

## Lake County Updates

- **Yesterday the United States reached over 400,000 deaths from COVID-19.** On Jan. 7, more than 4,000 deaths were reported in a single day for the first time in the U.S.  
<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/>
- **Lake County has had 49,938 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 3,697 probable cases, and 808 deaths.** Over 650,000 tests have been administered. **Lake County's recovery rate is 97.9 percent.**  
<https://covid19response-lakecountyiil.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. Currently we are assisting 69 facilities with 2 or more cases reported. Over the course of the pandemic, outbreaks in long-term care facilities have resulted in 3,963 cases and 475 deaths.
- **New variants of COVID-19 have been emerging internationally.** The first Illinois case of the U.K. B.1.1.7 variant was detected in Chicago on January 15. This variant spreads more easily and quickly than other variants. Currently, there is no evidence that it causes more severe illness or increased risk of death.
  - New COVID-19 Variants (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html>
- **On Friday, January 15, 2021, the State's Tier 3 Mitigation Freeze was released.** Region 9, which includes Lake and McHenry counties, has entered Tier 2 mitigation in the State's Restore Illinois Mitigation Plan.
  - Region 9 moved into Tier 2 mitigation after the medical/surgical bed limits metric was removed from the IDPH regional metrics.
  - This metric was removed as a result of a new hospital staffing program run by the state.
  - If a region again experiences a sustained resurgence of COVID-19 with Tier 2 mitigations in place, a return to stricter measures may be necessary.

### **Under Tier 2, restrictions have eased on the following industries:**

- Cultural institutions, Gaming and Casinos may open under Phase 4 guidelines.
- Household gatherings should be limited to 10 people.
- Indoor fitness classes are limited to 10 participants.
- Meetings, events and gatherings (excluding in-person school and sports) are limited to 10 people indoors and outdoors.
- Offices are open under Phase 4 guidance
- Organized group recreational activities are limited to the lesser of 25 people or 25% capacity indoors and outdoors, and sports must follow the All Sports guidelines.
- **There are NO changes in restaurants/indoor dining or hotels.**
- **Mitigation plan:** <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/restore-illinois-mitigation-plan>.

- **DCEO guidelines for businesses:** <https://dceocovid19resources.com/restore-illinois/>
- In Region 9, our testing positivity rate is 8.4% as of January 16, close to where we were at Christmas. After the holidays, this rate peaked at 10.6% on January 6 and has declined since. Our ICU beds are holding steady at 25% availability.
  - <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=9>
  - In order to move to Tier 1 mitigations, a region must meet the following metrics:
    - A test positivity rate between 6.5 and 8% for three consecutive days, as measured by the 7-day rolling average; AND
    - ≥20% available staffed ICU hospital beds for three consecutive days, on a 7-day rolling average; AND
    - No sustained increase in the number of people in the hospital with COVID-19 for seven out of 10 days, on a 7-day average.
- **Lake County has moved once again into orange ‘warning’ level on the Illinois Department of Public Health county-level map**, indicating increased COVID-19 risk. Rates of new cases indicate that Lake County continues to have ‘substantial community transmission’ of COVID-19. Lake County’s testing positivity rate is also above 8%.  
<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics?county=Lake>
- **Continue to be vigilant to prevent the spread of COVID-19.** Wear a mask, wash your hands often, watch your distance – keeping at least 6 feet apart – and avoid crowds. The more steps you take, the more you are protected against COVID-19.
- **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.
  - We are working closely with our partners to develop culturally tailored outreach materials around the vaccine and will be hosting several events that address our communities’ unique concerns.
  - You can learn more about these groups on their Facebook pages:
    - <https://www.facebook.com/AACPGLakeCounty>
    - <https://www.facebook.com/asociacioncomunitarialatinalc>
- **The Health Department has opened a new mass vaccination clinic at the Lake County Fairgrounds.** Both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are being administered **by appointment** through the AllVax system. The new location allows for expanding our vaccination capacity while protecting workers during the coldest months of the year.
  - Press release: <https://lnks.gd/2/NzvRPw>
  - Please do not call the Lake County Fairgrounds to inquire about an appointment, and do not go to the fairgrounds unless you have a scheduled appointment. We are

not allowing walk-in appointments, and we do not have a waiting list. Appointments are ONLY available through AllVax.

