

Lake County Updates

- **COVID-19 cases are starting to increase again in the United States and leveled off at higher levels than last summer.** We are now in the “race to vaccinate” and the United States recently administered a record of 3.38 million doses in one day. As of April 1, approximately 30% of the U.S. population have received at least one dose of vaccine, and 16.9% of the U.S. population have been fully vaccinated. Once a person is fully vaccinated, a person’s risk of infection is reduced by up to 90%.
 - More information can be found here, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>.
- **In Illinois, we are seeing signs of an increase in virus transmission that could lead to a resurgence.** Hospital admissions for COVID-19-like-illness, Hospitalized patients with COVID-19, and COVID-19 daily rates are increasing. - 3,790 new cases just announced.
 - COVID-19 daily mortality is decreasing.
 - This information can be found on the IDPH website, <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/statewidemetrics>.
- **Illinois is currently in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois plan** and will move on to the ‘bridge phase’ when 70% of the population 65 years and older has received at least one dose of vaccine, and to Phase 5 when 50% of the population 16 years and older has received at least one dose of vaccine. **In order to transition phases**, hospital ICU bed availability needs to be higher than 20%, and new COVID-19 hospital admissions, total COVID-19 patients in the hospital, and death rates must not be increasing significantly statewide over the most recent 28 days.
- **Lake County has had over 57,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 951 deaths.** Over 927,000 tests have been administered. Lake County’s recovery rate is 98.3 percent. <https://covid19response-lakecountylil.hub.arcgis.com/>
- **A majority of our long-term care facility (LTCF) residents have been vaccinated in Lake County.** We continue to assist residents and staff to get vaccinated. Sporadic cases are being identified within LTCFs. We continue to work with these facilities to address vaccine hesitancy and encourage vaccination among staff and residents. Additionally, we are coordinating efforts with pharmacy providers to get our elders in senior housing vaccinated.
- In February 2021, the first B.1.1.7 (UK) variant was identified in Lake County followed by the first P.1. (Brazilian) case and the B.1.427 (California) variant identified in March 2021. The emergence of new variants of COVID-19 across the world and in Lake County underscores the importance of following public health strategies to limit the spread of the virus. The virus can’t mutate if it can’t replicate.
 - New COVID-19 Variants (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html>
- **According to the CDC, COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death in 2020, behind Heart Disease and Cancer.** The age-adjusted death rate increased by 15.9% in 2020. Overall death

rates were highest among non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native persons. The COVID-19 death rate was highest among Hispanics.

- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7014e1.htm?s_cid=mm7014e1_w
- **Lake County continues to see disparities in COVID prevalence and vaccination rates among our communities of color.** Of those who have been vaccinated, 3% are Black and 9% are Hispanic (Lake County's demographics are 6.5% Black and 14% Hispanic). LCHD continues its work with two community partnership groups—Asociacion Comunitaria Latina (ACL) and the African American Community Partnership Group (AACPG) to address these disparities.
 - You can learn more about these groups on their Facebook pages:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/AACPLakeCounty>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/asociacioncomunitarialatina>
- **Community Health Ambassadors** are hard-at-work hosting AllVax registration events and sharing educational materials and resources with our community members. Starting this week, we are sending out CHAs to knock on doors at our senior independent living facilities to help prep residents for upcoming mobile vaccination opportunities and to answer any questions about the vaccine they may have. See the materials being shared on our website:
 - <https://www.lakecountyl.gov/4524/Community-Health-Ambassadors>
- **Community organizations, municipalities, businesses, and faith centers are invited to help support COVID-19 vaccination across Lake County by becoming a Community Health Ambassador.**
 - Over 220 individuals representing over 90 community organizations serve as Community Health Ambassadors! Sign up here:
https://lchd.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e3BOCd49aly8xFz

The CDC has issued new guidance on domestic travel for people who are fully vaccinated. It is still recommended to delay travel until you are fully vaccinated. People who are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine can travel safely within the United States as they are less likely to get and spread COVID-19. **For fully vaccinated people:**

- You do not need to get tested before or after travel unless the destination requires it
- You also do not need to self-quarantine
- You should still follow CDC's recommendations for traveling safely including:
 - Wear a mask over your nose and mouth
 - Stay 6 feet from others and avoid crowds
 - Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer
- Travel guidance for vaccinated people:
<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/p0402-travel-guidance-vaccinated-people.html>

