

For Immediate Release
April 13, 2021

Brazilian Variant identified in Sedgwick County

TOPEKA – A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Emerging Variant known as the Brazilian or P.1 variant has been identified in an individual in Sedgwick County. A case investigation is being conducted to determine how the person became infected with this particular variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, as well as, if others may have been exposed. No further details will be released concerning the patient, including demographics.

The variant was determined through the whole genome sequencing conducted through the laboratories at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

The P.1 variant was originally identified in four travelers from Brazil, who were tested during routine screening at Haneda airport outside Tokyo, Japan. This variant was detected in the U.S. at the end of January 2021 and has been [found in 31 states and territories](#) in the U.S. At this point, there is still much to learn about the transmission characteristics and potential severity of the P.1 variant. Although this strain can reduce the effectiveness of some vaccines, vaccines still provide strong protection against severe illness and death.

“We continue to encourage people to take the appropriate precautions. This includes wearing a mask that fits snugly around the nose and face and has multiple layers of fabric or layering thinner masks with an additional cloth face mask to improve the fit,” Dr. Lee Norman, KDHE Secretary, said. “Kansans should also follow isolation and quarantine recommendations, practice physical distancing, good hygiene, staying home if ill and getting the vaccine if you are able to.”

Two other variants of concern have been identified in Kansas, including the UK variant, B.1.1.7, and the South African variant, B.1.351. Variant information in Kansas can be found on the [COVID-19 dashboard](#) under the “Variants” tab.

“In addition to following these healthy behaviors, this finding also shows the importance of getting tested for COVID-19,” Adrienne Byrne, Sedgwick County Health Director, adds.

Testing is available and free for all Kansans. To find a location near you, visit:
www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/280/COVID-19-Testing.