



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2020

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11 Illinois Counties at Warning Level for Coronavirus Disease

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today reported 11 counties in Illinois are considered to be at a warning level for novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). A county enters a warning level when it experiences an increase in two or more COVID-19 risk indicators from the state’s COVID-19 Resurgence Mitigation plan.

Eleven counties are currently at a warning level – Cass, Gallatin, Jackson, Jo Daviess, Johnson, Perry, Randolph, Saline, Sangamon, St. Clair, and White.

These counties saw outbreaks associated with business operations and activities posing higher risk for disease spread, including school graduation ceremonies, a rise in cases among late teens and 20s, parties and social gatherings, people going to bars, long-term care outbreaks, clusters of cases associated with restaurants and churches, and big sports events including soccer, golf, and softball tournaments. Residents of many communities are not wearing face coverings that have been proven to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Public health officials are finding that most contacts to cases are testing positive as well.

Several counties are taking swift action and implementing mitigation measures to help slow the spread of the virus. Examples include the mayor of Springfield requiring bar employees to wear masks or be subject to fines, Perry County hospitals and nursing homes temporarily suspending visitors, and the state’s attorney in Jackson County allowing the local food ordinance to be used to enforce COVID-19 guidance at restaurants and bars.

IDPH uses numerous indicators when determining if a county is experiencing stable COVID-19 activity, or if there are warning signs of increased COVID-19 risk in the county.

- **New cases per 100,000 people.** If there are more than 50 new cases per 100,000 people in the county, this triggers a warning.
- **Number of deaths.** This metric indicates a warning when the weekly number of deaths increases more than 20% for two consecutive weeks.
- **Weekly test positivity.** This metric indicates a warning when the 7-day test positivity rate rises above 8%.
- **ICU availability.** If there are fewer than 20% of intensive care units available in the region, this triggers a warning.

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- **Weekly emergency department visits.** This metric indicates a warning when the weekly percent of COVID-19-like-illness emergency department visits increase by more than 20% for two consecutive weeks.
- **Weekly hospital admissions.** A warning is triggered when the weekly number of hospital admissions for COVID-19-like-illness increases by more than 20% for two consecutive weeks.
- **Tests perform.** This metric is used to provide context and indicate if more testing is needed in the county.
- **Clusters.** This metric looks at the percent of COVID-19 cases associated with clusters or outbreaks and is used to understand large increase in cases.

These metrics are intended to be used for local level awareness to help local leaders, businesses, local health departments, and the public make informed decisions about personal and family gatherings, as well as what activities they choose to do. The metrics are updated weekly, with data from the Sunday-Saturday of the prior week.

A map and information of each county's status can be found on the IDPH website at <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics>.

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