

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT SCPHD'S COVID-19 RISK LEVELS:

- The risk levels may be applied at the county level.
- **Different counties within SCPHD may be at different risk levels.** Risk levels can increase or decrease.
- In ALL risk levels, the preventive measures outlined in the Minimal Risk Level should be followed. *Always prepare for the next risk level.*
- In addition to metrics determining risk of transmission, public health officials will closely monitor and may take into consideration for movement to a different risk level the following:
 - Input from hospital partners – local hospital capacity is determined by each hospital in the region
 - Trends in COVID-19 testing, including positivity rate
 - Supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare providers/first responders
 - Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing capacity, including outbreaks associated with congregate living facilities
 - COVID-related hospitalizations and deaths
 - Syndromic surveillance of emergency department visits with COVID-like symptoms



COVID-19 HOTLINE • 208-737-1138 • www.phd5.idaho.gov

Last risk assessment: 9/15/2022

Metric Definitions

and weight
for each metric

Positivity Rate for the County

Data is provided by Idaho Health and Welfare. This category is used mostly for context and has the least weight in the final assessment.

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents.

This category reflects the trending case number on a rolling 14 day average. It indicates public health's ability to keep up with investigation and contact tracing for new cases. This category has less weight than hospital capacity and more weight than the positivity rate.

Hospital Capacity

Hospital Capacity includes the local healthcare facility's ability to treat all incoming patients, not just COVID -19 positive patients. This category has the most weight in the decision making for the final assessment.

Hospital capacity includes available staffing, available beds, available personal protective equipment, and other factors that may impact their ability to respond to medical emergencies. The final assigned capacity is determined by the local hospital in each county.

Other Epidemiological Factors

These factors indicate public health risk. These may include SIGNIFICANT outbreaks (outbreaks that are not controlled) in healthcare centers, schools, congregate living facilities, etc. They may also include case surges that overwhelm investigation efforts.

If SCPHD identifies any concerning factors, this category will have similar weight to the hospital capacity level.



South Central Public Health District

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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

Blaine County

Risk level: Moderate

Blaine County's positivity rate is in the high risk category. The case rate is in the moderate risk level and fairly steady. At-home tests are not recorded in this data. It is possible the case rate is higher than data shows.

The overall impact on local healthcare is in the high risk category, but the contributing factors are not COVID related.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is moderate.



South Central Public Health District

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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

11.5%

Positivity Rate for the County
Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

1.5

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents
based on a **14 day rolling average.**

High

Hospital Capacity

Impact on the local hospital is moderate because of staffing. Impact on the regional hospital is critical for non-COVID related care. Overall impact is moderate.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL	METRICS MONITORED	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
<p>MODERATE</p> <p>MODERATE RISK</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NEW DAILY CASES IS BETWEEN 1 to 2.5 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE) 2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE IS BETWEEN 5% to 10% <p>OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS IMPACTED (MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY STILL AVAILABLE) 	<p>AT THE MODERATE LEVEL, THERE MAY BE SPORADIC CASES, AN UPTICK IN CLOSE CONTACT TRANSMISSION, OR ISOLATED CLUSTER OUTBREAKS. SCPHD <u>OR</u> LOCAL JURISDICTIONS MAY INSTITUTE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education, information sharing and warning, and messaging (health advisories), continue to emphasize vaccinations • Extra precautions for vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) • Stricter policies for staff and visitors to avoid potential outbreaks in congregate living facilities (long-term care, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.) • Follow state, public health district, and/or local medical guidance for limitations on gatherings and mask requirements • If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible – avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces • If unvaccinated, wear face coverings in public that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain

Camas County

Risk level: Minimal

Camas County's case rate remains in the minimal risk level. The positivity rate has jumped up into critical, but that is because there have been so few tests in the county. This county has only had two positive tests in this time period.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is moderate.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is minimal.



