



**NEVADA
HEALTH
RESPONSE**

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Meghin Delaney

Communications Director

CONTACT: pressroom@nvhealthresponse.nv.gov

COVID-19 Press Bulletin for 2-24-2021

Carson City, NV — Today, Caleb Cage, Nevada COVID-19 Response Director and Candice McDaniel, Health Bureau Chief for the Bureau of Child, Family, and Community Wellness, were joined by Dr. Mark Pandori, director of Nevada State Public Health Laboratory.

This bulletin provides facts, figures, and informational items from the call. As a reminder, data is provided in a dashboard on the home page of the [Nevada Health Response](#) website and can be accessed 24 hours a day.

SUMMARY:

- As of today, Nevada has logged 292,059 cases, with the 14-day rolling average of daily cases being 335.
- Nevada has now completed a total of 2,686,592 molecular tests since the beginning of COVID-19.
- The test positivity rate over the last 14 days is 8.6%.
- Compared to other U.S. states, Nevada has the 4th lowest caseload (daily average cases over the past 7 days per 100,000 residents).

- In Nevada, average daily cases are now at half of the summer surge. Nationally, average daily cases are still around the peak of the summer surge.
- Cases have declined 55% in the past two weeks.
- The Nevada Hospital Association (NHA) reports Nevada is continuing to see a downward trajectory in hospitalizations.
- The NHA is also reporting there are currently 534 COVID-19 hospitalizations (456 confirmed; 78 suspected).
- Trends in deaths tend to lag behind hospitalizations. Deaths continue to decline in Nevada, but are only now dipping below the peak of the summer surge.
- As of February 23, 579,102 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered and reported to NV WebIZ.
- Nevada's vaccine rollout is on pace with the rest of the country. Nevada has vaccinated 13% of its population with at least one dose, which equals the national average.
- Compared to other states, Nevada has the 9th highest vaccine utilization. Along with Washington, Oregon and Colorado, Nevada has used 91% of its allotted vaccines, which is ahead of the national rate of 85%.
- Nationally, more Americans are expressing willingness to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Intent to receive COVID vaccines increased from 39% to 49% among American adults between September and December.

- Immunize Nevada continues to update [NVCovidFighter.org](https://nvcovidfighter.org) with information on vaccination locations in communities statewide. Nevadans are encouraged to visit that website, or if you need assistance, call 1-800-401-0946
- The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine is a single dose, and it is expected to be reviewed for safety and efficacy by the Food and Drug Administration later this week.
- If the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine receives Emergency Use Authorization from the FDA, the process is similar to the previous products and the vaccine may come to our state soon after approval.
- The Nevada State Immunization Program is monitoring this process closely and coordinating with all local partners.
- To date, the reports on the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, show that it is effective in preventing severe illness, hospitalization and death as the Moderna and Pfizer presentations do, with the convenience of not needing two doses.
- In addition to the FDA recommendation, the State's team will continue to rely on the guidance from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and will be reviewing the available information and data with the Western States Scientific Safety Committee.
- Like the two vaccines currently in use, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine will not be released unless it is deemed safe and effective.

Update from the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory:

- As the virus spreads in the community, it will continue to generate novel variants.
- Some variants are concerning, due to biological differences that make them more capable of infecting humans or evading immunity.
- A pair of variants recently studied in California, two variants very similar to each other, B.1.427 and B.1.429, seem to be more infectious and more able to evade immunity than regular strains.
- These variants have spread considerably in California.
- These variants make up approximately 25% of all cases in Nevada, according to sequencing surveillance at the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory (NSPHL).
- The variant has been observed in Nevada since at least December, but it is not the most common variant in Nevada.
- It is highly prevalent (25%), but at a time when cases are plummeting. These variants don't appear to be driving a spike or any increases in cases.
- More research is needed. The data on its danger or ability has not been peer-reviewed; the data shown by UCSF shows minimal quantitative differences between these variants and "regular" SARS-CoV-2; the data isn't yet published in any scientific venue.
- There are 49 lineages or variants in Nevada according to sequencing surveillance at the NSPHL.

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