



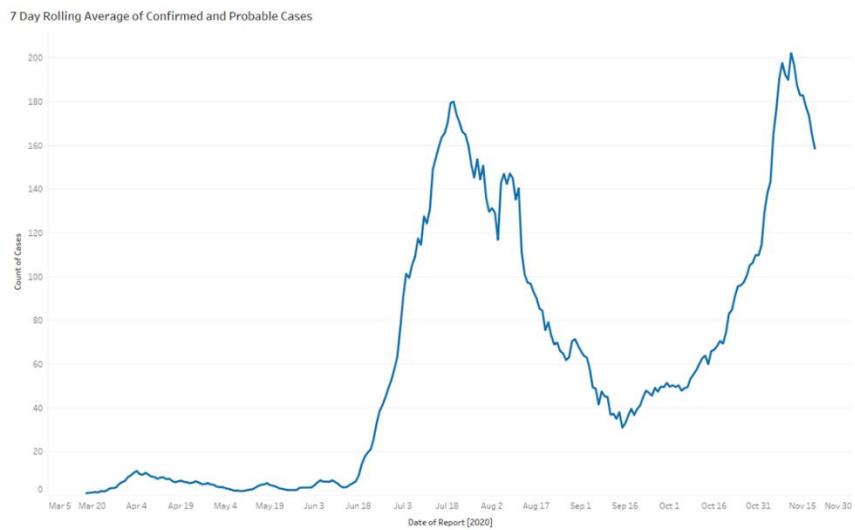
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 20, 2020**

**Southwest District Health Issues COVID-19 Public Health Advisory for Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, and Washington Counties**  
***Advisory now in effect***

CALDWELL, IDAHO – Southwest District Health has issued a COVID-19 Public Health Advisory for the entire six-county jurisdiction of Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, and Washington Counties. The Advisory, which took effect immediately, is prompted by the continued surge in case counts, increasing demands on the healthcare system, and a backlog of cases that have required public health investigators and contact tracers to prioritize incoming case work.

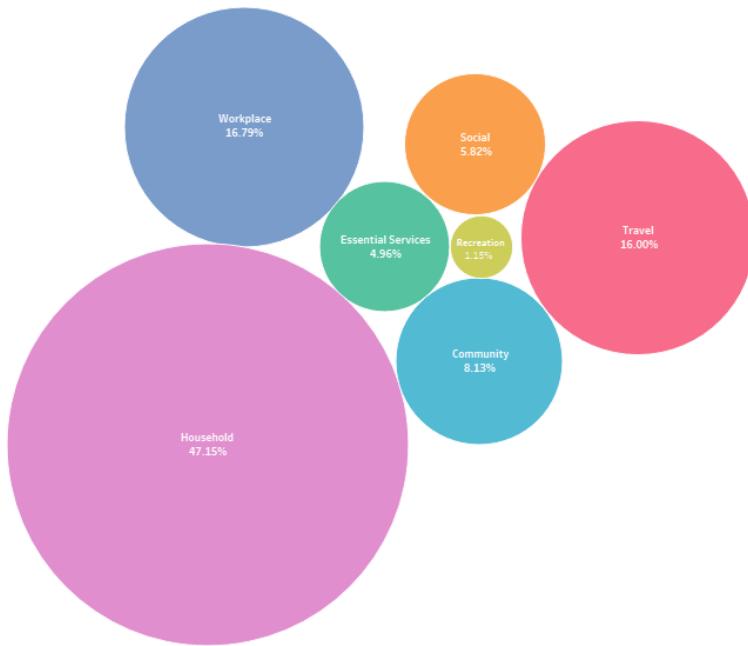
The surge in cases can be seen in the graph below. The graph illustrates the seven-day rolling average of confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases within the six-county region, available on the Southwest District Health data dashboard.



Southwest District Health has identified the top 5 exposure sources, based on data reported through October 23, 2020. **TOP 5 EXPOSURE SOURCES:** Congregate Living (Senior Living Facilities, Correctional Facilities, College Dormitories), Traditional Household (Single Family homes or Roommates), Travel (Primarily local (in state) travel in a car), Community Events (Primarily religious services and sporting events), and Social Events (Primarily parties and family gatherings). The data is illustrated in the bubble chart below.

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Unlike public health orders, a health advisory is not a mandate, but instead, an advisement to the community regarding a significant public health risk, and includes associated strong recommendations for action. All residents are strongly advised to follow guidance provided in Governor Little's [Modified Stage 2 Stay Healthy Order](#).

The Public Health Advisory includes strong recommendations for individuals and businesses around personal behaviors and business operations. The advisory aims to ensure healthcare capacity so our loved ones and neighbors can continue to access the routine, urgent, and emergency medical care they need as well as the public health capacity to ensure close contacts are notified of their exposure, rapid testing is available to our high-risk populations, and once available, vaccine can be distributed and administered.

The advisory includes the following health and safety measures:

### **Individuals**

- Wear a face covering at all times around anyone who is not a member of your household when physical distancing of at least 6 feet cannot be maintained. The only exceptions are for children younger than age 2, people who have trouble breathing, people who cannot remove the mask without assistance, or people who are obtaining a service involving the nose, face, or head for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the services.
- Work from home, if possible.
- Minimize non-essential travel.
- Suspend visits to congregate living facilities.
- Avoid social gatherings, including among family members who do not

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live in your household.

- Per Governor Little's [Modified Stage 2 Stay Healthy Order](#), the current public health order requires social gathering sizes to be limited to 10 or fewer people.
- Anyone age 65 and older, or who smokes, or with a health condition that puts them at risk for severe outcomes, avoid close contact with anyone other than immediate household members except for necessary services, such as accessing healthcare.
  - Per the [CDC](#), health conditions that put a person at a high risk include:
    - Chronic kidney disease,
    - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease),
    - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies, Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant, Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher but < 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>), Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>), Pregnancy, Sickle cell disease and Type 2 diabetes mellitus.

### **Outings/Activities/Places of Business**

- Businesses implement delivery/curb-side services.
- Places of worship implement hybrid (in-person and virtual) or virtual services.
- Discontinue youth and adult sports/activities in which physical distancing is not possible.
- Discontinue school extracurricular activities of all types in which physical distancing cannot be maintained AND where physical distancing can be maintained but the activity requires increased breathing, such as choir and band.

Bars, restaurants, breweries/taprooms/wineries/distilleries – all patrons must remain seated while consuming food or drink or when otherwise remaining on the premises, except for when entering, exiting, or using the restroom; seating must be arranged so that tables are spaced at least six feet apart; and nightclubs may continue to operate as a bar but must comply with the requirements of the [Stage 2 Stay Healthy Order](#).

### **Duration of Advisory**

This advisory will remain in effect until a county has met requirements to return to the orange health alert level. This is typically indicated by a two-week case rate of less than 3.0/10,000 daily new cases along with other factors. If one of the three large hospitals, St. Luke's, Saint Alphonsus, or West Valley Medical Center implement crisis standards of care as authorized by the State of Idaho, this advisory may include additional recommendations.

Questions may be directed to the SWDH COVID-19 Call Center Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 208-455-5411. Please refer to <https://phd3.idaho.gov/covid19/> for the latest local numbers and data and <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/> for statewide information. To view SWDH's Fall and Winter Holiday

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Guidance, visit <https://phd3.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Fall-Winter-Guidance-Final-11.16.2020.pdf>.

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