South Central Public Health District
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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

50%

Positivity Rate for the County
Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

0.66

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents based on a **14 day rolling average.**

No Specific Hospital

Hospital Capacity

Hospital Capacity includes the local healthcare facility's ability to treat all incoming patients, not just COVID -19 positive patients.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL**METRICS MONITORED****MITIGATION STRATEGIES****MINIMAL**

1. NEW DAILY CASES <1 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)
2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE <5%
3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS NORMAL

At the minimal level, the risk of community-wide COVID-19 spread is lower.

REGARDLESS OF THE RISK LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC, EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Get vaccinated
- If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible
- If unvaccinated, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces
- If unvaccinated, wear a mask in public (especially indoors) that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain
- Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available
- Vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) take extra precautions
- Carefully monitor your health – be alert for symptoms

**MINIMAL
RISK**

Cassia County

Risk level: Minimal

Cassia County's positivity rate remains in the moderate risk level. The county's case rate have moved back down into the minimal risk level.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is critical, but not because of COVID-19 related cases.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is minimal.



South Central Public Health District

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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

7.2%

Positivity Rate for the County in the past week.

Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

0.43

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents based on a **14 day rolling average**.

Critical

Hospital Capacity

The impact on the local hospital is critical because of staffing. The impact on the regional hospital is high because of capacity. Overall, the impact is critical.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL**METRICS MONITORED****MITIGATION STRATEGIES****MINIMAL**

1. NEW DAILY CASES <1 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)
2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE <5%
3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS NORMAL

At the minimal level, the risk of community-wide COVID-19 spread is lower.

REGARDLESS OF THE RISK LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC, EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Get vaccinated
- If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible
- If unvaccinated, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces
- If unvaccinated, wear a mask in public (especially indoors) that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain
- Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available
- Vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) take extra precautions
- Carefully monitor your health – be alert for symptoms

**MINIMAL
RISK**

Gooding County

Risk level: Moderate

Gooding County's positivity rate has jumped into the high risk level. The county case rate has also increased slightly and is in the moderate risk level.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is moderate.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is moderate.



South Central Public Health District

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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

11.8%

Positivity Rate for the County in the past week.

Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

2.43

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents based on a **14 day rolling average.**

Moderate

Hospital Capacity

The impact on the local hospital is minimal. The impact on the regional hospital is high because of capacity. Overall, the impact is moderate.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL	METRICS MONITORED	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
<p>MODERATE</p> <p>MODERATE RISK</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NEW DAILY CASES IS BETWEEN 1 to 2.5 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE) 2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE IS BETWEEN 5% to 10% <p>OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS IMPACTED (MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY STILL AVAILABLE) 	<p>AT THE MODERATE LEVEL, THERE MAY BE SPORADIC CASES, AN UPTICK IN CLOSE CONTACT TRANSMISSION, OR ISOLATED CLUSTER OUTBREAKS. SCPHD <u>OR</u> LOCAL JURISDICTIONS MAY INSTITUTE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education, information sharing and warning, and messaging (health advisories), continue to emphasize vaccinations • Extra precautions for vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) • Stricter policies for staff and visitors to avoid potential outbreaks in congregate living facilities (long-term care, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.) • Follow state, public health district, and/or local medical guidance for limitations on gatherings and mask requirements • If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible – avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces • If unvaccinated, wear face coverings in public that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain

Jerome County

Risk level: Moderate

Jerome County's positivity rate and case rate have moved down into the moderate risk level.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is moderate.

Despite the positivity rate and case rate, COVID-19 impact in the community remains relatively low.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is moderate.



South Central Public Health District

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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

9.9%

Positivity Rate for the County
Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

1.5

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents
based on a **14 day rolling average**.

