

## Lake County Updates

- As of yesterday afternoon, **Lake County has had 19,758 COVID-19 cases and 505 deaths**. Over **300,000** tests have been administered. **Lake County's recovery rate is 96.7 percent**, slightly higher than the state's average. Visit our data hub for details: <https://covid19response-lakecountyil.hub.arcgis.com/>
- The Health Department continues to work closely with long-term care facilities to prevent the spread of disease among this vulnerable population. In total, 90 long-term care facilities in Lake County have had at least 2 cases throughout the course of the pandemic, totaling 2,371 cases and 325 deaths.
- The Health Department is reporting **substantial community transmission** of COVID-19 and **recommending that public and private K-12 schools transition to virtual learning**. Our 7 day rolling average daily incidence rate surpassed the 'substantial' threshold of over 14 cases per 100,000 residents on October 11 and continues to rise. It is now up to school district to make decisions on their path forward. Read the press release for more information. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILLAKE/bulletins/2a6e0bd> and view the school decision dashboard on our data hub. <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/c19schools>.
- **Lake and McHenry counties make up Region 9** in the State's Restore Illinois Mitigation Plan. As of October 21, the Region 9 testing positivity rate is 7.7%, the highest rate we have seen since entering Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois plan. Hospital admissions have increased since early October, and hospital bed availability has decreased slightly.
  - Region 9 is very close to the state thresholds triggering mitigation. If our region has a testing positivity rate of 8% or above for three days, or we see 7 out of 10 days of increases in testing positivity and hospitalizations or simultaneous decreases in hospital bed availability, we will need to implement additional mitigation measures across our region.
  - Mitigation measures in the region would include restrictions on bars and restaurants and limiting gathering sizes to 25 people.
  - Four regions in Illinois are currently in mitigation or entering mitigation this week. Metrics are updated daily. <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=9>
- **The Illinois Department of Public Health tracks county-level metrics weekly** and has a map indicating if a county is at an orange warning level, indicating increased COVID-19 risk, or blue – stable. <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics?county=Lake>
  - Lake County reached warning level for the second time on Friday, October 9, due to increases in case prevalence and adult emergency department visits for COVID-19-like illness. We returned to blue the following week.
  - As of last week, our rate of new cases is 104 cases per 100,000 residents. At 100 per 100,000, we are seeing substantial community spread of COVID-19. This is the only

metric currently not meeting state targets. If another metric moves in the wrong direction, we will return to orange warning status.

- **Herd immunity** is a term commonly used for vaccination – how much of a population needs to be vaccinated in order for protection of the entire population to be achieved. According to the World Health Organization, striving for so-called herd immunity by letting a virus spread is not an ethical or scientifically sound strategy for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and is dangerous as we are still learning about the long-term health impacts of this virus.  
<https://twitter.com/DrTedros/status/1316349324578746375?s=09>
- **The pandemic is far from over, but we know what to do to keep ourselves and our communities safe – follow the 3 Ws consistently:**
  - **Wear** a mask
  - **Wash** your hands
  - **Watch** your distance
- **As we enter the fall, it is very important to get your annual flu vaccination.** COVID-19 and influenza are caused by different viruses, and it is possible to get both, even at the same time.
  - The CDC recommends **every person over the age of 6 months** get their flu vaccine every year by the end of October.
  - The flu vaccine is available now at many doctor’s offices and retail locations, as well as at the Health Department’s Community Health Centers. Visit the Vaccine Finder website (<https://www.vaccinefinder.org>) to find a location near you.
- **Contact tracing is a critical tool for slowing the spread of COVID-19.** As part of our case investigations, public health staff work to contact everyone who has COVID-19, along with their close contacts. Through these calls, they ensure that people have information and the necessary support to isolate or quarantine safely. **Please do your part; answer the call and provide our staff with all the information needed.**
- **The Health Department has hired 122 Case Investigators and Contact tracers** over the past several months and as new hires are onboarded, we will be fully staffed to carry out contact tracing efforts in the county.
- **LCHD continues its work with two community partnership groups**—Asociacion Comunitaria Latina (ACL) and the African American Community Partnership Group (AACPG) to address COVID-19 disparities along racial and ethnic lines.
  - These groups represent over 50 local organizations and places of worship collaborating on educational awareness campaigns, distributing 83,000 PPE kits this fall, a worker outreach initiative, and efforts to address the digital divide.
  - Both groups are currently working on initiatives to increase awareness of and accessibility to flu shots, especially among individuals without insurance.
  - You can learn more about these groups on their Facebook pages:

