RUPRI Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis
Rural Data Update

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County-Level 14-Day COVID-19 Case Trajectories

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Background

This document updates maps and tables for the Rural Data Brief "County-Level 14-Day COVID-19 Case Trajectories" (https://ruprihealth.org/publications/policybriefs/2020/County COVID Trajectories.pdf). This data brief looks at the new case counts in every US county between December 19, 2022 and January 1, 2023 to quantitatively evaluate 14-day trends in metropolitan, nonmetropolitan, and noncore counties. Previous versions of this document can be found at: https://ruprihealth.org/publications/policybriefs/2020/COVID_Projects.html

Data on confirmed COVID-19 cases were obtained from the Johns Hopkins University COVID-19 Data Repository[1]. The number of cases in each county was aggregated for each week in the two-week period, and the totals for each week were compared. To minimize the impact of counties with very minor real variation in weekly counts, those with a change in case count of two or fewer (either increase or decrease) were coded as "Same number, both weeks." Counties that saw more than a 25 percent increase or decrease in number of cases between the weeks were labelled "notable" (including counties that went from 3 or more to none [notable decrease] and counties that went from none to 3 or more [notable increase]). Counties in the 50 states and the District of Columbia were classified as metropolitan, nonmetropolitan, or noncore based on Urban Influence Codes[2].

Table 1. 14-day trends[a] in newly confirmed COVID-19 cases, by county geography: 12/19/2022 – 1/1/2023[d]

	Metropolitan (n = 1,166)		Nonmetropolitan (n = 641)		Noncore (n = 1,335)	
No cases reported	104	(8.9%)	55	(8.6%)	130	(9.7%)
Decreasing, notable[b]	448	(38.4%)	243	(37.9%)	468	(35.1%)
Decreasing, not notable	269	(23.1%)	97	(15.1%)	70	(5.2%)
Same number, both weeks[c]	77	(6.6%)	89	(13.9%)	385	(28.8%)
Increasing, not notable	126	(10.8%)	48	(7.5%)	36	(2.7%)
Increasing, notable	142	(12.2%)	109	(17.0%)	246	(18.4%)

[a]Comparison of number of new cases in first week of 14-day period with new cases in second week.
[b]"Notable" trends indicate weekly changes in new cases exceeding (either increasing or decreasing) 25 percent.
[c]Includes counties with an absolute change in count of two or fewer.
[d] Case reporting has become less reliable as surveillance has gotten less comprehensive and states have reduced the frequency of their reports. Counts are therefore under reported.

RHRC Rural Health Research & Policy Centers
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www.ruralhealthresearch.org

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Table 2. 14-day trends[a] in newly confirmed COVID-19 cases, in counties with any cases, by county geography: 12/19/2022 – 1/1/2023[d]

	Metropolitan (n=1,062 of 1,166)		Nonmetropolitan (n=586 of 641)		Noncore (n=1,2405of 1,335)	
Any decrease	717	(67.5%)	340	(58.0%)	538	(44.6%)
Notable decrease[b]	448	(42.2%)	243	(41.5%)	468	(38.8%)
Same number, both weeks[c]	77	(7.3%)	89	(15.2%)	385	(32.0%)
Any increase	268	(25.2%)	157	(26.8%)	282	(23.4%)
Notable increase[b]	142	(13.4%)	109	(18.6%)	246	(20.4%)
Increase of 100% or more	29	(2.7%)	27	(4.6%)	126	(10.5%)

[a]Comparison of number of new cases in first week of 14-day period with new cases in second week.
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[c]Includes counties with an absolute change in count of two or fewer.
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Figure 1.

