Are Counties effectively containing the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”)?
County trends and risk assessment report for July 16, 2020

While Oregon has fared better than many states, keeping it that way will require quick intervention to avoid spiraling out of control. A test, trace, and isolate strategy is ineffective in a County with a severe outbreak. 5 counties are already out of control, and a further 3 are at risk without immediate action from the state.

This fact sheet uses a color scale (below) to show how Oregon’s 36 counties are performing against benchmarks for containment, COVID testing, and contact tracing over the last week. Refer to page 2 to see how we assigned colors to each county for each of the three benchmarks.

| Counties in this category are currently meeting containment benchmarks. | GREEN |
| Counties in this category should maintain all current restrictions. | YELLOW |
| Counties in both the “Red” and “Failing” categories are failing critical containment benchmarks, and should be locked down for at least 2 weeks. | RED FAILING |
**BENCHMARK 1: Daily COVID+**
The first benchmark we are tracking is the 7-day moving average for daily COVID diagnoses per 100,000 population. To contain COVID-19, a community should try to keep this number below 3. Counties are assigned a color for this metric based on the scale below.

| ≤3 | 3-10 | 11-24 | 25+ |

**BENCHMARK 2: Testing**
The WHO recommends a community test enough such that 5% or less of tests are returned positive. A higher number indicates too many infections are going undiagnosed, making a test & trace strategy impossible to implement.

| ≤5% | 5-10% | 11-14% | 15%+ |

**BENCHMARK 3: Tracing**
We are tracking the percentage of cases that are tracked back to a known source of infection. A number above 30% indicates high levels of community spread, making a test & trace strategy impossible to implement.

| ≤20% | 20-30% | 30-49% | 50%+ |

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**Benchmark 1: all counties**
This map shows the grades of all 36 Oregon Counties on benchmark 1 – containment, measured by daily COVID+ cases reported per 100,000 population, averaged over the last 7 days (7/10-7/16).

**Benchmark 2: all counties**
This map shows the grades of all 36 Oregon Counties on benchmark 2 – testing adequacy, measured by the percentage of COVID tests returned positive, averaged over the last week of available OHA data (7/6-7/12).

**Benchmark 3: all counties**
This map shows the grades of all 36 Oregon Counties on benchmark 3 – contact tracing, measured by the percentage of COVID cases that could not be traced back to a known source over the last week of available OHA data (7/6-7/12).
## FAILING Counties (alphabetical)

### Josephine County
- **Daily COVID+**: 20/100k
- **Test Positivity**: 1.4%
- **Untraced Cases**: 50%

### Malheur County
- **Daily COVID+**: 93/100k
- **Test Positivity**: 33.2%
- **Untraced Cases**: 48%

### Morrow County
- **Daily COVID+**: 53/100k
- **Test Positivity**: 25.3%
- **Untraced Cases**: 81%

### Sherman County
- **Daily COVID+**: 18/100k
- **Test Positivity**: 2.7%
- **Untraced Cases**: 50%

### Umatilla County
- **Daily COVID+**: 56/100k
- **Test Positivity**: 21.4%
- **Untraced Cases**: 45%
## RED Counties (alphabetical)

### Jefferson County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+</th>
<th>Test Positivity</th>
<th>Untraced Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/100k</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Marion County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+</th>
<th>Test Positivity</th>
<th>Untraced Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/100k</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wasco County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+</th>
<th>Test Positivity</th>
<th>Untraced Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/100k</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## YELLOW Counties (alphabetical)

### Baker County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+</th>
<th>Test Positivity</th>
<th>Untraced Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/100k</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Clackamas County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+</th>
<th>Test Positivity</th>
<th>Untraced Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/100k</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Daily COVID+</td>
<td>Test Positivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deschutes County</td>
<td>7/100k</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilliam County</td>
<td>7/100k</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hood River County</td>
<td>9/100k</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson County</td>
<td>7/100k</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multnomah County</td>
<td>9/100k</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polk County</td>
<td>4/100k</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OR County COVID Trends and risk assessment page 5 of 11
Union County

Daily COVID+ 5/100k
Test Positivity 5.5%
Untraced Cases 71%

Wallowa County

Daily COVID+ 6/100k
Test Positivity 8.5%
Untraced Cases 100%

Washington County

Daily COVID+ 9/100k
Test Positivity 5.0%
Untraced Cases 51%

Yamhill County

Daily COVID+ 7/100k
Test Positivity 6.2%
Untraced Cases 34%
## Green Counties (alphabetical)

