

Below is a summary from the Dept. of Health conference call for Thursday:

- There are 143 new positive cases of Covid-19 in South Dakota reported in the past 24 hours
 - o 4 new hospitalizations
 - o 1 new death (Minnehaha County)
 - o 144 new recoveries
 - o 560 new negative tests
- In total, 1,311 total positive cases have been reported in SD
 - o 55 total hospitalizations
 - o 7 total deaths
 - o 373 total recoveries
 - o 9,239 negative tests
- Now able to report 598 positive cases for Smithfield Foods employees
 - o 135 positive cases have been reported for people who have had contact with Smithfield employees
 - o 80 Smithfield employees report new positive cases today
 - o Total Smithfield cases (employees and contacts): 733
- New cases are being reported today in the following counties:
 - o Hamlin (1 new case), Jerauld (1), Lake (1), Lincoln (6), Minnehaha (131), Moody (1), Pennington (1), Yankton (1)

Below is a summary of Gov. Noem's press conference for Thursday:

- Gov. said she had a call with several different governors earlier this morning, mostly from the surrounding states
 - o Attempting to get facts from the front lines from these surrounding states
- Gov. had a call with a number of SD mayors this morning; am planning to talk to another group of mayors this afternoon
 - o Gov. said state has been getting a number of questions; she said the answers to a number of the questions are already on the covid.sd.gov website; please look there first if you have a question. If the info is not there, then give us a call
- Gov. said the CDC team went through the Smithfield Foods plant this morning at 9 am; the expectation is that the CDC will issue a list of things that need to be done in order to get the plant ready to re-open
 - o Gov. said she has talked to US Sec. of Ag Sonny Perdue about getting the resources needed to get the plant up and running
- Gov. acknowledges there is a hotspot in Sioux Falls (Smithfield Foods)
 - o She said state govt is being very transparent with the public about the information that is related to the Smithfield situation
 - o SD is testing aggressively
 - SD has a higher percentage of our population tested as opposed to many other states (*side note: SD is 18th in the nation in tests per 1 million population; only ND has a higher rate of testing of states adjacent to SD according to data from Covid tracking project*)
 - The fact that we are finding positive cases is a good thing; we are finding positive cases and getting these people isolated
- Gov. said there are currently 36 people in the hospital in SD with positive Covid cases
 - o Gov. said we are preparing for a peak need of 5,000 hospital beds even though current models say state will only need 2,500

- Gov. said South Dakotans are doing the right thing
 - Gov. asked people to download CARE 19 app for phones to assist with contact tracing if someone tests positive
- Gov. said there have been 6,152 unemployment claims filed in the past week
 - Prior week, there were more than 8,100 UI claims filed
 - As a reference, prior to the Covid outbreak, SD typically had about 150 UI claims/week
 - Gov. said that next week will be a very bad week for UI claims; next week is the first week that CARES Act rules will be in effect and will allow self-employed individuals to file UI claims along with Gig economy workers and a host of others that had not been able to file previously
- Gov. said she signed a new executive order earlier today to remove a variety of barriers and regulations to assist health care workers, telehealth delivery and to help streamline ambulance supply lines
- Reporter ?: the mayor of Sturgis announced that planning for the annual motorcycle rally is progressing as normal. What is your reaction?
 - Gov. said it is OK to proceed with planning. SD may be in a very different place by August which might allow for the rally to take place, but we need to be flexible; depending on how things progress, adjustments to the planning may need to be made
- Reporter ?: When will the special legislative session happen, and is there a ballpark figure for how much the state budget has been impacted?
 - Gov. said we won't know the initial impacts on the state budget until early May when sales tax reports start to come in; some industries have taken a big hit.
 - There is no specific date for the special session at this time
- Reporter ?: What are Gov.'s expectations for UI filings for next week?
 - Gov. said that she expects the total number of filings next week to surpass the 8,000 level that were filed earlier
- Reporter ?: Are state officials accompanying CDC personnel on the Smithfield plan tour this morning?
 - Gov. said there are state officials on the tour and there are officials from the city of Sioux Falls as well
- Reporter ?: How are state relief funds holding up?
 - Gov. said there were a number of applications approved this morning for funds from the small business relief loan program
 - There are funds still available
 - Gov. encouraged people to apply if they need assistance to keep business operating
 - She said there is a light at the end of the tunnel
 - Gov. said that state can offer assistance and advice to business owners needing help with applying for SBA loans and assistance programs
- Reporter ?: What does it mean to SD now that there are no more Paycheck Protection Program funds available?
 - Gov. said the state can turn around decisions on the state-level relief programs pretty quickly if businesses need help
- Reporter ?: The President said he was planning to reach out governors across the country to gather input about how to open up the country. Will you be part of that conversation?
 - Gov. said the President has a number of ideas about how to open up the country, and that there are a variety of opinions among the nation's governors

- Gov. said there will be a call between the gov's and the President later today; Noem will be part of that call
 - Gov. said that SD is in a good spot when it comes to allowing businesses to open up at some future point
 - SD has allowed businesses to be innovative and operate while keeping employees and customers safe
 - SD residents need to continue what they have been doing for the past several weeks (keep groups to under 10 people; social distance; only make essential trips, etc.)
- Reporter ?: What pressure does Gov. feel from both sides of a shelter in place order (those that favor and those that oppose)?
 - Gov. said that she believes that what is being done in SD is working
 - She said local mayors are doing what they think is right for their individual community
 - Each mayor has a variety of tools available to them which they can use
- Reporter ?: When calculating the model outcomes, are the results of the state's drug trial being factored into the data?
 - Kim Malsom-Rysdon (SD Sec. of Health) – Drug trial results are not being factored into the model, but we think the trial will have a positive effect on state's overall case load
- Reporter ?: Has Gov. given any thought to putting a moratorium on evictions in place?
 - Gov. said state is working with folks to help those in need in these tough times, but that she is not planning to put an eviction moratorium in place at this time
- Reporter ?: Is there a plan to test asymptomatic workers at Smithfield?
 - Malsom-Rysdon – State is not planning to test asymptomatic workers at this time; state has a very aggressive testing program targeted at those who are showing mild symptoms in order to minimize exposure to others
- Reporter ?: Will the state release daily hospitalization numbers (ie. Those who are currently in the hospital due to Covid-19) going forward?
 - Gov. said that is the plan going forward as the number of people in the hospital is a number that we should be focusing on
- Reporter ?: Is Gov. likely to recommend SD for inclusion in another Covid clinical trial?
 - Gov. said that Sanford is doing several other Covid trials along with the HCQ trial that was announced earlier this week, but the HCQ trial is the only one that state and the three major health systems will be participating in jointly at this time
- Reporter ?: What criteria is being used to evaluate applications for the state small business relief programs?
 - Gov. said GOED Commissioner Westra would have more information about the number of applications approved, etc.
 - She said the state is using some of the same guidelines as is used for SBA assistance
 - Gov. said the state is also using elements to try and make sure businesses are actually impacted and taking a downturn due to the virus