

# 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](https://ruprihealth.org/publications/policybriefs/2020/County_COVID_Trajectories.pdf)). This data brief looks at the new case counts in every US county between July 18, 2021, and July 31, 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](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<sup>1</sup>. 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<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 1. 14-day trends<sup>a</sup> in newly confirmed COVID-19 cases, by county geography: 7/18/2021 – 7/31/2021**

	<b>Metropolitan (n = 1,166)</b>	<b>Nonmetropolitan (n = 641)</b>	<b>Noncore (n = 1,335)</b>
No cases reported	14 (1.2%)	23 (3.6%)	130 (9.7%)
Decreasing, notable <sup>b</sup>	34 (2.9%)	33 (5.1%)	110 (8.2%)
Decreasing, not notable	39 (3.3%)	33 (5.1%)	37 (2.8%)
Same number, both weeks <sup>c</sup>	62 (5.3%)	61 (9.5%)	372 (27.9%)
Increasing, not notable	99 (8.5%)	52 (8.1%)	46 (3.4%)
Increasing, notable	918 (78.7%)	439 (68.5%)	640 (47.9%)

<sup>a</sup>Comparison of number of new cases in first week of 14-day period with new cases in second week.

<sup>b</sup>“Notable” trends indicate weekly changes in new cases exceeding (either increasing or decreasing) 25 percent.

<sup>c</sup>Includes counties with an absolute change in count of two or fewer.



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**Table 2. 14-day trends<sup>a</sup> in newly confirmed COVID-19 cases, in counties with any cases, by county geography: 7/18/2021 – 7/31/2021**

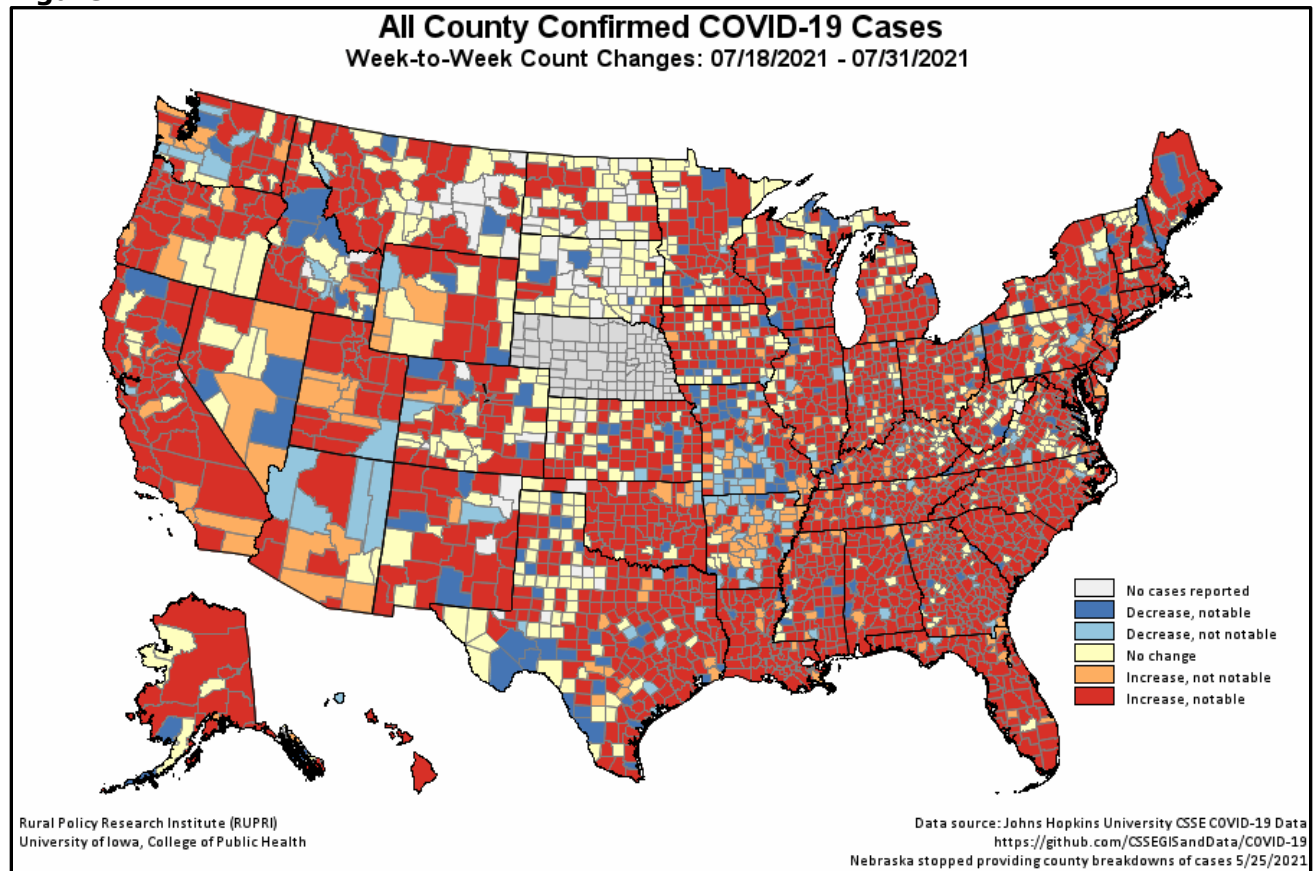
	<b>Metropolitan (n = 1,152 of 1,166)</b>		<b>Nonmetropolitan (n = 618 of 641)</b>		<b>Noncore (n = 1,205 of 1,335)</b>	
Any decrease	73	(6.3%)	66	(10.7%)	147	(12.2%)
Notable decrease <sup>b</sup>	34	(3.0%)	33	(5.3%)	110	(9.1%)
Same number, both weeks <sup>c</sup>	62	(5.4%)	61	(9.9%)	372	(30.9%)
Any increase	1017	(88.3%)	491	(79.4%)	686	(56.9%)
Notable increase <sup>b</sup>	918	(79.7%)	439	(71.0%)	640	(53.1%)
Increase of 100% or more	323	(28.0%)	220	(35.6%)	381	(31.6%)

