

## Lake County Updates

- **As of March 1, 2022, Lake County has had over 122,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 1,331 deaths.** Over 2.4 million tests have been administered. Lake County's recovery rate is at 98.5 percent.
  - Data hub: <https://covid19response-lakecountyil.hub.arcgis.com/>
- **As February 26, 2022, the Region 9 positivity rate is 3.3% (Lake 2.9%) (McHenry 4.2%).** Region 9 has had 10 days of decreases in COVID-19 patients and ICU bed availability is at 25%.
  - Region 9 Data: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/data/region-metrics.html?regionID=9>
- **In total, over 1,244,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered to Lake County residents.** Over 477,364 of our residents, or 68% of our population are fully vaccinated. Over 99% of our 65 and older population, over 82% of our population age 18-64, over 80% of our population age 12-17, and over 50% of our population age 5-11 have received at least one dose.
  - Vaccination data: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccine/vaccine-data.html?county=Lake>
- **Illinois lifted the statewide indoor mask requirement on Monday February 28, 2022.** Masks will continue to be required where they are federally mandated. Illinois will continue to require masks in the following settings:
  - **Healthcare Settings:** Continue mask requirement
  - **Long Term Care Facilities:** Continue mask requirement
  - **Congregate Settings** (prisons, shelters, etc.): Continue mask requirement
  - **Transportation:** Follow federal guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/face-masks-public-transportation.html>)
  - Read the updated Executive Order at <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/resources/executive-orders/display.executive-order-number-06.2022.html>
- While masks are no longer required in most indoor locations they do offer an additional layer of protection especially for those who have an underlying health condition or who are around those who do.
  - If you find yourself in a crowded indoor setting, a mask can still help protect you. Visit the CDC page, Prevent Getting Sick, to learn more about how masks can protect you <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html>
  - For information on what masks are most effective, visit the CDC's Types of Masks page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>
  - Read the IDPH press release on the mask mandate ending at <https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.24498.html>
- **The CDC recently updated guidance around mask wearing to help people make decisions about when to wear a mask.** The CDC recommends masking based on the new COVID-19 Community Level framework, which is a measure that takes into consideration COVID-19 hospitalizations, hospital capacity, and cases within a community.
- **CDC's masking recommendations based on COVID-19 community level are:**
  - **Low:** Mask use is based on personal preference and risk assessment.

- **Medium:** People who are at high risk for severe health impacts if infected with COVID-19, or who regularly interact with someone at high risk, should strongly consider wearing a mask in indoor public settings for additional protection from COVID-19.
  - **High:** People should wear masks in indoor public settings, including in schools and workplaces.
- Read more about the new COVID-19 Community Level and COVID-19 Prevention here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>
- Effective Monday, Feb. 28, 2022, in response to the CDC's recommendation that masks are needed only in areas of high transmission, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) lifted the state's indoor masking requirements in day care settings.
  - Read the updated guidance from DCFS here: [https://www2.illinois.gov/dcms/brighterfutures/healthy/Documents/Updated\\_guidance\\_re\\_masking\\_requirements\\_in\\_day\\_care\\_settings\\_022822.pdf](https://www2.illinois.gov/dcms/brighterfutures/healthy/Documents/Updated_guidance_re_masking_requirements_in_day_care_settings_022822.pdf)
  - On Friday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, the judge in Sangamon County mask/quarantine case ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and school districts listed
    - This decision allowed the specific plaintiffs and schools districts listed to choose to make their school mask policy "recommended" instead of required, and not enforce quarantine per the existing governor's executive order; while districts and plaintiffs listed can make this change, the decision does not require them to do so and schools who choose can continue to enforce universal masking.
    - [http://digitaledition.chicagotribune.com/infinity/article\\_share.aspx?guid=99449956-d40e-402a-8956-4be9df71d2a5](http://digitaledition.chicagotribune.com/infinity/article_share.aspx?guid=99449956-d40e-402a-8956-4be9df71d2a5)
- **On February 11, 2022, Pfizer postponed their FDA request for a COVID-19 vaccine for children under 5.** After reviewing its initial data, the FDA announced it would wait until more data from the ongoing trial is available.
  - Children under 5 are not currently eligible for COVID-19 vaccination. Pfizer is conducting ongoing clinical trials in this age group.
  - The trial showed that two smaller doses of the vaccine in younger children do not create the same immune response as the larger doses used in older children, and scientists are now evaluating data about the effectiveness of a third dose.
  - This evaluation is part of the rigorous review process that all COVID-19 vaccines have undergone before being authorized for a given age group.
  - Read the Pfizer press release at <https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-and-biontech-provide-update-rolling-submission>
  - Learn how to best protect young children from COVID-19 at the CDC's Families and COVID-19 page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/groups/families-covid-19.html>
- **Due to decreased demand at the state community-based testing sites (CBTS) and the availability of free at-home COVID-19 tests, the state- run CBTS will now be open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.**
  - Locations previously open on Sundays will be closed this Sunday. Learn more here: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/testing>
- **A new Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) provides real-world evidence that COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy might help protect babies younger than 6 months**