- <https://www.facebook.com/AACPGLakeCounty>
- <https://www.facebook.com/asociacioncomunitarialatinalc>
- If you're interested in getting connected to these groups, please contact Jon Ashworth ([JAshworth@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:JAshworth@lakecountyil.gov)).
- **Going forward, these conference calls will be held the third Wednesday of every month. Our next conference call is scheduled for November 18, 2020.**
  - The key points, chat files, and audio recordings are posted to the Health Department's website. <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4428/Conference-Calls>
- **The Health Department continues to issue weekly email newsletters.** Please make sure you are signed up (English: <http://bit.ly/lccovid-19> or Spanish: <https://bit.ly/lccovid-19-es>)

## Policy

- The Affordable Care Act (ACA) **open enrollment begins November 1** and ends December 15. This is the time when you can sign up for health insurance at [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov). People who are low-income and eligible for Medicaid can sign up at any time at <https://enrollhfs.illinois.gov/choose/compare-plans>. People who have lost their job-based health insurance are eligible for a special enrollment period.
- Illinois has extended the **moratorium on evictions** through November 14.
- **Requested Vote by Mail ballots have been sent to Lake County voters.** To request a ballot, or track the status of your ballot, log on to [LakeVoterPower.info](http://LakeVoterPower.info). Ballots include information on how to return it, including a list of 21 new postage-free drop boxes around Lake County.
- **In-person early voting** is now available at locations across the County through November 2. You can log in to [LakeVoterPower.info](http://LakeVoterPower.info) to find voting locations closest to you. You can check wait times for polling locations online at: <http://maps.lakecountyil.gov/EarlyVotingSites>
- The **Lake County Board is currently in budget hearings** for the Fiscal Year 21 budget. Watch at [www.lakecounty.tv](http://www.lakecounty.tv) or visit [www.lakecountyil.gov](http://www.lakecountyil.gov) for meetings and agendas.
- Visit [www.lakecountyil.gov/forward](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/forward) to view how **\$121 million in CARES Act funding** is being distributed throughout the County.

## Businesses

- **Thank you, businesses, for all you are doing to keep your staff and customers safe during the pandemic.** This is no easy task, and we are grateful for your efforts and for following public health guidance. **If you have questions about how to operate safely, or to report a business-related concern, please call the Health Department’s Environmental Health division at (847) 377-8020.**
- More than 1000 local businesses applied for the **Lake County Government Small Business Assistance Grant Program**. The final group of applications are being reviewed and more than \$6 million dollars has been distributed. For a list of what businesses have received grants, visit [www.lakecountyil.gov/forward](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/forward).
- The Health Department has a new **Lake County Businesses email subscription list** for sending updates about upcoming conference calls and other important news. You can also provide your phone number to receive text notifications. Invite your colleagues or anyone else who may be interested to sign up as well. <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILLAKE/signup/18495>
- If a person with COVID-19 spent time at their workplace, school, or other facility, swift action may be needed to keep others safe. **The Health Department has a form for workplaces and facilities to use to report cases of COVID-19 and close contacts.**  
<https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=NHECLHEHFP>
  - Information submitted is confidential and stored in a secure system. A member of our Communicable Disease team will follow up to provide guidance and perform contact tracing, as necessary.
- **The “Get Hired Illinois” online portal** connects job seekers and employers and currently has over 75,000 positions listed. <https://www2.illinois.gov/gethired/pages/default.aspx>. Also see the **Job Center of Lake County** website for opportunities - <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/167/Job-Center-of-Lake-County>.
- The **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity** has resources for businesses available in several languages. <https://dceocovid19resources.com/for-businesses/>
- **The Health Department continues to update its guidance** for businesses in both English and Spanish. <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4412/Community-Guidance-and-Resources>
- **Lake County Partners continues to add to its COVID-19 Resources** for businesses on its website, <https://www.lakecountypartners.com/>.
- The **Small Business Administration** website has information on business relief options: <https://www.sba.gov/>
- **If you have concerns that your employer is not allowing for safe social distancing or that it is not maintaining a safe and sanitary work environment** to minimize the risk of spread of COVID-19, please contact the Workplace Rights Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General’s Office at 844-740-5076 or [workplacerights@atg.state.il.us](mailto:workplacerights@atg.state.il.us).

