



# The Globe

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# A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

## Timeline of COVID-19 cases and deaths in Nobles County

### MARCH 2020

**April 9, 2020:** first confirmed positive case of COVID-19

**April 13:** second confirmed positive case

**April 17:** MDH reports more than 30 confirmed cases in Nobles County

**April 20:** Nobles County's first confirmed COVID-19 patient dies in Ellsworth

**April 30:** 866 cases of COVID-19; one death in month

**May 5:** JBS reopens with COVID precautions in place

**May 31:** 1,544 cases; five deaths. (678 new cases; four deaths in month)

**June 10:** Salons and barber shops reopen at 50% capacity

**Nov. 30:** 3,102 cases; 30 deaths. (662 new cases; 12 deaths in month)

**Sept. 30:** 1,985 cases; 16 deaths. (116 new cases; three deaths in month)

**Aug. 31:** 1,869 cases; 13 deaths. (129 new cases; seven deaths in month)

**June 30:** 1,655 cases; six deaths. (111 new cases; one death in month)

**Oct. 31:** 2,440 cases; 18 deaths. (455 new cases; two deaths in month)

**Sept. 8:** District 518 begins the school year in hybrid learning

**July 31:** 1,740 cases; six deaths. (85 new cases; no deaths in month)

**Dec. 31:** 3,474 cases; 46 deaths. (372 new cases; 16 deaths in month)

**Jan. 31:** 3,767 cases; 47 deaths. (293 new cases; one death in month)

**Feb. 16:** All District 518 students return to in-person learning in the classroom

### 2021

**Jan. 23, 2021:** Vaccines start being administered at assisted living and long-term care facilities throughout Nobles County

**Feb. 28:** 3,868 cases; 47 deaths. (101 new cases; no deaths in month)

### MARCH 2021

#### INSIDE

For related COVID stories, SEE PAGES 6, 7 AND 11

## TIMELINE

**March 17, 2020**  
• Minnesota public schools host their final day of in-person classes for the 2019-2020 academic year. Minnesota West Community & Technical College was already in the midst of an extended spring break and would also not resume in-person classes during the semester.  
• An executive order by Gov. Tim Walz also orders the closure of bars, restaurants and other places of public accommodation.  
• Nobles County offices were closed and would not reopen until further notice.

**March 18, 2020**  
• In a special morning meeting, Nobles County commissioners take official action to declare a state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**March 23, 2020**  
• Worthington Mayor Mike Kuhle urges city residents during a press conference via Zoom to follow social distancing guidelines in conjunction with the executive order Walz issued the previous week.  
• The Worthington City Council approves of a resolution authorizing Kuhle to declare a local emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**April 9, 2020**  
• While acknowledging that restrictions are difficult on several fronts, Kuhle urges Worthington residents to follow stay-at-home orders that have been extended from April 10 to May 4.

**April 17, 2020**  
• The city of Worthington officially closes all of its playground facilities, and nets

and hoops from its basketball courts had been removed.

**April 20, 2020**  
• JBS Worthington closes its doors indefinitely as COVID spreads through the facility.

**April 23, 2020**  
• Walz signs an executive order allowing the return to work on April 27 of non-essential workers in certain industrial, manufacturing and office settings. Walz also orders the moving of the remainder of the school year to distance learning; students and teachers have been operating from home since March 30.

**April 24, 2020**  
• A drive-through testing site at the Nobles County Fairgrounds screens 475 JBS workers during its first seven hours of operation. It was the first of four scheduled days of organized testing set up specifically for the JBS USA pork processing facility's approximately 2,000 employees.

**April 29, 2020**  
• Gov. Tim Walz and U.S. Reps. Jim Hagedorn, Steve King and Collin Peterson visit Worthington to discuss reopening JBS.

**April 30, 2020**  
• Walz announces that Minnesota's stay-at-home order would be extended to May 18 with some extensions. The closure of dine-in restaurants and bars is extended until May 18.

**May 5, 2020**  
• JBS reopens with COVID precautions in place.

**May 12, 2020**  
• Nobles County commissioners unanimously approved reductions in the penalties for property owners unable to make their May 15 property tax payment in full due to ramifications from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**May 26, 2020**  
• The Worthington City Council approves a resolution allowing bars and restaurants to serve customers in outdoor seating areas on public and private property during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

**May 29, 2020**  
• WHS holds a virtual graduation ceremony and car parade through town.

**June 10, 2020**  
• Salons and barber shops reopen at 50% capacity; they reopened June 1 at 25% capacity.

**July 25, 2020**  
• The first day of an executive order requiring Minnesotans to wear masks in public. The order mandates that everyone older than age 5 wear a cloth face covering over their mouth and nose inside public properties and businesses.

**Aug. 21, 2020**  
• The city of Worthington has teamed with Nobles County to offer a Small Business Assistance Grant Program, providing grant funds to small, private, for-profit businesses whose operations had been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications for the program were already being accepted and could

be submitted through Sept. 15.

**Sept. 8, 2020**  
• District 518 begins the school year in hybrid learning.

**Sept. 21-Oct. 5, 2020**  
• District 518 spends two weeks in distance learning as COVID cases surge.

**Oct. 3-4, 2020**  
• The Minnesota Department of Health partners with Voices for Racial Justice on a serology research project in Worthington with the goal of testing 2,000 Nobles County residents (and those who work, shop or worship in the county) to see if they possess COVID-19 antibodies.

**Nov. 2, 2020**  
• District 518 moves into full distance learning for the remainder of fall term.

**Dec. 3, 2020**  
• Vault Health opened Worthington's semi-permanent saliva testing lab for COVID-19 in the Worthington Event Center. The site remains open for testing.

**Dec. 23, 2020**  
• Pfizer vaccines for COVID-19 arrived in Minnesota during the previous week and the state reserved the first phase of vaccinations for health care workers, including staff at Sanford Worthington Medical Center.

**Jan. 4, 2021**  
• District 518 returns to hybrid learning.

**Jan. 5, 2021**  
• Nobles County Deputy Administrator Bruce Heitkamp reports that Phase 1A vaccinations were taking place at the Nobles County Government Center Farmer's Room for EMS responders, while outside clinics were offering to vaccinate staff and residents of long-term care facilities.

**Jan. 23, 2021**  
• Vaccines have begun being administered at assisted living and long-term care facilities throughout Nobles County, The Globe reported.

**Feb. 10, 2021**  
• A COVID-19 Relief grant program launched by Nobles County to help businesses and the not-for-profit sector hit hard by the pandemic had generated more than 150 applications. The Minnesota Legislature had awarded \$433,000 to Nobles County for the program with the request that counties focus the dollars on those who truly need it.

**Feb. 13, 2021**  
• Nursing staff with Nobles County Public Health administered 200 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to District 518 staff and daycare providers throughout the county during the past week.

**Feb. 16, 2021**  
• All District 518 students return to in-person learning in the classroom.

**March 12, 2021**  
• Walz announces sweeping plans for reopening businesses, houses of worship and social gatherings just as Minnesota was set to mark the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

Becca Clemens / Forum Design Center

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INDEX

Agriculture	9	Markets	9
Classifieds	12	Opinion	4
Deaths	5	Religion	4
Divisions	8	Sports	16-17
Education	10	Weather	2
Lifestyles	6		

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