<sup>a</sup>Comparison of number of new cases in first week of 14-day period with new cases in second week.

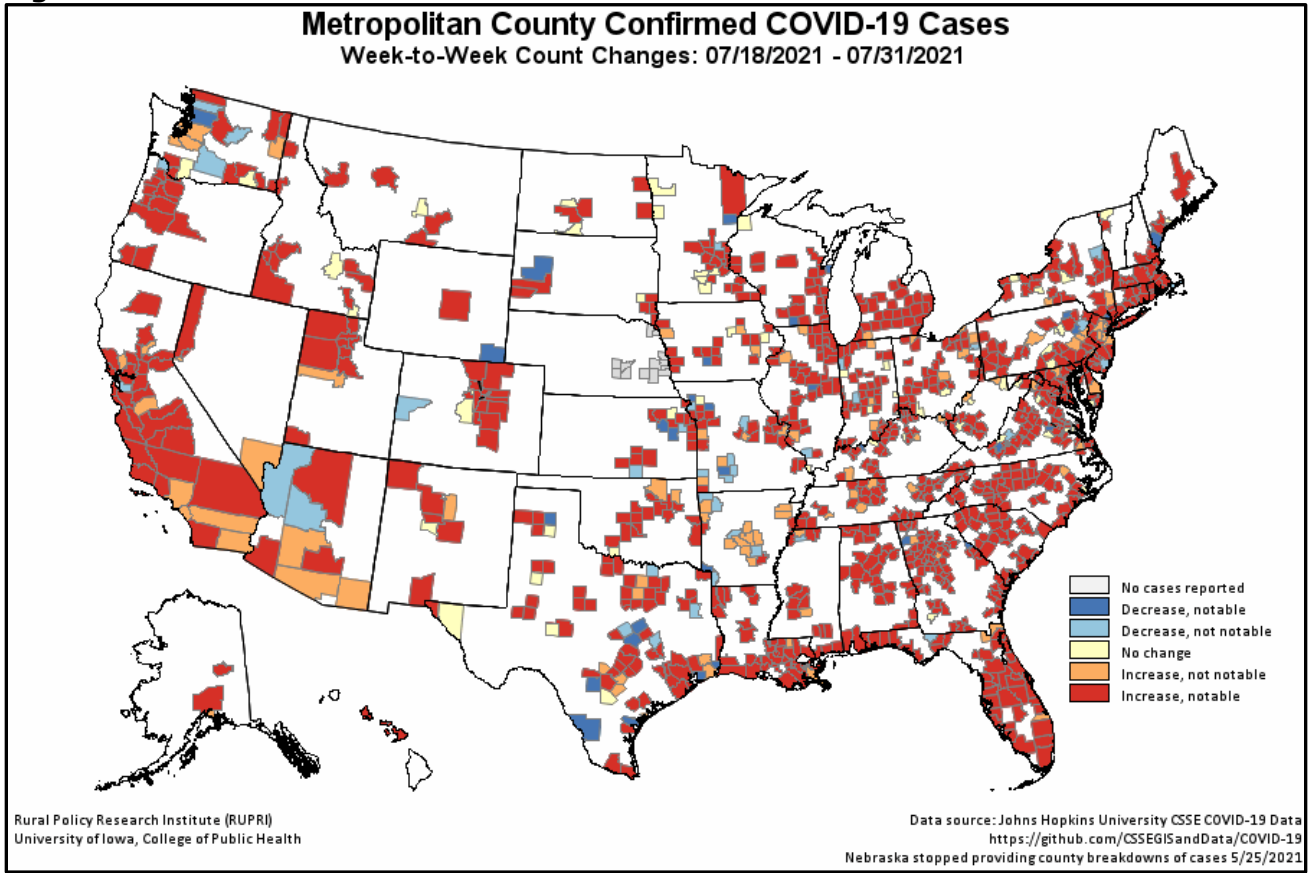
<sup>b</sup>"Notable" trends indicate weekly changes in new cases exceeding (either increasing or decreasing) 25 percent.

