

Kane County COVID Task Force Call Updates

February 25, 2021

In attendance:

Alan Alldredge, Kane County Emergency Services
Andy Gant, Brent Chamberlain, Wade Heaton, Kane County Commission
Rob VanDyke, Kane County Attorney
Tracy Glover, Nick Hoyt, Megan Ramsay, Kane County Sheriff's Office, jail & Dispatch
Rhonda Gant, Kane County HR Director
Camille Johnson Taylor, Kane County Office of Tourism Director
Dr. David Blodgett, Southwest Regional Health Department Director
Sherrie Pandya, Brit Baer, Stuart Willoughby, Kane County Hospital & EMS
Robert Houston, Joe Decker, Kanab City
Robert Caruso, Orderville Town
Jessie Staples, Alton Town
Pat Horning, Big Water Fire Chief
Jamie Little, Kane County School District
Scott Alvord, Utah Division of Emergency Management
Tina Hardy, Kane County Senior Citizen Center
Devin Reed, Kane County IT Director
Pat Guerrero, Kanab Chamber of Commerce
Whit Bunting, BLM
Mark Fisher, Kane County Water Conservancy District
Bart Battista, Best Friends

Alan Alldredge:

Welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed current state and County information. We reviewed the information on The Southwest Utah Health Department website and the states website. The health department shows Kane County currently having 108 active cases. Approximately 80 of those are in the Kane County Jail so there are only 25-30 active cases in the county. The cases in the jail have mostly been asymptomatic or mild symptoms only. Many did not even know they were positive until they were tested. The state website lists the co-morbidities that will be eligible to sign up starting March 1st. Kane County has continued to keep our vaccination phone line active and taking calls to help those who need help signing up for a vaccination. We are currently using the health department's online system. Those who can use a computer are encouraged to keep trying to get their own appointment and we are taking names of those who do not have computers or internet and will help to get them an appointment. All appointments are full through March 17th at this point. The Governor dropped the eligible age to 65 last week.

Dr. Blodgett:

The Governor updated the criteria for the risk categories. Kane County is still in high category for now. Today the governor will announce that those with underlying co-morbidities can begin getting vaccinations immediately instead of March 1st and that you can now go anywhere in the state to get a vaccination and no longer have to stay in your own county. Kane County only gets about 100 doses a week right now and so unfortunately those doses are now available to anyone in the state. There are other changes in school testing requirements. Johnson & Johnson's vaccine should be coming soon. It is a one-shot dose. All vaccines are good, and you should take whatever you can get. The senior center asked Dr. Blodgett about senior citizen centers opening. According to the governor's order, the criteria would

be masks and social distancing and with that population getting vaccinated, that would be a county decision as to when they feel they can do that safely. Utah is in the top five in the nation of states who use all the vaccine they are given in a timely manner.

Sheriff Glover:

The jail staff is doing an outstanding job handling the outbreak in the jail. We feel like our inmates are safe and we have taken measures to keep our staff safe and not carry the illness into the community.

County Commissioners, Mayors and City Officials:

All are doing their best to keep their cities operational and employees safe. Kanab City expressed concerns for the upcoming fire season and the dry conditions the state is experiencing. Bigwater is making efforts to help their citizens get vaccinations. Expressed the hurdle of getting people not to be scared of the vaccine.

Sherrie Pandya:

Still seeing a few cases in the hospital each day. Ambulance seeing some busy days.

Jamie Little:

Discussed the changes in testing requirements for schools and dances.

Whit Bunting:

The BLM visitor center will open on April 1st which is later than usual.

Camille Taylor:

Balloons & Tunes had a bigger crowd than ever. The balloons were able to fly all 3 days. Tourism through the winter has been good. Working on a refreshed "Above and Beyond" campaign. It encourages people to stay healthy and gives recommendations to help accomplish those goals.

Follow up Notes:

For up-to-date information from the state, check their website at coronavirus.utah.gov. For timely information updates for our region, check Southwest Public Health's website at swuhealth.org.

Next COVID-19 Task Force call will be March 11th.