**from hospitalization due to COVID-19.** These findings emphasize the importance of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy to protect pregnant people and to protect their babies.

- Individuals who are pregnant, breastfeeding, planning to get pregnant now or in the future, should get vaccinated and stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines to help protect themselves and their baby.
- Read the report: [bit.ly/MMWR7107e3](https://bit.ly/MMWR7107e3).
- **The Lake County Health Department is conducting their county wide Community Health Survey.** This survey gives insight into how the community's health is currently and how it can be improved.
  - The results will help guide future planning, creating priorities and strategies for achieving the highest level of health and wellness for all in Lake County.
  - Residents can take the survey and find more information at [lakecountyil.gov/yourvoice](https://lakecountyil.gov/yourvoice).
  - There you can also find graphics, newsletter messages and answers to FAQs to help encourage your community members take the survey.
  - Residents that have any questions or need help taking the survey can email [HealthAssessment@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:HealthAssessment@lakecountyil.gov) or call our Community Help Line at (847) 377-8444.
- **COVID-19 vaccination remains our best path forward to ending the COVID-19 pandemic.** We encourage residents to explore their options for COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.
- As a reminder, appointments are available on AllVax or by walking up to the site. The Health Department is currently providing first and second doses as well as a limited number of booster appointments at the following locations:
  - Grand Avenue Health Center (3010 Grand Avenue in Waukegan), Belvidere Medical Building (2400 Belvidere Road in Waukegan), Midlakes Health Clinic (224 W. Clarendon Drive in Round Lake Beach ), and Zion Health Center (1191 27<sup>th</sup> Street in Zion)
  - Appointments are available on AllVax, [allvax.lakecohealth.org](https://allvax.lakecohealth.org). Community members with additional questions should call (847) 377-8130.
  - We encourage residents to explore their options for vaccination at pharmacies, healthcare providers, and mobile clinics throughout Lake County. Visit <https://www.vaccinefinder.org> for a location near you.
  - To sign up for an appointment at a mobile vaccination clinic, visit <https://www.vaccinefinder.org>. All sites are walk-in friendly
    - **If your organization would like to host a mobile pop-up vaccination event or include vaccinations at your upcoming event (including fairs, farmers markets, back to school events), please register here:**  
<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccinationclinics>
- **For the most up to date information on the COVID-19 pandemic, make sure that you follow the Health Department on social media and subscribe to our COVID-19 newsletter.**
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/healthdepartment/>
  - Newsletter: (English: <http://bit.ly/lccovid-19>, Spanish: <https://bit.ly/lccovid-19-es>).
  - The key points, chat files, and audio recordings are posted to the Health Department's website. <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4428/Conference-Calls>
- **We have not yet scheduled our next conference call. When we have additional updates to share, we will schedule a call and notify the community.**

