

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 September 26, 2021, and October 9, 2021, 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 Repository¹. 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 Codes².

Table 1. 14-day trends^a in newly confirmed COVID-19 cases, by county geography: 9/26/2021 – 10/9/2021

	Metropolitan (n = 1,166)	Nonmetropolitan (n = 641)	Noncore (n = 1,335)
No cases reported	2 (0.2%)	2 (0.3%)	9 (0.7%)
Decreasing, notable ^b	312 (26.8%)	201 (31.4%)	449 (33.6%)
Decreasing, not notable	466 (40.0%)	194 (30.3%)	248 (18.6%)
Same number, both weeks ^c	66 (5.7%)	53 (8.3%)	242 (18.1%)
Increasing, not notable	220 (18.9%)	113 (17.6%)	124 (9.3%)
Increasing, notable	100 (8.6%)	78 (12.2%)	263 (19.7%)

^aComparison 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.

^cIncludes counties with an absolute change in count of two or fewer.



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Table 2. 14-day trends^a in newly confirmed COVID-19 cases, in counties with any cases, by county geography: 9/26/2021 – 10/9/2021

	Metropolitan (n = 1,164 of 1,166)	Nonmetropolitan (n = 639 of 641)	Noncore (n = 1,326 of 1,335)
Any decrease	778 (66.8%)	395 (61.8%)	697 (52.6%)
Notable decrease ^b	312 (26.8%)	201 (31.5%)	449 (33.9%)
Same number, both weeks ^c	66 (5.7%)	53 (8.3%)	242 (18.3%)
Any increase	320 (27.5%)	191 (29.9%)	387 (29.2%)
Notable increase ^b	100 (8.6%)	78 (12.2%)	263 (19.8%)
Increase of 100% or more	15 (1.3%)	11 (1.7%)	83 (6.3%)

^aComparison 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.

^cIncludes counties with an absolute change in count of two or fewer.

Figure 1.