## Municipalities

- The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) published **Holiday Season Guidance**, including travel considerations, overnight guests, holiday shopping, meals, and more.  
[http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/COVID-19\\_Guidance%20Holidays.pdf](http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/COVID-19_Guidance%20Holidays.pdf)
  - There is also an infographic, please share this information with your communities.  
[http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19/COVID-19\\_HolidaySeasonSafetyTips\\_GraphicVersion.pdf](http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19/COVID-19_HolidaySeasonSafetyTips_GraphicVersion.pdf)
- IDPH also has a framework for **safe operations of election polling locations** during the COVID-19 pandemic on its website. <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/2020election>.
  - Social distancing and face masks are recommended, but it is important to remember that election authorities are prohibited from preventing a noncompliant voter from casting a ballot for refusal to wear a face covering outside or inside a polling place.
- If a person with COVID-19 spent time at their workplace, school, or other facility, swift action may be needed to keep others safe. **The Health Department has a form for schools, workplaces, and facilities to use to report cases of COVID-19 and close contacts.**  
<https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=NHECLHEHFP>
  - Information submitted is confidential and stored in a secure system. A member of our Communicable Disease team will follow up to provide guidance and perform contact tracing, as necessary.
- Last month, Lake County Government hosted a **training webinar for local municipalities and local government on how to submit for reimbursement to Lake County**, ensuring compliance with the new guidance from the U.S. Treasury on eligible uses of the Coronavirus Relief Funds provided through the CARES Act. The presentation and the video of the training is available on [www.lakecountyil.gov/forward](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/forward).
- The CDC has **guidelines for fall and winter holiday celebrations**. There are many factors to consider when planning events or gatherings, including the level of community spread, the behavior of people attending, and the size, location, and duration of gatherings. Find holiday-specific guidelines on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>
- The Office of the Attorney General Workplace Rights Bureau is using its hotline 844-740-5076 and email [workplacerrights@atg.state.il.us](mailto:workplacerrights@atg.state.il.us) to receive **complaints of employers failing to abide by the social distancing or sanitation guidelines**.

## Faith-Based Organizations

- **Over the past several weeks, we have seen cases of COVID-19 connected to weddings, funerals, social and sporting events, and youth activities.** Please encourage others to follow the 3Ws at any event or service that you host. Keeping a list of attendees and phone numbers can be helpful if attendees are exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- **Emily Gelber-Maturo is the Health Department's dedicated liaison for faith communities during COVID-19.** You can reach her by emailing [egelber@lakecountyl.gov](mailto:egelber@lakecountyl.gov).
- The Health Department has a new **Lake County Faith Leaders email subscription list** for sending updates about upcoming conference calls and other important news. You can also provide your phone number to receive text notifications. Invite your colleagues or anyone else who may be interested to sign up as well. <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILLAKE/signup/18498>
- As faith communities prepare for the fall and winter, the Health Department has a **Worshipping Together Safely guide** on its website: <https://www.lakecountyl.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36546/Worshipping-Together-Safely---English>
- If a person with COVID-19 spent time at their workplace, place of worship, or other facility, swift action may be needed to keep others safe. **The Health Department has a form for schools, workplaces, and facilities to use to report cases of COVID-19 and close contacts.** <https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=NHECLHEHFP>
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- **Guidelines for Places of Worship are available on the IDPH website –** <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/places-worship-guidance>
- **The CDC has a webpage dedicated to communities of faith –** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

