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Press Release

For Release: Immediately

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Relaxed Mask Guidelines for Fully Vaccinated in Reno County

Reno County, Kan., May 14, 2021- The CDC announced updated guidelines for individuals who have been fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated people may resume activities without wearing a mask or social distancing, except where required by federal, state, or local rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. The new guidance was based on results from three recently completed post-vaccine studies.

The Reno County Health Department hopes this will spur more individuals to receive vaccinations. *“The new guidance will allow those fully vaccinated a bit more freedom, but we still only have 36 percent of our county residents vaccinated,”* states Reno County Health Department Director Karla Nichols. *“We really want to increase that percentage so we can keep numbers moving in the right direction.”*

Fully vaccinated individuals are defined as those being more than 2 weeks removed from the second Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or 2 weeks removed from the Johnson & Johnson single dose vaccine. If the above requirements are not met, regardless of age, a person is NOT considered fully vaccinated. These individuals are at higher risk for infection and transmission of COVID-19 and should continue using face coverings and social distancing. Additionally, these persons will need to quarantine if exposed to a positive COVID-19 individual. If a person has a weakened immune system, due to either disease or medical therapy, they may not be fully protected despite adequate vaccination. It is advised that these persons discuss their unique situation with their physician.

All persons with COVID-19-like symptoms, regardless of immunization status, should get tested for COVID-19.

The Health Department will be open Saturday, May 15 from 8 a.m. to noon for those wanting the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccine, no appointment needed. They also accept walk-ins during their normal week-day hours. The RCHD has ordered Pfizer vaccine and should receive doses next week.

If you have not been vaccinated yet, find available locations at vaccinefinder.org. The vaccine is FREE, regardless of citizen status or insurance, anywhere it is offered. For more information on the vaccine, visit www.renogov.org/741/COVID-19. To schedule a FREE ride to and from any of the vaccination sites, call RCAT at 620-694-2913.