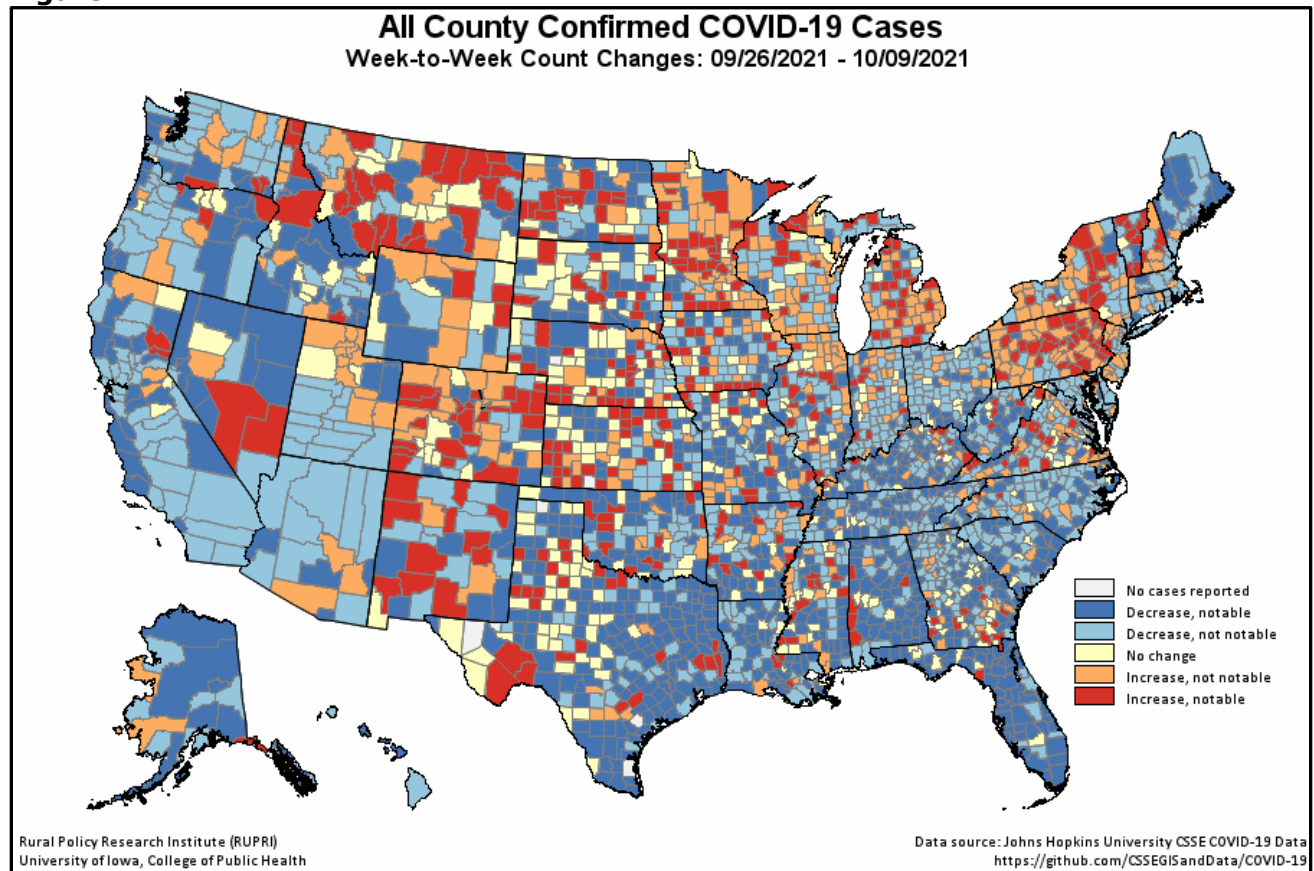


Figure 2.