## Businesses

- **The US Small Business Administration has created a Restaurant Revitalization Fund** providing emergency assistance for eligible restaurants, bars, and other qualifying businesses impacted by COVID-19.
- Visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) and click on COVID Relief section to learn more about Restaurant Revitalization Fund, Paycheck Protection Program, and more.
  - [https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/covid-19-relief-options/restaurant-revitalization-fund?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/covid-19-relief-options/restaurant-revitalization-fund?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)
- **The Health Department has a 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](https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/employers?language=en_US)
- **The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has a detailed webpage with information on COVID-19-related legal questions,** such as what information employers can request when an employee calls in sick, if employers can require proof of vaccination, and mandatory vaccination policies and accommodations. <https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws>
- **By providing information about COVID-19 vaccination and establishing supportive policies and practices, employers can help increase vaccine uptake among your 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>
- **Thank you, businesses, for all you are doing to keep your staff and customers safe during the pandemic.** 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.
- **Additional business resources:**
  - **Lake County Health Department** <https://www.lakecountyl.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>

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

## Municipalities

- **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 to report cases of COVID-19 and close contacts.** <https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=NHECLHEHFP>

## 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.
  - o **More information is available on our Employers page** [https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/employers?language=en\\_US](https://allvax.lakecohealth.org/s/employers?language=en_US)
  - o **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 3 Ws** 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.
- **Pat Brady, Michael Atlas, and Leia Mueller are the Health Department's dedicated community liaisons during COVID-19.** You can reach them by emailing [PBADY2@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:PBADY2@lakecountyil.gov), [MATLAS@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:MATLAS@lakecountyil.gov), [LMueller@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:LMueller@lakecountyil.gov)
- **Additional resources:**
  - o **IDPH Funeral home guidance** for conducting funeral services of visitations. <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/funeral-homes>
  - o **IDPH: Outbreaks of COVID-19 by type of facility** <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/data/contact-tracing/outbreak-locations.html?regionID=9>
  - o **IDPH: Locations where exposures may have occurred** (not definitive exposure locations) <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/data/contact-tracing/potential-exposure-location.html?regionID=9>
  - o **Form to report cases of COVID-19 and close contacts:** <https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=NHECLHEHFP>

- o **Lake County Faith Leaders email subscription**  
list: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILLAKE/signup/18498>
- o **CDC webpage dedicated to communities of faith**  
– <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

## Community Resources

- **The Lake County Health Department’s Community Case Management program is actively taking referrals! Our case managers can help community members navigate food, housing, childcare, health, and employment resources, and community health workers are available for in-person support and education.**
  - o **Contact 847-377-8444 or email [HLcommunityhelp@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:HLcommunityhelp@lakecountyil.gov) to get connected.**
  - o [https://www.lakecountyil.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40404/PHNP-Here-to-Help-Flyer\\_English\\_Spanish](https://www.lakecountyil.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40404/PHNP-Here-to-Help-Flyer_English_Spanish)
- **FEMA is providing funeral reimbursement support to those that lost a loved one to COVID-19.** Funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020 are reimbursable. Applications began on April 12, 2021. To apply, call the hotline 844-684-6333 (TTY: 800-462-7585)
  - o Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
  - o FEMA funeral reimbursement program and eligibility: <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance#eligible>
- 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/>.
- **Rental Assistance:** Lake County’s program for renters provides needed relief to those who need help making past-due or current rent and utility payments: [lakecountyil.gov/renthelp](http://lakecountyil.gov/renthelp)
- **Food for Families in Need:** Northern Illinois Food Bank operates a traveling food pantry that delivers nutritious food directly to those in need and coordinates pop-up food markets across Lake County. Some upcoming locations include Waukegan, Highwood, Grayslake, Fox Lake, and Ingleside: [solvehungertoday.org/get-help/distributions](http://solvehungertoday.org/get-help/distributions)
- **Help for Veterans:** The Lake County Veterans Assistance Commission can help veterans and their families with a variety of issues, including financial help, survivor spousal benefits, burial arrangements, and more. Call them at 847-377-3344.
- **Help for Businesses:** The State of Illinois Back To Business Program is a grant program for small businesses in Illinois that provides up to \$150,000 to small businesses in industries and geographies hardest hit by the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Pages/B2B.aspx>
- **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 through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and also offers adult COVID-19 vaccinations. <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>

*During our municipal call we answered a question about the difference between a pandemic and endemic citing this article. To learn more, please visit <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/what-will-it-be-like-when-covid-19-becomes-endemic/>*