Moderate

Hospital Capacity

The impact on the local hospital is minimal. The impact on the regional hospital is high.
The overall impact is moderate.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL	METRICS MONITORED	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
<p>MODERATE</p> <p>MODERATE RISK</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NEW DAILY CASES IS BETWEEN 1 to 2.5 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE) 2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE IS BETWEEN 5% to 10% <p>OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS IMPACTED (MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY STILL AVAILABLE) 	<p>AT THE MODERATE LEVEL, THERE MAY BE SPORADIC CASES, AN UPTICK IN CLOSE CONTACT TRANSMISSION, OR ISOLATED CLUSTER OUTBREAKS. SCPHD <u>OR</u> LOCAL JURISDICTIONS MAY INSTITUTE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education, information sharing and warning, and messaging (health advisories), continue to emphasize vaccinations • Extra precautions for vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) • Stricter policies for staff and visitors to avoid potential outbreaks in congregate living facilities (long-term care, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.) • Follow state, public health district, and/or local medical guidance for limitations on gatherings and mask requirements • If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible – avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces • If unvaccinated, wear face coverings in public that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain

Lincoln County

Risk level: Minimal

Lincoln County's positivity rate continues in the minimal risk zone. The case rate remains in the moderate risk level.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is moderate.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is minimal.



South Central Public Health District
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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

3.8%

Positivity Rate for the County
Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

1.8

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents based on a **14 day rolling average.**

No Specific Hospital

Hospital Capacity

Hospital Capacity includes the local healthcare facility's ability to treat all incoming patients, not just COVID -19 positive patients.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL**METRICS MONITORED****MITIGATION STRATEGIES****MINIMAL**

1. NEW DAILY CASES <1 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)
2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE <5%
3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS NORMAL

At the minimal level, the risk of community-wide COVID-19 spread is lower.

REGARDLESS OF THE RISK LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC, EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Get vaccinated
- If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible
- If unvaccinated, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces
- If unvaccinated, wear a mask in public (especially indoors) that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain
- Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available
- Vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) take extra precautions
- Carefully monitor your health – be alert for symptoms

**MINIMAL
RISK**

Minidoka County

Risk level: Moderate

Minidoka County's positivity rate is in the moderate risk level. The county case rate is in the moderate risk level.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is moderate.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is moderate.



South Central Public Health District
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Using data from July 31st to August 13th

8.9%

Positivity Rate for the County
Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

1.49

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents
based on a **14 day rolling average.**

Moderate

Hospital Capacity

The impact on the local hospital is minimal. Impact on the regional hospital is high. Overall, the impact is moderate.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL	METRICS MONITORED	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
<p>MODERATE</p> <p>MODERATE RISK</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NEW DAILY CASES IS BETWEEN 1 to 2.5 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE) 2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE IS BETWEEN 5% to 10% <p>OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS IMPACTED (MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY STILL AVAILABLE) 	<p>AT THE MODERATE LEVEL, THERE MAY BE SPORADIC CASES, AN UPTICK IN CLOSE CONTACT TRANSMISSION, OR ISOLATED CLUSTER OUTBREAKS. SCPHD <u>OR</u> LOCAL JURISDICTIONS MAY INSTITUTE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education, information sharing and warning, and messaging (health advisories), continue to emphasize vaccinations • Extra precautions for vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) • Stricter policies for staff and visitors to avoid potential outbreaks in congregate living facilities (long-term care, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.) • Follow state, public health district, and/or local medical guidance for limitations on gatherings and mask requirements • If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible – avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces • If unvaccinated, wear face coverings in public that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain

Twin Falls County

Risk level: Moderate

Twin Falls County's positivity and case rate continues in the moderate risk level.

The overall impact on hospitals in the area is in the critical risk level because of staffing and capacity. This impact is **not** COVID-19 related.

Taking all major factors into account, the overall determined risk level is moderate.



South Central Public Health District
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Using data from August 28th to September 10th

8.4%

Positivity Rate for the County
Provided by Idaho Health and Welfare

1.51

Average New Cases Per 10,000 residents
based on a **14 day rolling average.**

Critical

Hospital Capacity

The impact on the local and regional hospital is in the critical category because of staffing and capacity. These staffing and capacity impacts are not COVID related.

Minimal

Other Epidemiological Factors

Minimal impact to community. Investigations and contact tracing have been suspended.