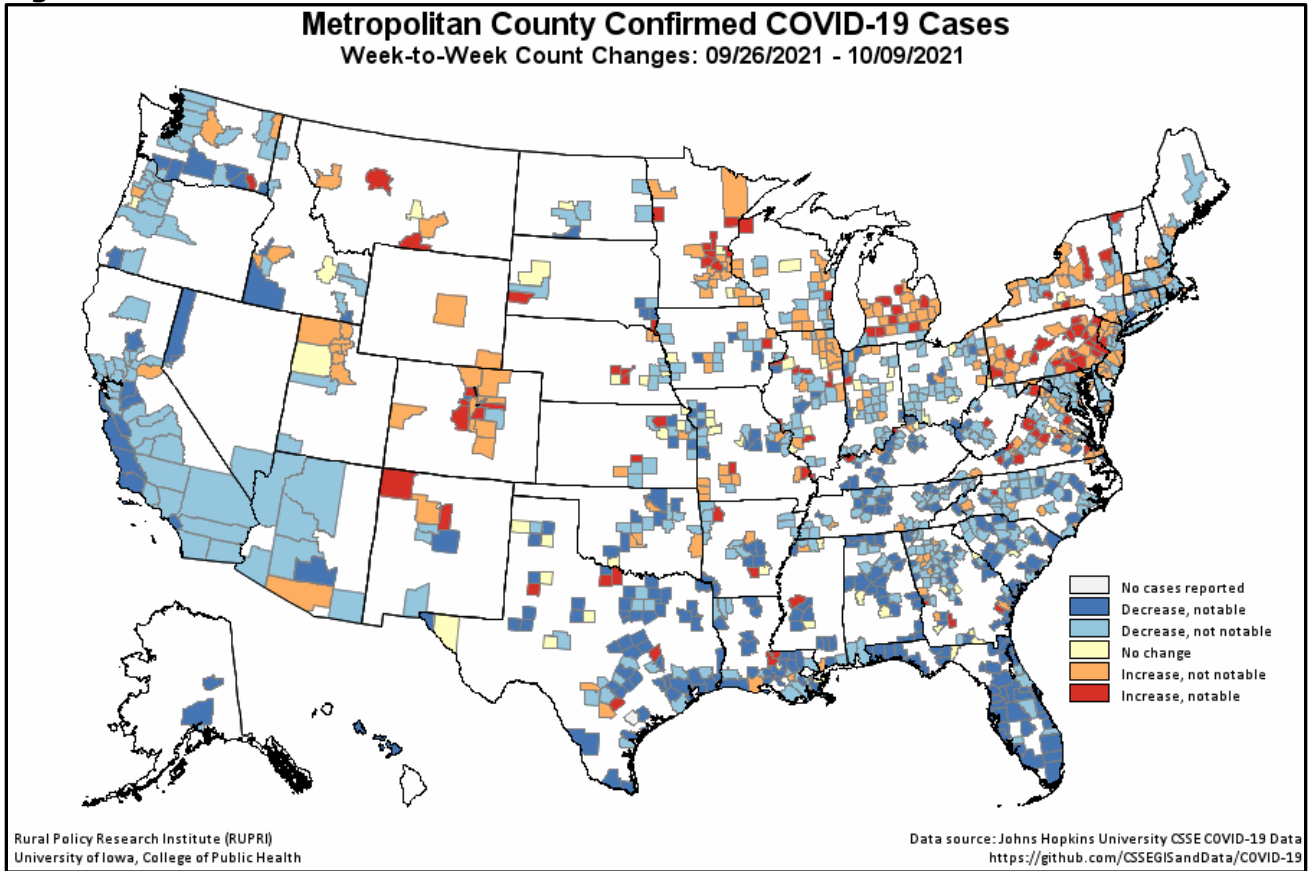


Figure 3.