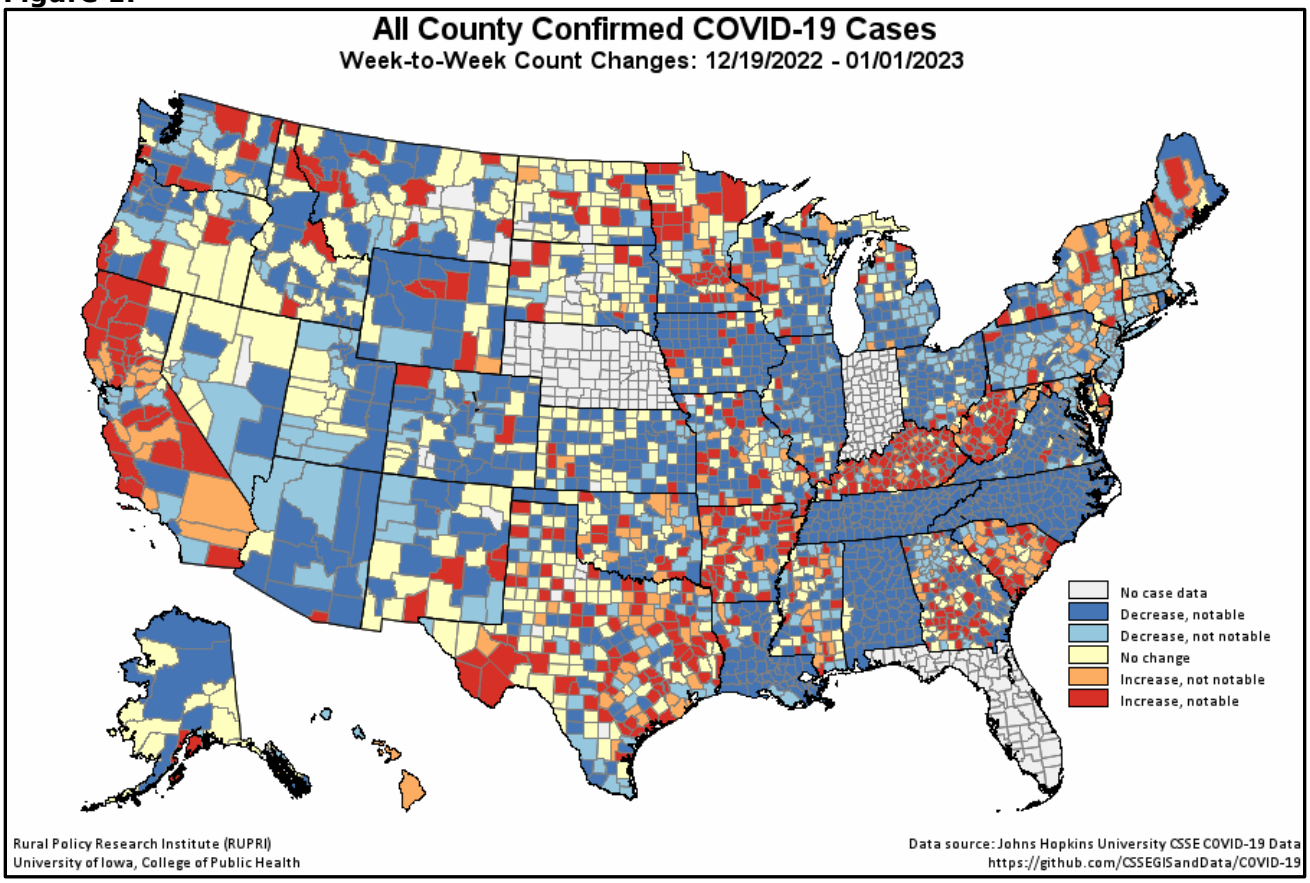


Figure 2.