RISK LEVEL**METRICS MONITORED****MITIGATION STRATEGIES****MODERATE**

1. NEW DAILY CASES IS BETWEEN 1 to 2.5 PER 10,000 POPULATION (14 DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)
 2. COVID-19 TESTING POSITIVE RATE IS BETWEEN 5% to 10%
- OR
3. HOSPITAL CAPACITY FOR CARE IS IMPACTED (MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY STILL AVAILABLE)

AT THE MODERATE LEVEL, THERE MAY BE SPORADIC CASES, AN UPTICK IN CLOSE CONTACT TRANSMISSION, OR ISOLATED CLUSTER OUTBREAKS. SCPHD OR LOCAL JURISDICTIONS MAY INSTITUTE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Increase education, information sharing and warning, and messaging (health advisories), continue to emphasize vaccinations
- Extra precautions for vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions)
- Stricter policies for staff and visitors to avoid potential outbreaks in congregate living facilities (long-term care, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.)
- Follow state, public health district, and/or local medical guidance for limitations on gatherings and mask requirements
- If unvaccinated, maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible – avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces
- If unvaccinated, wear face coverings in public that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain

**MODERATE
RISK**

Crosswalk for Schools

[Idaho Back to School Framework](#) has identified three categories for determining transmission risk (table below). To assist schools located in the six-county region, South Central Public Health District has crosswalked the Idaho Back to School Framework with the COVID-19 Risk Level advisory system.

"Identify Level of Transmission Risk"			
	Category 1: No Community Transmission	Category 2: Minimal to Moderate Community Transmission	Category 3: Substantial Community Transmission
Definitions	Evidence of isolated cases, case investigations underway, no evidence of exposure in large communal setting, e.g., healthcare facility, school, mass gathering.	Widespread and/or sustained transmission with high likelihood or confirmed exposure within communal settings, with potential for rapid increase in suspected cases.	Large-scale community transmission, healthcare staffing significantly impacted, multiple cases within communal settings like healthcare facilities, schools, mass gatherings, etc.
Level of Operations	School buildings open with physical distancing and sanitation.	School buildings open but option of limited/staggered use of school buildings with physical distancing and sanitation.	Targeted, short-term, or extended building closure.



COVID-19
RISK LEVEL
GREEN



COVID-19
RISK LEVEL
YELLOW
ORANGE



COVID-19
RISK LEVEL
RED

DEFINITIONS

CRISIS STANDARDS OF CARE:

Guidance to help guide ethical decision-making for how to triage medical care when it has to be rationed.

Plan can be found on the [Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's website](#).

MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY:

Medical surge capacity refers to the ability to evaluate and care for a markedly increased volume of patients—one that challenges or exceeds normal operating capacity. The surge requirements may extend beyond direct patient care to include such tasks as extensive laboratory studies or epidemiological investigations.

[Source](#)

TIMELINE FOR MEASUREMENTS

Data to support the corresponding Health Risk Level and any related mitigation strategies will be posted every other Thursday by 5 pm.

Health Risk Levels will be made on every other Thursday based on the prior two weeks starting on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday. Movement from one risk level to a lesser risk level will occur at 14-day intervals (one incubation period for COVID-19), while advancement to a level of higher risk can occur at any time.

MOVEMENT BETWEEN RISK LEVELS

Determinations to move to a more restrictive risk level may be made mid-stage if any of the criteria below are met:

- Crisis standards of care are implemented
- Counties must remain in a risk level for at least two weeks before moving to a less restrictive phase
- Senior leadership at a local hospital indicates that further increases in cases in the community will overwhelm local hospital capacity
- Reported cases exceed **> 5 daily new cases** per 10,000 people in a defined population (e.g., town, city, or county) or if new case rate adversely impacts SCPHD's ability to respond

REFERENCES

- [Key Metrics for COVID Suppression: A framework for policy makers and the public. July 1, 2020.](#)
- [Essential information for states and counties to publicly report](#)