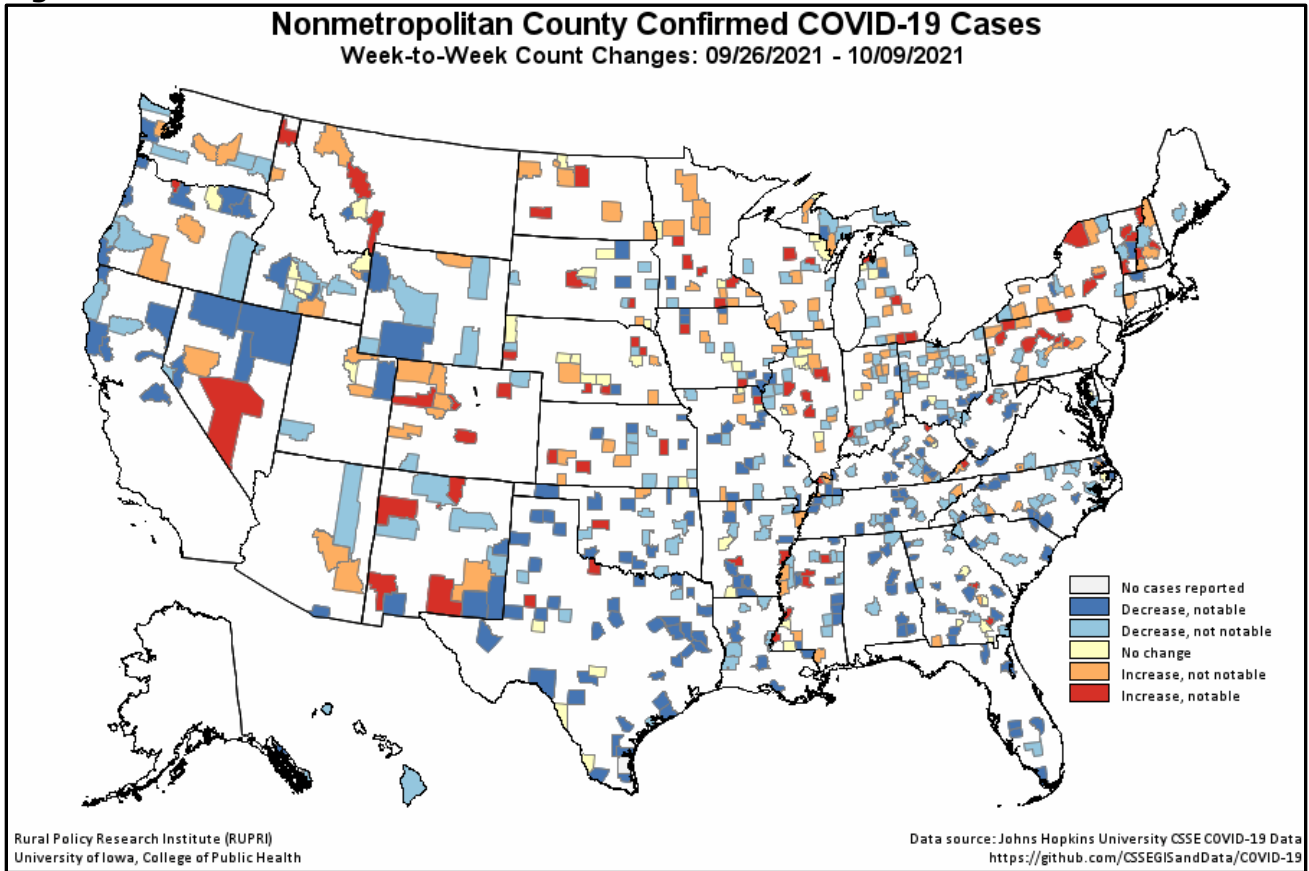
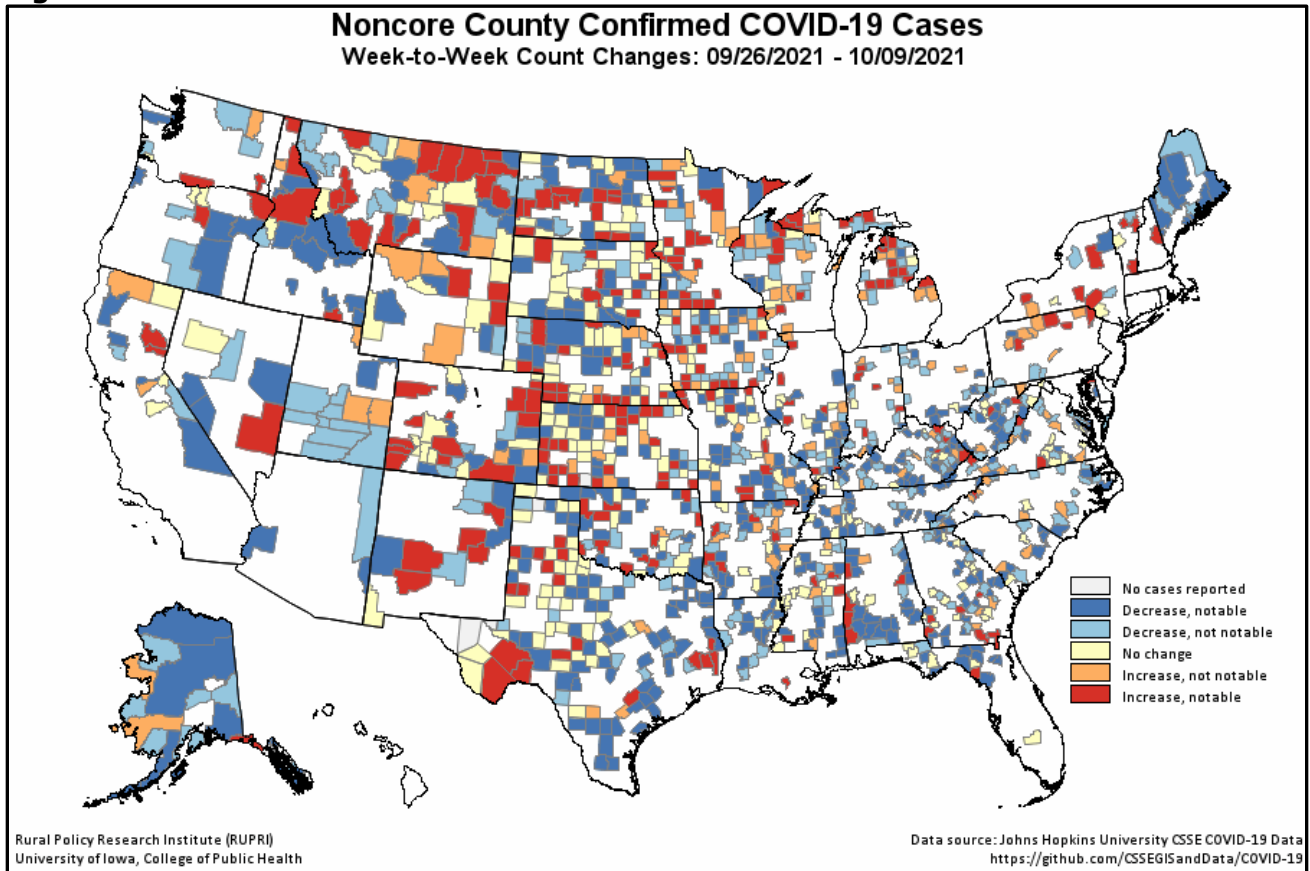


Figure 4.



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](https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19). 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/>.