- **Continue to be vigilant to prevent the spread of COVID-19, even after vaccination.** 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 protect yourself and others from COVID-19.
- **In Region 9, our 7-day rolling average testing positivity rate is 3.5% as of April 3.** Testing positivity reached 4.2% as of March 29 and has declined slightly. Our ICU bed capacity is 39%, and there were 7 days of decreases in COVID-19 hospitalizations in the past 30 days. Lake County’s testing positivity rate was 3.2% as of April 3.
 - Cook County’s 7 Day Rolling Average is 5.1% as of 4/2, and has seen 10 days of COVID-19 Patient Increases as of 4/2.
 - Chicago’s 7 Day Rolling Average is 5% as of 4/2, and has seen 9 Days of COVID-19 Patient Increases as of 4/2
 - <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=9>
 - **DCEO guidelines for businesses:** <https://dceocovid19resources.com/restore-illinois-phase-4/>
- **In total, over 319,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered to Lake County residents.** Over 115,000 of our residents, or 16.53% of our population, are fully vaccinated. 72.82% of our 65 and older population and 28.25% of our population age 16-64 have received at least one dose. Our county is averaging 5,819 doses administered daily on a 7-day rolling average.
 - Vaccination data: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccinedata?county=Lake>
- **This is Lake County Seniors Week!** We are dedicating this week, April 5-11, to ensure all seniors can get the COVID-19 vaccine. We are featuring information and resources for seniors because they are at a higher risk of severe illness. Our seniors are an important part of our community and we all have a responsibility to help them stay healthy. We encourage everyone to check-in with the seniors in your life to see if they have a plan to get vaccinated.
 - Some ways we are encouraging our community to help our seniors are:
 - Helping a senior register in AllVax.
 - Assisting a senior with scheduling an appointment.
 - Offering to drive a senior to an appointment.
 - Sharing vaccine information, like why it’s important to get vaccinated, with the people you love.
 - The AllVax call center hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (847) 377-8130. Recently, additional volunteers have been added to take calls from Lake County residents age 65 and older during special senior hours:
 - Tuesdays: Noon to 3 p.m.
 - Thursdays: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
 - Fridays: Noon to 3 p.m.

- Our partners are starting to vaccinate homebound seniors this week. Seniors who are unable to leave your home for a vaccine should call the AllVax support team to be added to our list.
- Seniors Week Newsletter with resources, information, and the week's events:
 - English: https://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/ILLAKE-2caf9f1?wgt_ref=ILLAKE_WIDGET_444
 - Spanish: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILLAKE/bulletins/2cb452b?fbclid=IwAR0xS3oL96Qztbfn6PV8EQAPNZW09BYh1fy-GxlpZz8sML8lecErM-EobgY>
- Please share Seniors Week content from our social media channels throughout the week with #LCSeniorsWeek.
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/healthdepartment>
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lakecohealth/>
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LakeCoHealth>
- There will be multiple opportunities today (Wednesday, April 7) through radio stations to hear discussions about COVID-19 vaccinations as well as the chance to ask questions.
 - At 3:00 p.m, join us on 102.3 WXLC Facebook page for a live stream discussion with mid-day host Frank Wright. <https://www.facebook.com/1023XLC>
 - At 5:30 p.m., Mark Pfister will be discussing senior vaccinations on WGN Radio 720 (or listen online) with Steve Bertrand. <https://wgnradio.com/on-air/>
- On Thursday, April 8 at 1:30 p.m. our Medical Director, Dr. Leslie Zun will be on Facebook LIVE answering questions and discussing the safety and efficacy of the vaccines.
- Additionally, we are asking those in our community to send us their "Why". Why are you choosing to get vaccinated against COVID-19. We encourage all of you to share your why on Facebook, or by emailing COVID19@lakecountyil.gov. <https://www.facebook.com/healthdepartment/photos/a.417055706582/10157720155656583/>.
- **Lake County is currently vaccinating eligible individuals in Phase 1a, Phase 1b, and Phase 1b Plus at our mass vaccination sites. All Illinoisans age 16 and older are eligible as of April 12, 2021.** Appointments are only offered as we receive vaccine supply and have appointments available.
 - **The Lake County Fairgrounds site is now vaccinating up to 1,500 per day, dependent on staffing and vaccine supply.** This site will transition to walk-through service by appointment on April 12 to accommodate higher daily capacity. All three vaccine brands (Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson) are being given at the site depending on our current supply.