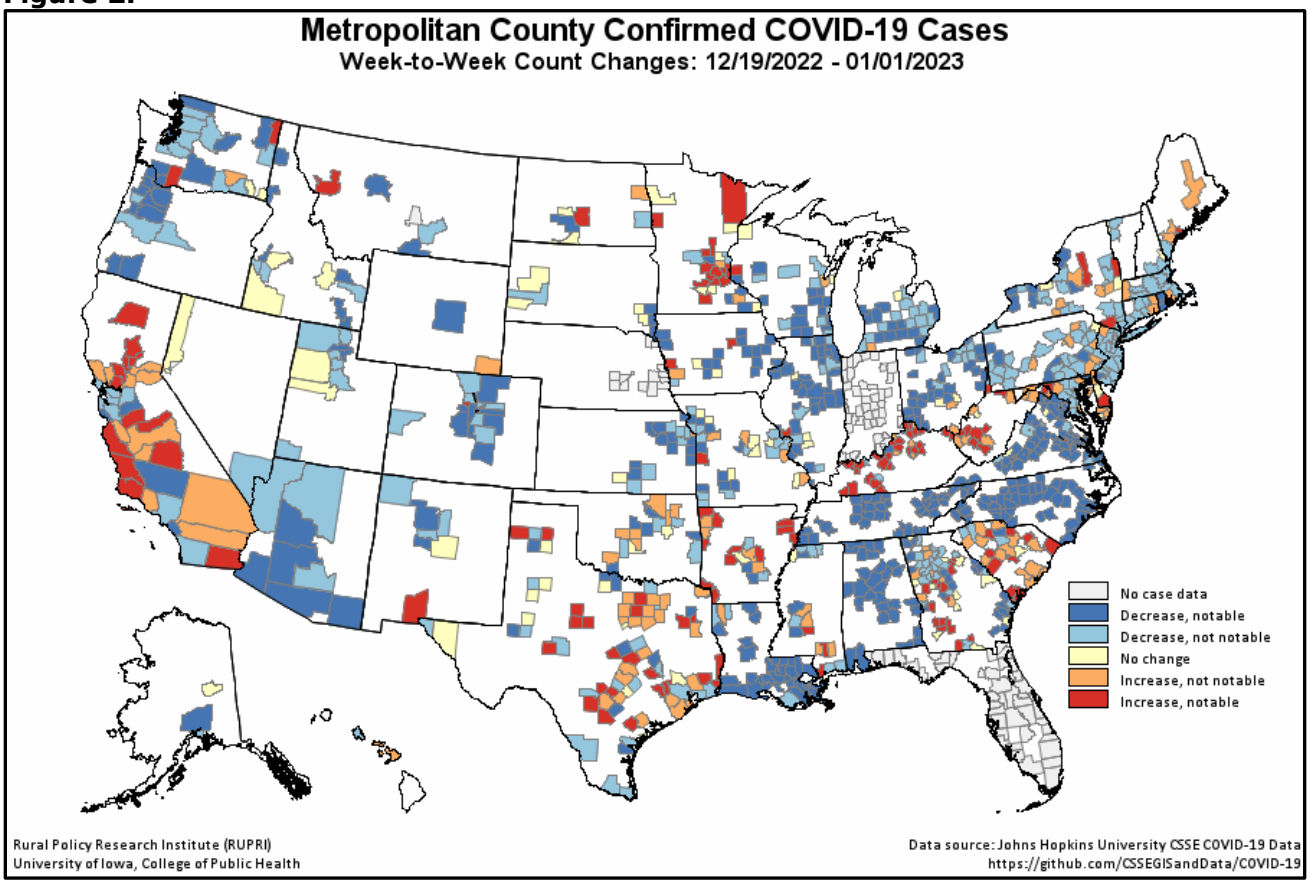


Figure 3.

