

Friday, May 22, 2020 Local Briefing Notes

Locally

Cherokee County has 1 active positive case, bringing our total to 9 since tracking began. Eight of the previous cases have since recovered and are no longer considered contagious. Cherokee County has a test rate of 15.6 per 1,000 residents and a case rate of .5 per 1,000 residents

Statewide

The Kansas Legislature worked a bill overnight and early this morning regarding the Kansas Emergency Management Act. The Senate passed the bill at 6:30 this morning, followed by the House passing it at 7:55 a.m.

The bill does many things, but some highlights as it relates to COVID-19 Response and Recovery includes placing legislative control over the Governor's response, gives county officials the authority to set less restrictive rules than statewide standards and allows the legislature (through the Legislative Coordinating Council) to strike down how the Governor spends \$1.2 billion in CARES Act funding.

In addition, the bill limits the authority of the Governor to only close businesses for up to 15 days (the State Finance Council would need to authorize additional closures), prohibits the confiscation of guns and somewhat shields businesses and medical providers from certain COVID-19 related litigation.

There are questions as to whether or not Governor Kelly will veto it or allow it to become law.

If the bill does not become law, the current Emergency Proclamation expires at the end of the day, May 26, 2020. All executive orders issued under the authority of the proclamation would also expire at that time. I am attaching a copy of the 78-page document along with a 25-page summary. One key point is the Class A misdemeanors in KEMA are changed to civil violations with up to a \$2500 penalty.

If the bill does become law, the Governor's emergency powers extend through May 31st. After that, the State Finance Council will need to be asked to approve extensions of up to 30 days.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment reports 8,958 total positive cases in Kansas since tracking began, which includes 787 hospitalizations and 185 deaths.

Four counties are reporting their first cases today. Ninety-nine outbreak clusters have been identified throughout the state.

Health and Human Services have announced nearly \$5 billion to nursing facilities who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was discussion about the inability to procure PPE if the Governor's Disaster Declaration is not extended and the State Emergency Operations Center would be shut down because it is operational under the current declaration.

The Governor held her regularly scheduled press conference this afternoon. During the press conference she stated she hadn't yet had time to determine how she will proceed regarding the legislation.

Dr. Norman encouraged everyone to be safe and take proper precautions over the Memorial Day Holiday Weekend.

John Hopkins University is reporting 1,577,758 confirmed total positive cases since tracking began. Included in that number are 94,729 deaths and 298,418 recovered cases. Below is our local daily COVID-19 update.

Thanks!
Sheriff David Groves