- **A new vaccination site is now open at 102 W. Water Street in Waukegan**, offering both drive-through and walk-through appointments through AllVax. The Illinois National Guard is supporting this site, which will predominantly use Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- **The best vaccine to get is the first one available to you.** With limited vaccine supply, many sites cannot guarantee a certain brand of vaccine, and all three that are authorized are extremely safe and effective.
- **The Health Department has a new webpage for medical providers.** Those interested in administering COVID-19 vaccine to their patients can find information on our website. Please email Noor Alhayani (nalhayani@lakecountyil.gov) with any questions or requests for assistance.
 - https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/healthcare-providers?language=en_US
- **We expect our vaccine supply to continue to increase in April, and more appointments for first doses will be available.** Demand far outpaces supply in our county. You can track the weekly vaccine we are receiving on our data hub: <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/covid19data>
- **Our Health Department encourages people to explore their options for COVID-19 vaccination and take the first available appointment if they are eligible.** There are four ways to access the vaccine:
 - **Registering and being notified of appointment availability in the AllVax system;** <https://AllVax.lakecohealth.org>. Over 428,000 people have registered so far. Remember that you can opt-in and consent to allow the Health Department to securely share your registration information with local vaccination partners. This option gives you more access to vaccination opportunities;
 - Using the State's Vaccine Locator website that lists pharmacies and other public sites; <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/vaccination-location> or calling the state Vaccine Appointment Call Center at 833-621-1284. The call center is open 7 days a week from 6 a.m. to midnight.
 - Checking with their health system (i.e. hospital system or healthcare provider group) for registration and availability – most systems are reaching out to their existing patients and cannot accommodate people calling to inquire about appointments at this time; and
 - Community vaccination sites are opening and are being listed on our website as they become available – <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/vaccine>.
- As a reminder, these conference calls are held the first and third Wednesday of every month. Our next conference calls are scheduled for April 21 and May 5.
 - The key points, chat files, and audio recordings are posted to the Health Department's website. <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4428/Conference-Calls>
- **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

- **The American Rescue Plan, a \$1.9 trillion dollar package is now law.**
 - **Many people will be receiving a \$1400 stimulus payment as a result of this legislation. People can check on the status of their payment on the IRS website:**
Get My Payment: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment>
- **Lake County is working with community partners to help keep families in their homes as we work to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.** Through the federal emergency rental assistance program eligible households may receive up to 12 months of past due rent and up to three months of assistance with future rent, but no more than 12 months of assistance total. Payments from the program will be made directly to landlords and/or utility companies. Eligibility and application information is available at lakecountyiil.gov/renthelp.
- **A special enrollment period for health insurance, due to the COVID-19 pandemic will end on May 15th.** People can go to healthcare.gov to find out more about their health insurance options. <https://healthcare.gov>
- **Illinois has extended the moratorium on evictions through May 1.** The moratorium applies only to renters who are unable to make a full rent or housing payment due to a COVID-19 related hardship. Income limits apply.
 - Under the 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>
- **The President has extended a ban on housing foreclosures (federally guaranteed mortgages) to June 30** to help homeowners struggling during the pandemic. Federal moratorium for evictions of rental tenants also remains through June 30.

Businesses

- **The Health Department has a new webpage for employers for COVID-19 vaccine information.** Businesses interested in hosting vaccination events for their employees can find information on this page. https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/employers?language=en_US
- **By providing information about COVID-19 vaccination and establishing supportive policies and practices, employers can help increase vaccine uptake among essential workers.** Please share clear, complete, and accurate messages, promote confidence in the decision to get vaccinated, and engage your employees in plans to address potential barriers to vaccination. Strong confidence in the vaccines within your workplace leads to more people getting vaccinated, which leads to fewer COVID-19 illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths. Detailed information is available to employers on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/essentialworker/workplace-vaccination-program.html>

- **Environmental Health has seen an increase in mask complaints in the past couple of months.** In January and February 2021, we investigated 32 complaints, and from March to April 6 we investigated 30 complaints so far. We have been able to achieve compliance with the site visits conducted.
- **The State has issued updated guidance, indicating that fully vaccinated or recently tested people do not count toward capacity limits at venues.** The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity published additional guidance here:
<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/Documents/Essential%20Business%20FAQ.pdf>.
 - The guidance states that: “Individuals with proof of full vaccination plus 14 days or a negative COVID-19 test (PCR) 1 to 3 days prior to an event or outing do not count against capacity limits. Patrons and attendees must show proof of completed vaccination series or recent negative COVID-19 test prior to entry and are subject to additional state face covering rules and social distancing guidelines of at least 6 feet between individuals that are not in the same household or group even if they meet the criteria for demonstrated immunity.”
 - The guidance also states that: “Businesses are responsible for managing their capacity and admission procedures within the venue to establish a protocol and system to verify proof of a vaccination plus 14 days or a negative COVID-19 test.”
- **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.**
 - 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.
- **Additional business resources:**
 - **Lake County Health Department** <https://www.lakecountyyil.gov/4412/Community-Guidance-and-Resources>
 - **Lake County Businesses email subscription list**
<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILLAKE/signup/18495>
 - **LCHD form for workplaces and facilities to use to report cases of COVID-19 and close contacts.** <https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=NHECLHEHFP>
 - **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/>
 - **Paycheck protection program** <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program#section-header-0>

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- **ComEd Small Business Assistance Program:** <http://ComEd.com/SmallBizAssistance>
- **Report an unsafe work environment:** Workplace Rights Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office, 844-740-5076 or workplacerrights@atg.state.il.us.