<sup>c</sup>Includes counties with an absolute change in count of two or fewer.

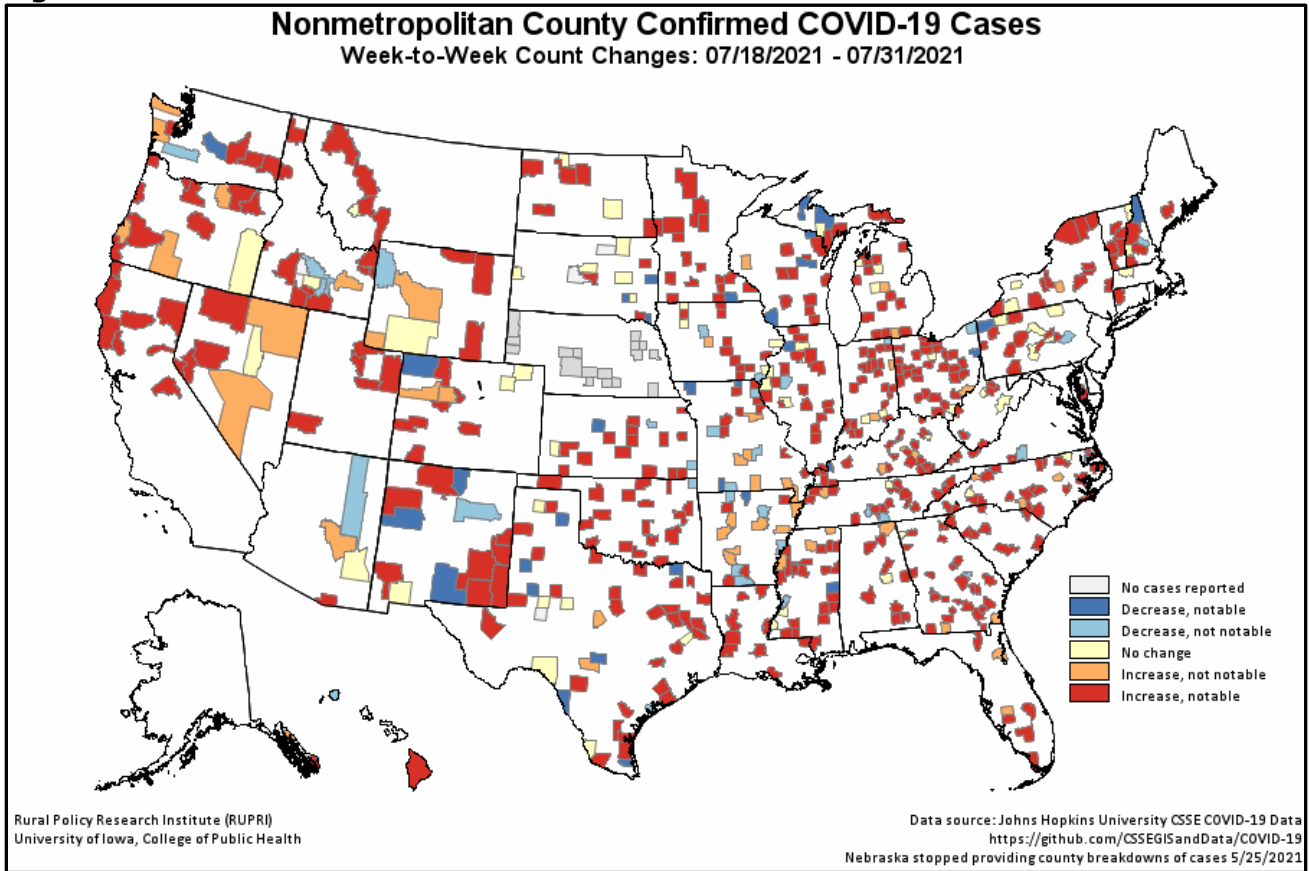
**Figure 1.**



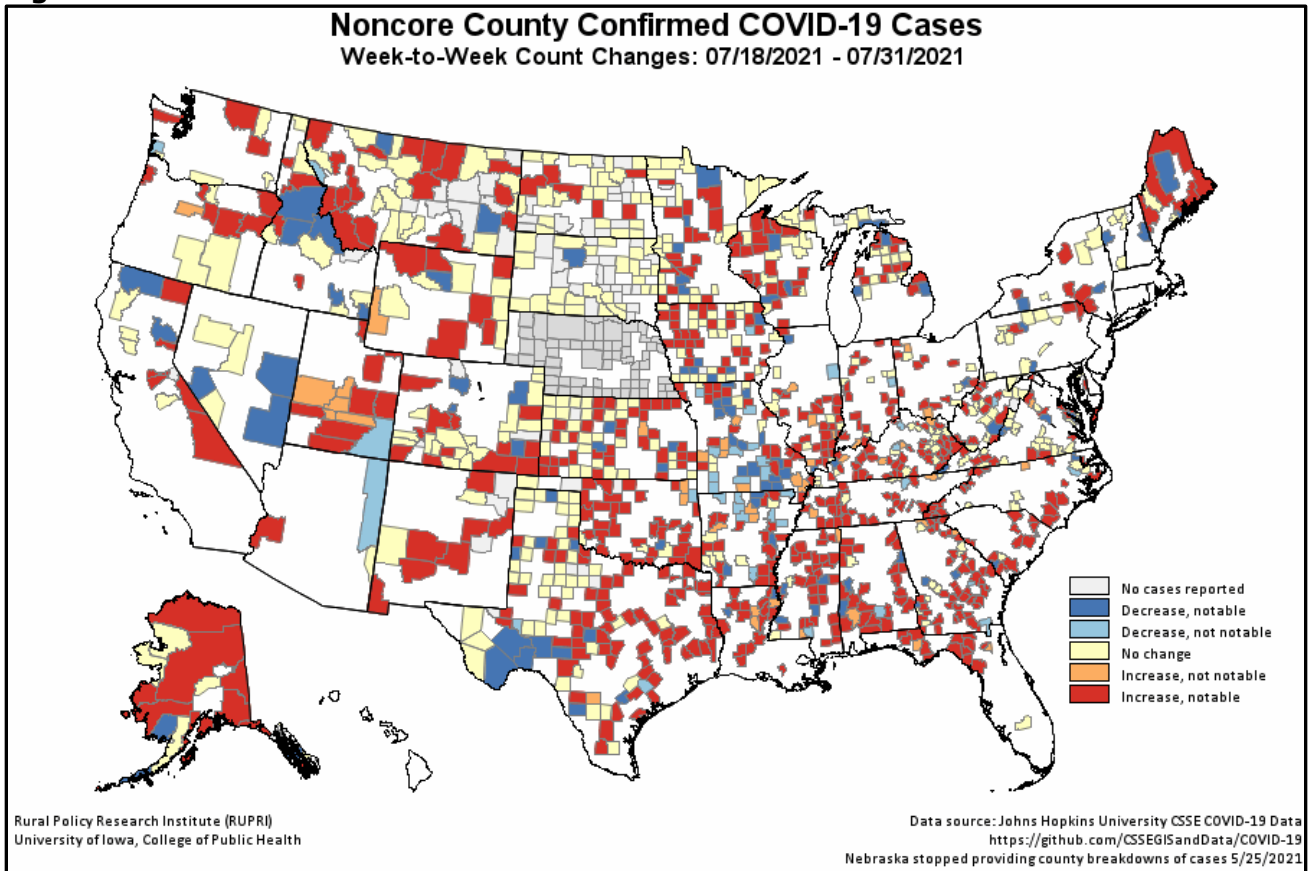
**Figure 2.**



**Figure 3.**



**Figure 4.**



<sup>1</sup> COVID-19 case and death data for this ongoing report were previously obtained from [USAFacts.org](https://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.

Nebraska stopped reporting county-level case and mortality data on 5/25/2021. Therefore, total cases/deaths for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counts are undercounts.

<sup>2</sup> 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/>.