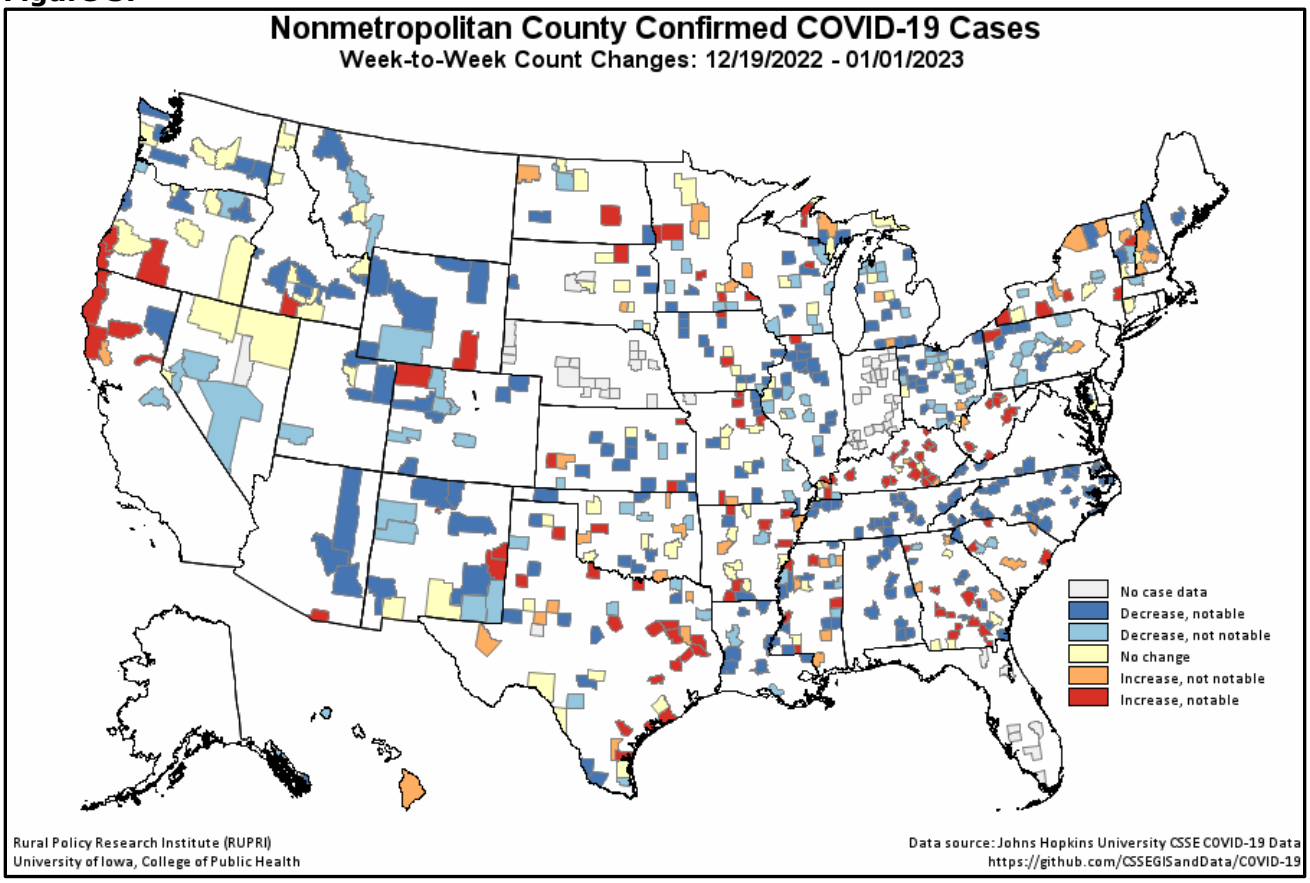
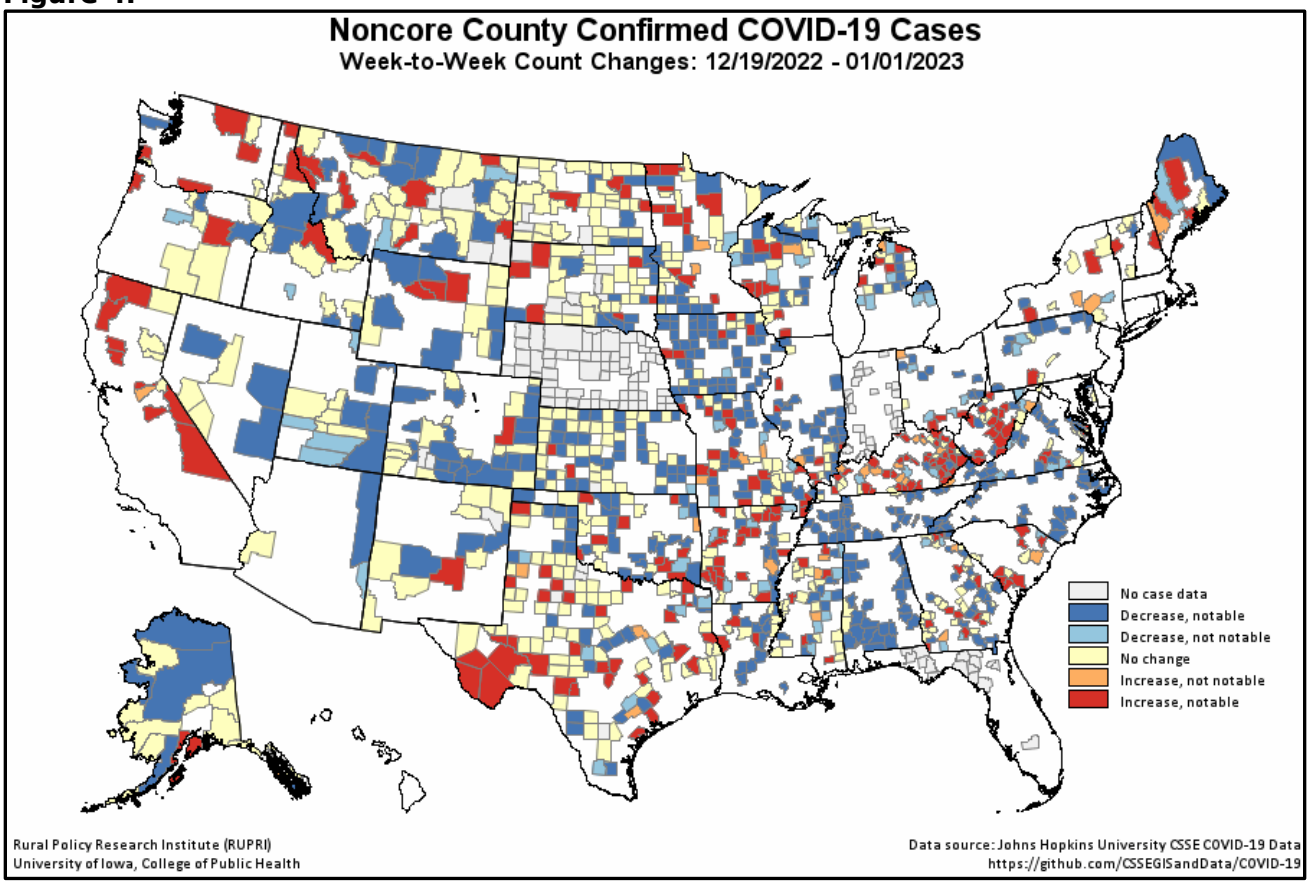


Figure 4.



[1] COVID-19 case and death data for this ongoing report were previously obtained from USAFacts.org. Reports after 8/15/2020 use data from the COVID-19 Data Repository by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University. While both sources employ similar approaches and resources to produce their data, the Johns Hopkins data is released in a more timely fashion making it more suitable for use in these reports.

Additional changes were made to the report starting 4/26/2021 to better account for the Utah practice of providing aggregated incidence and mortality data for less populous counties.

[2] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (2019). "Urban Influence Codes." Retrieved May 20, 2020 from https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/urban-influence-codes/.