Municipalities

- **Thanks to all who participated in Mayor's Day at the Lake County Fairgrounds on April 2.** Municipal leaders who wish to volunteer on special municipal days should contact Mandi Florip. mflorip@lakecountyleague.org.
 - Please share about your volunteer experience, whether in your newsletter or on social media. As a trusted leader in your community, you can reinforce the importance of getting vaccinated and encouraging our community members to register in AllVax.
- **As of today, the Illinois National Guard has deployed multiple mobile units consisting of 12 vaccinators, 24 medical screeners, and 4 non-medical personnel to our Lake County Fairgrounds site, and 6 vaccinators and 12 medical screeners to our Water Street, Waukegan site.**
- **Last month the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) released their Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools**
 - The most prominent change is that students can now be at least 3 foot but, ideally—6 feet, apart and fully masked at all times while in school. Please note, close contacts are still defined by IDPH as individuals who are within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative of 15 minutes. Close contacts to infected persons will be recommended to quarantine 10–14 days.
 - More schools will be resuming in-person learning &/or full day learning models
 - <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/revised-public-health-guidance-for-schools.pdf>
 - *New Exclusion Guidance: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-COVID19-Exclusion-Decison-Tree.pdf>
- **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 out 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

- **Multiple Faith Communities in Lake County are organizing vaccination events for their congregations.** This involves partnering with a local pharmacy or medical group for a pop-up event, promoting the event and helping fill up appointments, and providing the location and non-medical volunteers. If you are interested in hosting a vaccination event, please reach out to Buddy Hargett, bhargett@lakecountyil.gov.
 - **More information is available on our Employers page** https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/employers?language=en_US
- **Please reach out to seniors and others in your congregation about vaccines** - know that it is taking time to get appointments, and make sure that people are signed up for AllVax. <https://AllVax.lakecohealth.org>.
- **The State of Illinois updated vaccine eligibility for essential workers to include religious leaders as of March 29, 2021.** Per IDPH, anyone who works with the public at a place of worship is eligible under state guidelines for a COVID-19 vaccine as a religious leader.
- **Resources on religious/moral information on COVID-19 vaccines**
 - English Statement: [COVID-19Vaccines_Dec182020FINAL.pdf \(ilcatholic.org\)](#)
 - Spanish Statement: [COVID-19Vaccines_Dec182020FINAL_SPANISH.pdf \(ilcatholic.org\)](#)
 - [U.S. Bishop Chairmen for Doctrine and for Pro-Life Address the Use of the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 Vaccine | USCCB](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Fetal Cell Handout.pdf](#)
- **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.
- **Emily Gelber-Maturo is the Health Department's dedicated liaison for faith communities during COVID-19.** You can reach her by emailing egelber@lakecountyil.gov.
- **Additional resources:**
 - **IDPH Funeral home guidance** for conducting funeral services of visitations. <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/funeral-homes>
 - **IDPH: Outbreaks of COVID-19 by type of facility** Outbreaks are defined as 5 or more cases linked to a common location (and 2 or more cases in congregate settings like long-term care facilities and daycares). <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/outbreak-locations?regionID=0&rPeriod=1>
 - **IDPH: Locations where exposures may have occurred** (not definitive exposure locations) <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/location-exposure?regionID=9>
 - **LCHD 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>
 - **Lake County Faith Leaders email subscription list:** <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

- 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/>.
- **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. This site is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Mobile testing sites managed by the Illinois Department of Public Health will be in Lake County:**
 - Thursdays April 8 and 15, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Mundelein Metra Station, 205 N. Archer Ave. Mundelein
 - Fridays April 9 and 16, 8 a.m.-4p.m., Highland Park Metra Station, 1700 St. John’s Ave. Highland Park
 - Visit our testing web page for more information:
<https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4435/COVID-19-Testing>.
- **Many more community resources are available for those in need.** Visit <https://www.lakecountyil.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.lakecountyil.gov/4413/How-You-Can-Help>