### Benton County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+ 3/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity 3.5%</th>
<th>Untraced Cases 83%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Columbia County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+ 3/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity 2.3%</th>
<th>Untraced Cases 78%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Coos County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+ 2/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity 3.1%</th>
<th>Untraced Cases 70%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Crook County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+ 2/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity 4.7%</th>
<th>Untraced Cases 60%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Clatsop County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+ 1/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity 1.2%</th>
<th>Untraced Cases 75%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Curry County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily COVID+ 0/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity 0.0%</th>
<th>Untraced Cases 100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Douglas County

Daily COVID+ 2/100k
Test Positivity 1.7%
Untraced Cases 36%

Grant County

Daily COVID+ 0/100k
Test Positivity 0.0%
Untraced Cases 0%

Harney County

Daily COVID+ 0/100k
Test Positivity 2.8%
Untraced Cases 100%

Klamath County

Daily COVID+ 3/100k
Test Positivity 1.9%
Untraced Cases 71%

Lake County

Daily COVID+ 0/100k
Test Positivity 2%
Untraced Cases 100%

Lane County

Daily COVID+ 3/100k
Test Positivity 1.9%
Untraced Cases 24%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Daily COVID+/100k</th>
<th>Test Positivity</th>
<th>Untraced Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linn</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tillamook</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeler</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Policy Recommendations

### FAILING Counties

Counties in both of these categories are badly failing benchmarks for either testing capacity or case growth. Counties in the “Failing” category are not even close to meeting benchmarks, and will have to make significant progress before reopening. Insufficient testing and high rates of infection indicate a level of community spread that probably cannot be contained through a test & trace strategy alone.

This means a stay-at-home order is probably necessary to bring infections to a manageable level. OSPIRG recommends implementation of a full lockdown in these counties for at least 2 weeks – including closures of all non-essential businesses, stay-at-home guidance, and deployment of additional state resources to assist with physical distancing and face covering requirements in essential businesses.

### RED Counties

Counties are not meeting either the containment or testing benchmark, but are close– meaning it may be possible to bring the outbreaks in these communities under control through a test & trace strategy. OSPIRG recommends that these Counties maintain all current public health interventions, and be prepared to take additional steps if daily cases rise any further. Note: many of these counties are failing our contact tracing benchmark, which is not factored into our overall grade.

### YELLOW Counties

Counties in the “Yellow” category are not meeting either the containment or testing benchmark, but are close– meaning it may be possible to bring the outbreaks in these communities under control through a test & trace strategy. OSPIRG recommends that these Counties maintain all current public health interventions, and be prepared to take additional steps if daily cases rise any further. Note: many of these counties are failing our contact tracing benchmark, which is not factored into our overall grade.

### GREEN Counties

Counties in the “Green” category are currently meeting both containment and testing benchmarks. If infections remain at current levels in these communities, they should be able to effectively respond to COVID-19 through a test & trace strategy. Note: many of these counties are failing our contact tracing benchmark, which is not factored into our overall grade.

## Statewide Policy Recommendations

- Inconsistent application of the principles in Governor Brown’s “Building a Safe & Strong Oregon” plan have left county governments, businesses, and consumers guessing as to what comes next. The state should define clear benchmarks for placing additional containment measures on poorly performing counties, and apply them consistently across the state.
- Other states, including California, New York, Texas, and Florida, have recognized that some types of business, especially bars and indoor dining rooms, cannot be operated safely with current levels of community spread for COVID-19. Without an interstate travel ban or robust quarantine procedures at Oregon’s borders, bars and indoor dining rooms should be shuttered throughout the state until the virus is brought under control nationwide.
- The virus doesn’t care whether an indoor gathering is a book club, a fraternity party, or a church service. Restrictions on the size of gatherings should be applied uniformly across all types of indoor activity.
Oregon has fared better than most states during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that’s only because we acted quickly to lock down the state in March, when the virus was not prevalent. The Oregon Health Authority’s most recent modeling already shows the pandemic has the potential to spiral out of control in Oregon – as we’ve seen in other states over the last two months. Governor Brown should act now, proactively, to prevent outbreaks, rather than scrambling to get things back under control once it’s already too late.

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**NOTES AND CITATIONS**

- Cover photo Credit: Skeeze, from [www.Pixabay.com](http://www.Pixabay.com).
- Color ratings for case positivity & testing capacity adapted from COVID Exit Strategy, [www.covidexitstrategy.org](http://www.covidexitstrategy.org).
- Map graphic from Free Vector Maps, [www.freevectormaps.com](http://www.freevectormaps.com).
- Policy recommendations are derived from Key Metrics for COVID Suppression, released by Harvard Global Health Institute. URL: [https://ethics.harvard.edu/files/center-for-ethics/files/key_metrics_and_indicators_v4.pdf](https://ethics.harvard.edu/files/center-for-ethics/files/key_metrics_and_indicators_v4.pdf)
- A county’s overall grade is assigned based on the worse of a county’s results for containment and testing. Contact tracing is not factored into the overall grade, due to volatility.