Ontario (SAMCO) CEO, reports they have the capacity to accommodate hospitalizations and will maintain at least 20% capacity. Overall, SAMCO has seen a 60% reduction from normal volume.
- Sufficient PPE Supply: Saint Alphonsus Medical Center Ontario, Valley Family Health Care (five Federally Qualified Health Center medical sites in Malheur County), Malheur County Ambulance Service District, and Malheur County Emergency Management all report sufficient PPE supply.

5. Timely Follow-Up: A minimum of 95% of all new cases must be contact traced within 24 hours as reported in the state's ORPHEUS system over the previous 7 day and 14-day time periods.

- Yes. Overall, Malheur County Health Department case investigators have contacted nearly all new cases within 24 hours. In the last 7 days and 14 days, we have met the criteria.

6. Successful tracing: A minimum of 70% of new COVID-19 positive cases must be traced to an existing positive case over the previous 7 day and 14-day time periods.

- Yes. Overall, our case investigators have traced nearly all positive cases in the last month to known sources. In the last 7 days and 14 days, we have met the criteria.

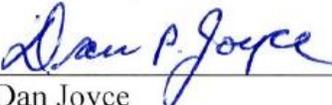
7. No increase in incident cases or positivity:

- a) There cannot be a five percent or greater increase in new cases in the county over the past 7 days; or
- b) There cannot be a significant increase in the percentage of positive cases out of total tests taken in your county over the past 7 days.

- Yes to both a and b. There has been a decrease in the rate of cases and although more testing is being done, the rate of positive cases over time has remained low and has decreased over the last week. To date, there have not been more than 5% positive of all tests completed in Malheur County.
  - 7.a. From May 17-23, 2020, there were nine new cases at a rate of 1.5 per day. From May 24-30, there were four new cases at a rate of .58 per day. There have been no new cases since May 28. There are currently eight active cases in the county.
  - 7.b. The positive test rate from May 24-31, 2020 ranged from 4.3% to 4.5% of total tests completed. The rate is currently at 4.3% and has not increased significantly at any time over the last month. On May 1, the rate was 4.4%.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of Malheur County. We appreciate your efforts. Do not hesitate to contact our office with any questions.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Joyce  
Malheur County Judge

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Larry Wilson  
Commissioner

  
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Don Hodge  
Commissioner