- Pfizer-BioNTech FDA Fact Sheet: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144414/download>
- Moderna FDA Fact Sheet: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144638/download>
- **The Health Department is seeking volunteers to assist in mass vaccination efforts.** Both medical and non-medical positions are available. If you are interested, please email [HLHealthEM@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:HLHealthEM@lakecountyil.gov) or call (847) 377-8186.
- **Over 21,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Lake County.** Illinois vaccination data: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccinedata?county=Lake>
- **Lake County continues to vaccinate Phase 1a** (<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19/PHASE1aVaccineEligibility.pdf>), **which includes healthcare workers and long-term care facility residents and staff.** We expect to move to the next phase in the next week or two. There will be some overlap between groups.
  - Those in Phase 1b will include: (<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19/PHASE%201b%20VaccineDistribution.pdf>)
    - Seniors age 65 and older.
    - Frontline essential workers (first responders, teachers and support staff, public transit employees, grocery store staff, and daycare workers).
    - People working in food and agriculture, manufacturing, corrections, and the US Postal Service.
  - Phase 1c is not yet finalized in the Illinois vaccination plan. It may include:
    - Persons aged 16–64 with high-risk medical conditions.
    - Other essential workers.
  - Illinois vaccination FAQs: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccine-faq>
  - Lake County COVID-19 Vaccine web page: <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4521/COVID-19-Vaccine>
- **Over 250,000 people have registered on the Lake County AllVax Portal,** our online platform where you can register yourself and your household for COVID-19 vaccination. Registering is free, easy, and secure. <https://AllVax.lakecohealth.org>. Residents who need assistance registering can call (847) 377-8130 or email [AllVax@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:AllVax@lakecountyil.gov). Our call and email volume is extremely high, and our team is working diligently to return calls and emails.
  - As a reminder, COVID-19 vaccines are still extremely limited due to vaccine supply. In Lake County, only people in Phase 1a: healthcare workers and long-term care facility residents, are being offered appointments at this time. No appointments are available to schedule for people in other groups. Due to vaccine supply, it may be weeks to

months before many people in later phases receive notification that they can schedule an appointment.

- The AllVax system does not email everyone in the current phase at the same time. Three things must happen for you to receive the scheduling email:
  1. You must be registered in the AllVax system.
  2. You must be eligible to receive your vaccine in the CURRENT phase of vaccinations. If you are not eligible until Phase 1b or 1c, you will not receive an email to schedule until we reach that phase.
  3. The Health Department must receive a shipment of vaccines and have appointments available.
- Please rest assured, everyone will be able to get the vaccine, but this will take time.
- Lake County's goal is to vaccinate 80% of our population. We ask for your partnership in sharing this important resource and encouraging anyone who lives or works in Lake County to register.
- A FAQ page continues to be updated with common questions about AllVax and COVID-19 vaccines. <https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/topic/0TO4W00000hqBUWAY/resident>
- **Community organizations, municipalities, businesses, and faith centers are invited to help support COVID-19 vaccination across Lake County by becoming a Community Health Ambassador.**
  - Community Health Ambassadors will receive step-by-step registration guidance, answers to COVID-19 FAQs that they can relay to their communities, promotional materials, and recognition for the important role they play in restoring Lake County communities.
  - We already have 70 individuals representing 46 community organizations serving as Community Health Ambassadors! Join the team.
  - Sign up here: [https://lchd.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_e3BOCd49aly8xFz](https://lchd.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e3BOCd49aly8xFz)
- **The video from Lake County's January 13 Virtual Town Hall is posted online in English and Spanish.** Over 2,500 people attended. Health Department Executive Director Mark Pfister and Medical Epidemiologist Dr. Sana Ahmed answered many common questions about COVID-19 vaccinations.
  - **Town Hall Recording:** <https://www.lakecountyyil.gov/townhall>
- As a reminder, these conference calls are held the first and third Wednesday of every month. Our next conference calls are scheduled for February 3 and 17.
  - The key points, chat files, and audio recordings are posted to the Health Department's website. <https://www.lakecountyyil.gov/4428/Conference-Calls>

