



Iowa County Health Department

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<https://www.iowacounty.org/departments/HealthDepartment>

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Iowa County Health Department

Director/Health Officer

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Case Count and Dashboard Update; Omicron Variant; Universal Indoor Masking Recommendation Continues

Iowa County –

The Iowa County Health Department reports the total number of cases as 3,007 (12.3.21). There were 88 new cases reported this week, consistent with the trend we are seeing of steady or rising weekly case counts.

Weekly case totals the last eight weeks (Iowa County)

Week of 10/11/21	56 positive cases
Week of 10/18/21	41
Week of 10/25/21	62
Week of 11/1/21	61
Week of 11/8/21	49
Week of 11/15/21	56
Week of 11/22/21	81
Week of 11/29/21	88

This week's Iowa County COVID-19 Dashboard update (data period 11/17/21 to 11/30/21) reported the percentage of positive cases at 9% (a significant increase from 11/19 when it was 5.9%). The average cases reported daily metric also increased significantly from a daily average new case count of 7.4 to 10.8 new cases. It's also of note that the regional hospital bed capacity metric is in red status, reporting 90.2% of beds are in use. The entire dashboard is at <https://www.iowacounty.org/departments/COVID-19>.

COVID-19 Omicron Variant

A new COVID-19 variant was identified last week in South Africa and cases of this new variant have also been identified in dozens of other countries. On November 26, 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified this variant, B.1.1.529, as a variant of concern (VOC). The variant has prompted concern because of its unusually high number of mutations. It will be weeks before scientists can say with confidence whether it is more contagious or causes more severe disease. More information available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/variant.html>

This variant is a cause for concern but not a cause for panic. We have more tools to fight the variant today than ever before. The best protection against this new variant, or any variant of COVID-19, is to get fully vaccinated and get a booster shot.

- A layered prevention approach continues to be recommended to help slow the spread of COVID-19. People should continue to wear masks, avoid large gatherings, stay home if ill, maintain good hand hygiene, and get vaccinated. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, or were in close contact with someone with COVID-19, please get tested.

ICHD Continues Masking Recommendation

Iowa County, according to the CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view> remains categorized as **high risk** in regards to level of community transmission for COVID-19. **The recommendation that everyone, including fully vaccinated people, wear a mask when in indoor public spaces regardless of vaccination status remains very important, especially in light of the increase in local case numbers and the concern regarding the new [Omicron Variant](#).** Masks are recommended for people age two and older.

The Iowa County Health Department and DHS support [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)'s recommendations](#).

Key points from the [CDC's recommendations](#):

- Everyone, including fully vaccinated people, should wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of [substantial or high transmission](#) which includes Iowa County as well as the entire State of Wisconsin.
- Wearing a mask in public is most important for people who are immunocompromised due to their risk of becoming infected. Fully vaccinated people might choose to mask regardless of the level of community transmission, particularly if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease, or if someone in their household is not fully vaccinated. [Prevention measures](#) are still recommended in indoor public spaces for unvaccinated people.
- **School setting:** [CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools](#), regardless of vaccination status.
- Based on evolving evidence, CDC recommends fully vaccinated people get tested 5-7 days after close contact with a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and should wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

See full guidance document on the Iowa County COVID-19 website [Iowa County Universal Masking Recommendation Due to HIGH Transmission Risk Nov29.2021updated.pdf](#)

Flu Rates Up

[Rates of influenza have jumped](#) in the last few weeks, with 128 confirmed cases reported during the week leading up to Thanksgiving, more than the total number of flu cases during all of last year. Getting a flu shot is a critical prevention step. Know that it is safe to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and influenza at the same time. This will help protect you, your family and friends, and can help reduce strain on Wisconsin hospitals, which are facing capacity challenges.

COVID-19 Booster Clinics

Are you interested in getting a COVID-19 Booster dose? See links below to schedule your appointment. Clinics are by appointment only. If you would like to receive a different booster dose than the original type of vaccine you received, sign-up for whichever dose you prefer.

To sign-up for a Booster Clinic, visit our Iowa County COVID-19 website <https://www.iowacounty.org>

- ✓ Click on either Moderna or Pfizer and choose the preferred clinic date: 12/9, 12/16, 12/30)
- If you are interested in a J&J Booster, call the Iowa County Health Department at 608.930.9870.

The ICHD will announce further clinics on our [Iowa County Health Department | Facebook](#) page and the Iowa County website <https://www.iowacounty.org>

Iowa County Health Department **COVID-19 Vaccine WEDNESDAY CLINICS CONTINUE** each Wednesday from 2-4:30pm at the Health and Human Services Building in Dodgeville for those seeking to get started

with their covid vaccine, those needing dose #2 or those who are immunocompromised needing a third (additional) dose. Please call the Health Department to schedule an appointment 608.930.9870.

School-based COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics for Children Ages 5-11 Years

The Iowa County Health Department is coordinating with School Districts in Iowa County to offer an opportunity for kids' ages 5-11 years old to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in school. Look for information from your district on the details of your district's clinic.

The Iowa County Health Department will offer additional pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics in December. We will host two clinics over the Holiday break to offer both childhood flu and COVID-19 vaccinations.

December 28, 2021 12:30pm-2:30pm

December 29, 2021 9:00am-11:00am

Flu vaccines available for children ages 4-18 and COVID-19 vaccines available for children ages 5-18. Call 608-930-9870 for an appointment

Children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian OR have a note from parent AND be accompanied by a person over 18 years of age.

Follow the ICHD on our [Iowa County Health Department | Facebook](#) page and the Iowa County website <https://www.iowacounty.org> where we announce additional clinics.

Vaccination Rates in Iowa County

As of December 3, 2021, 65.3% of Iowa County residents have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and 62.8% residents have completed the vaccine series. 78% of adults over 18 have received one dose of the vaccine and 75.1% are fully vaccinated. You can view additional vaccine rates by age groups on the DHS webpage at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-data.htm>

Community Testing

The Iowa County Health Department continues to offer drive through COVID PCR testing **Tuesdays & Thursdays** at the Iowa County HHS Building located on 303 W. Chapel St, Dodgeville, from 9:00-11:00 AM. No appointment is necessary but registration is required at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov/en-US/> Testing is free to anyone above the age of 1 year who is symptomatic or asymptomatic. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian with consent. Masks are required.

See <https://www.iowacounty.org/COVID-19CommunityTesting> for list of additional testing options locally.

Important Sources of Information

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
- Iowa County website <https://www.iowacounty.org>
- Upland Hills Health <https://www.uplandhillshealth.org/patient-visitors/covid-19/>
- CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- 211 Wisconsin Simply call 211 from your phone <https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/>
- DHS Vaccine Data <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-data.htm#summary>
- CDC: [Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

Social Media sites:

Iowa County Public Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/iowacountyhealthdepartment/>

Upland Hills Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/UplandHillsHealthHospital/>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ICEMWI>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/icemwi/>