



South Central Public Health District
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NEWS RELEASE--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First Coronavirus Variant Identified in South Central Idaho

Blaine County, Idaho — South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) received laboratory confirmation of 12 confirmed case/s of the COVID-19 CA variant (B.1.429), and 4 confirmed case/s of the COVID-19 UK variant (B.1.1.7), discovered in Blaine County. At this point, COVID-19 variants have not been discovered in any other counties in this region.

Variants have been identified in other areas of the state. With the emergence of these variants in South Central Idaho, it is imperative, now more than ever, to follow public health recommendations to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

These recommendations include:

- ✓ Wearing a mask when in public
- ✓ Washing your hands often and avoiding touching your face.
- ✓ Staying home when sick except to seek medical attention.
- ✓ Maintaining space between yourself and others not of the same household.
- ✓ Avoid large gatherings.
- ✓ Getting vaccinated.

No single effort is 100 percent effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19, so public health officials urge residents to practice all of them whenever possible to help protect their community.

“Our COVID-19 case numbers are at some of the lowest rates we’ve since this pandemic started. Even with a variant in our community, we can keep those numbers low if we work together to slow the spread of disease,” said Tanis Maxwell, SCPHD epidemiologist. “As the vaccine is being made widely available, we encourage those who wish to receive one to sign up now and help reduce the spread.”

Schedule an appointment through the SCPHD website: <https://www.phd5.idaho.gov/Covid-vaccine/>
Public health encourages everyone 16 and older to register now so they can get signed up for an appointment with a local provider as soon as they qualify.

SCPHD is running two COVID-19 informational hotlines, one in English at (208) 737-1138, and one in Spanish at (208) 737-5965. These hotlines are currently running from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.