- **We understand that our residents have many questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.** Please share our Top 12 Questions about the COVID-19 vaccine video that can answer the most common questions we have been receiving.
  - <https://www.facebook.com/healthdepartment/videos/135736768262053/>
- **Make sure you are subscribed to our email newsletters for updates** (English: <http://bit.ly/lccovid-19>, Spanish: <https://bit.ly/lccovid-19-es>).

## Policy

- **Illinois has extended the moratorium on evictions through February 6, 2021** The moratorium applies only to renters who have earned no more than \$90,000 in annual income, or \$198,000 for joint filers during the calendar year, and are unable to make a full rent or housing payment due to a COVID-19 related hardship. Under the new Executive Order, tenants must complete this declaration and provide it to their landlord to protect themselves from eviction. <https://df7qosnywqs6g.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Tenant-Declaration-Forms-12.12.20.pdf>
- Visit [www.lakecountyiil.gov/forward](http://www.lakecountyiil.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.**
- The Paycheck Protection Program reopened on January 11. Get more information on eligibility and how to apply on the Small Business Administration website. [Paycheck Protection Program \(sba.gov\)](https://www.sba.gov)
- **Any businesses with Occupational Health teams with the capability to provide vaccinations to their own staff are encouraged to email [HLHealthEM@lakecountyiil.gov](mailto:HLHealthEM@lakecountyiil.gov) to determine if we can set up a closed Point of Dispensing (POD).**
- In line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Lake County Health Department recommends that **employers should not require a negative test for an employee to return to work if that employee previously tested positive for COVID-19.** This is because a person may continue to test positive for the virus for months after their infectious period, even though they are no longer contagious.
  - Individuals with COVID-19 or their close contacts who speak with a Health Department Contact Tracer can choose to enroll in a daily health assessment which will provide a release from isolation or quarantine letter from IDPH.
- To date, more than \$16 million dollars has been distributed to just over 1,200 local small businesses as part of the **Lake County Small Business Assistance Grants Program**. Grant awards

ranged from \$485 to a maximum of \$30,000. For a list of the local businesses that have received grants, visit [www.lakecountyil.gov/forward](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/forward).

- **Please continue to use the Health Department 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 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>
- **The Illinois Department for Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has a variety of small business and community relief programs.** For more information on programs available for businesses and communities, please visit DCEO website: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/Pages/default.aspx>
- **ComEd is offering a new bill assistance program to help local small businesses** facing financial difficulties as a result of COVID-19. Eligible small business customers that are past due on their energy bills can receive a one-time grant equal to 30 percent of their total ComEd balance (up to \$1,000) for a limited time. Customers whose electric service has not been disconnected can then set up their remaining balance due on a payment plan of up to six months.  
<http://ComEd.com/SmallBizAssistance>
- **Additional business resources:**
  - **Lake County Health Department** <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4412/Community-Guidance-and-Resources>
  - **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity** <https://dceocovid19resources.com/for-businesses/>
  - **Lake County Partners** <https://www.lakecountypartners.com/>
  - **Small Business Administration** <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 [workplacerrights@atg.state.il.us](mailto:workplacerrights@atg.state.il.us).

## Municipalities

- **Many municipalities have asked what they can do to assist with vaccine dispensing:**
  - **If you have a public works drive through building** that can be used for a drive through vaccine clinic, please let me know. We will come out and assess if it can be used.