## Community Resources

- Anyone needing assistance finding food, shelter, rent or utility assistance, or other essential services can CALL 211 or TEXT your zip code to 898211 to speak with someone who can help. **211 is available 24/7.** <https://211lakecounty.org/>. This includes connections to two new programs:
  - **Lake County CATCH:** 2 weeks worth of free meals delivered to families who have to stay home due to quarantine or isolation
  - **Lake County CHRP** (Coronavirus Housing Relief Program): rental assistance for families experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19  
<https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4476/Lake-County-COVID-Housing-Relief-Program>
- **The Community-Based Testing Site at 102 W. Water St., Waukegan is open to everyone with or without symptoms.** The site offers drive-thru and walk-up testing. Testing offered at the site is the molecular PCR test done with a nasal swab to determine if you have an active infection of COVID-19.
  - The site is open 7 days a week from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Tests are administered by testing site staff using a nasal swab, and results are provided by phone in 4-7 days. **Current turnaround time has been reported at approximately two to three days.**
  - Testing is free and available regardless of immigration status. A phone number and name are required in order to receive testing results.
  - For more details, visit our website: <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4435/COVID-19-Testing>
- **The Lake County Health Department's Crisis Care Program** has a free, confidential hotline staffed by professional counselors for those experiencing a mental health crisis or substance use issue. Services are available 24/7 to anyone. Call (847) 377-8088 or walk in to 3002 Grand Avenue, Waukegan. People can also get connected to this line by calling 211.
- Lake County's **map of active food pantries** can be found on the Coronavirus Data Hub: [www.lakecountyil.gov/COVID19data](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/COVID19data). <https://covid19response-lakecountyil.hub.arcgis.com/app/6990ca841cf74286ba7930e0fd9e4c6a>
- Employees can search for **childcare providers operating** by calling the Early Learning Helpline at (888) 228-1146 or by visiting this website: <https://emergencycare.inccrra.org/>
- **COVID-19 testing and treatment is available to all Illinois residents, including those without insurance.** Testing and treatment do not count towards Public Charge. Reach the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights by texting "HC4ALL" to 52886.
- People can apply for **public benefit programs** including healthcare (Medicaid), food (SNAP), and cash assistance at ABE, the state's Application for Benefits Eligibility. The state also launched the IDHS *Help is Here* toll-free line at 1-833-2-FIND-HELP to assist with public benefit applications. <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/>



- **A Safe Place** is a local domestic violence resource for those in need: A Safe Place: 24-Hour Help Line (847) 249-4450 / Toll-Free Help Line 1-800-600-SAFE / TTY (847) 249-6557  
<https://asafeplaceforhelp.org/>
- Illinois **Call4Calm** is a free **emotional support text line** for Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19. To speak with a local mental health professional, text “TALK” or “HABLAR” (for Spanish) to 552020.
- Individuals co-quarantined or isolated with an abuser can contact the **National Domestic Violence Hotline** 1-800-799-7233, or the **Illinois Domestic Violence Help Line** at: 1-877-TO END DV or 877-863-6338 (Voice), 1-877-863-6339 (TTY), Chat at [thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org).
- Mano a Mano has a **COVID-19 Tanda Emergency Fund** to help immigrant families directly, who are often excluded from government benefits. Learn more or donate on their website:  
<https://mamfrc.org/page-18194>
- United Way of Lake County, Lake County Government, Lake County Community Foundation, and the Lake County Municipal League **Lake County COVID-19 Community Response Fund** has disbursed many grants to community organizations providing relief to residents. For more information or to give, visit [LIVEUNITEDlakecounty.org/covid19](http://LIVEUNITEDlakecounty.org/covid19).
- **If someone loses their insurance** because they lost their job, they are eligible for a special enrollment period for health insurance. They can explore their options at [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) or [GetCoveredIllinois.Gov](http://GetCoveredIllinois.Gov). Additionally, people with low income may be eligible for **Medicaid**. People who are eligible can enroll in Medicaid at any time.
- The Illinois Commerce Commission **suspended disconnections for all electric, natural gas, water and wastewater services**. Late fees are waived. <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/home/covid-19>.
- **The Illinois Commerce Commission has extended the moratorium on utility disconnections through winter 2021** for eligible low-income residential customers and those who are experiencing financial or COVID-19 hardship. [https://www2.illinois.gov/IISNews/22117-State Regulated Utility Moratorium Extended through Winter 2021 for Eligible Customers.pdf](https://www2.illinois.gov/IISNews/22117-State%20Regulated%20Utility%20Moratorium%20Extended%20through%20Winter%202021%20for%20Eligible%20Customers.pdf)
- Many providers and programs are offering **free or low cost internet**.  
<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/free-low-cost-internet-plans/>