

# **Kane County COVID Task Force Call Updates**

## **March 25, 2021**

### **In attendance:**

Alan Alldredge, Kane County Emergency Services  
Andy Gant, Brent Chamberlain, Wade Heaton, Kane County Commission  
Tracy Glover, Nick Hoyt, Megan Ramsay, Kane County Sheriff's Office, jail & Dispatch  
Rob VanDyke, Kane County Attorney  
Rhonda Gant, Kane County HR Director  
Dr. David Blodgett, Julie Holland, Southwest Utah Public Health Department  
Robert Houston, Joe Decker, Tom, Kanab City  
Robert Caruso, Orderville Town  
Camille Taylor, Kane County Office of Tourism  
Jamie Little, Kane County School District  
Scott Alvord, Utah Division of Emergency Management  
Jerica Bauer, Kane County Senior Citizen Center  
Devin Reed, Kane County IT Director  
Mark Fisher, Kane County Water Conservancy District  
Bart Battista, Best Friends  
Monica Croteau, South Central Communications  
Lauren Willie, American Red Cross  
Whit Bunting, Bureau of Land Management

### **Alan Alldredge:**

Welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the SWUPHD website. They are not currently showing number of active cases. The state's average case count continues to drop from week to week. Hospitalizations and ICU beds are staying in manageable ranges. Starting on the 24<sup>th</sup>, vaccinations have been made available to all adults over the age of 16. In Kane County, we have been filling our clinics up and using every available shot every week. Everyone is grateful for the efforts of the health department staff in Kane County for the efficient way they have conducted the Kanab clinics. It is expected that the Governor will move Kane County from High to Moderate on the transmission index his press conference today. The Public Health Order expires today but it will most likely be extended until April 9<sup>th</sup> when there should be some changes because of the legislature ending the mask mandate on April 10<sup>th</sup>. The Governor will announce a grant program to assist those who have had COVID related funeral expenses.

### **Dr. Blodgett:**

Vaccines are not coming in quantities that was promised by the manufacturers. The region is still only getting about 3000-4000 vaccines per week. We have been able to get some Johnson and Johnson doses in Kane County. We are currently getting about 300 vaccinations per week in Kane County. We have vaccinated about 1600 people in Kane County which is a fairly good percentage of the population. Vaccines should hopefully be getting out to the pharmacies within the next 3-4 weeks.

### **Rob VanDyke:**

The Commissioners have been working with Dr. Blodgett to better identify Kane County's status as far as the actual number of cases in the county. The Commissioners petitioned the state to not include the inmate numbers in our case counts for determining our position in the transmission index, because they are not a risk to the community. The state agreed but has been slow to make that change. When looking at Kane's data without those numbers, we have only had 8 new cases in the community in the last two

weeks. If our daily case counts stay in the 1-2 cases a day we should stay around about 10 active cases in the county. The media has wrongfully portrayed the county as trying to remove the state's mask mandate. They have really been trying to educate the public on the actual risks to the county. By looking at the correct numbers with the jail removed, Kane County should be in the low transmission category. The Commission has asked businesses to develop their own precautions and posting their preferred plan and is asking all individuals to comply with the wishes of each individual business.

**Sheriff's Office:**

The jail currently only has 1 inmate that is still within the 11 day quarantine stage and 31 inmates that are off quarantine but still in the 11-21 day period before being considered recovered. All other inmates have passed the 21 day mark and are considered recovered and back to normal activity. There are only about 20 inmates who have not tested positive but have been in close proximity to infected inmates. Jail staff will continue to do testing on those to see if they become infected.

**County Commissioners, Mayors and City Officials:**

Kane County Commissioners want everyone to know they are not trying to ignore the health and safety of the county residents and visitors. There has been a lot of misrepresentation of the county's efforts. They are using the available data to give a true picture of the county's risk and then act accordingly. The commissioners still recommend that everyone wear masks where appropriate, get vaccinated, and stay healthy and protect themselves.

**Camille Taylor:**

Everything is going good with tourism. Visitation is higher than it normally is this time of year. People feel comfortable visiting Kane County.

**Jamie Little:**

School district is still testing students on a regular basis.

**Whit Bunting:**

The BLM visitor centers will be opening on April 2 for walk-in visitors.

**Bart Battista:**

Commented that there are a number of people who have symptoms but do not get tested so our numbers are most likely higher than posted. Everyone needs to be encouraged to continue getting tested.

**Other participants had had no additional updates.**

**Follow up Notes:**

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

**Next COVID-19 Task Force call is scheduled for April 8<sup>th</sup> but there are some potential conflicts that day. A decision will be made closer to that date.**