- **IDPH is always looking for mobile testing sites. These can continue to operate in cold weather provided it is not high winds and rain.** Please contact us if you could provide parking lot space or help coordinate a location in your community for COVID-19 testing. [pcorn@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:pcorn@lakecountyil.gov)
- **You play a vital role in keeping your community informed about COVID-19.** Please utilize content from the Health Department's email newsletter in your own communications, promote sign-ups to your distribution lists, and share the Health Department's social media content whenever possible. **Thank you** for all you are doing to keep our communities safe!
- Please continue to use and promote the Health Department's **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.

## Faith-Based Organizations

- **Many individuals are asking about when they will be able to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Please let your congregations know to sign up for AllVax, which will notify people when there is a vaccine and appointment available. Signing up does not obligate anyone to get a vaccine, but it will let them know when they would be eligible for an appointment.** <https://AllVax.lakecohealth.org>.
- **Illinois Catholic bishops joined U.S. bishops' statement on COVID-19 vaccines, which says Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are morally acceptable,** and urges Catholics to read a document on Moral Considerations Regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine.
  - English Statement: [COVID-19Vaccines\\_Dec182020FINAL.pdf \(ilcatholic.org\)](#)
  - Spanish Statement: [COVID-19Vaccines\\_Dec182020FINAL\\_SPANISH.pdf \(ilcatholic.org\)](#)
- To protect the health and safety of faith leaders, staff, congregants and visitors, **religious organizations and houses of worship are strongly encouraged to follow guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health.** The safest practices for religious organizations are to provide services online, in a drive-in format, or outdoors with social distancing and mask wearing, and to limit in-person services to 10 people. <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/places-worship-guidance#:~:text=Some%20best%20practices%20include%3A%20Congregants%20who%20are%20living%20together%20sit,virus%20by%20projecting%20respiratory%20droplets>.
- The state also updated **funeral home guidance**, which includes information for conducting funeral services of visitations. <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/funeral-homes>
- **Lake County Health Department Worshipping Together Safely guide has been updated:** <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36546/Worshipping-Together-Safely---English>

- **Please encourage everyone to be vigilant about following the 3Ws** if you do host any in-person events or services. Keeping a list of attendees and phone numbers can be helpful if attendees are exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- **The state reports COVID-19 outbreak locations on its website.** Outbreaks are defined as 5 or more cases linked to a common location (2 or more cases in congregate settings like long-term care facilities and daycares). Region 9 has had two outbreaks in religious locations since July. <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/outbreak-locations?regionID=0&rPeriod=1>
- The state also shared data on potential exposure locations, based on information shared by people diagnosed with COVID-19. **These should be interpreted as locations where COVID-19 exposure *may* have occurred, not definitive exposure locations.** <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/location-exposure?regionID=9>
- **Emily Gelber-Maturo is the Health Department's dedicated liaison for faith communities during COVID-19.** You can reach her by emailing [egelber@lakecountyiil.gov](mailto:egelber@lakecountyiil.gov).
- Please continue to utilize the **Health Department's 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.
- Make sure you are signed up for our **Lake County Faith Leaders email subscription list.** 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>
- **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

- **The Community-Based Testing Site at 102 W. Water St., Waukegan is open to everyone with or without symptoms.** The site offers free drive-thru and walk-up testing for those who do not have a vehicle or who use public transportation. The site is open 7 days a week, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 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 connecting to:
  - **Lake County CATCH:** 2 weeks 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.lakecountyiil.gov/4476/Lake-County-COVID-Housing-Relief-Program>



*January 20, 2021*

- **Many more community resources are available for those in need.** Visit <https://www.lakecountyiil.gov/4414/How-to-Get-Help> for an updated list.
- **If you are looking for opportunities to help others during this time,** please visit <https://www.lakecountyiil.gov/4413/How-You-Can-Help>