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51 Illinois Counties at Warning Level for Coronavirus Disease

Number of counties increases from 34 last week

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today reported 51 counties in Illinois are considered to be at a warning level for novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). A county enters a warning level when two or more COVID-19 risk indicators that measure the amount of COVID-19 increase.

Fifty-one counties are currently reported at a warning level – Adams, Bond, Boone, Carroll, Cass, Christian, Clay, Clinton, Crawford, DeKalb, Douglas, Edwards, Fayette, Ford, Franklin, Gallatin, Greene, Hamilton, Henderson, Jersey, Jo Daviess, Johnson, Kane, Kendall, Knox, LaSalle, Lee, Macon, Macoupin, McDonough, McHenry, Mercer, Morgan, Moultrie, Ogle, Perry, Pike, Pulaski, Rock Island, Saline, Shelby, Stephenson, Union, Vermilion, Wabash, Warren, Wayne, Whiteside, Will, Williamson, and Winnebago.

Although the reasons for counties reaching a warning level varies, some of the common factors for an increase in cases and outbreaks are associated with gatherings in people's homes, weddings and funerals, bars and clubs, university and college parties as well as college sports teams, family gatherings, long-term care facilities, correctional centers, schools, and cases among the community at large, especially people in their 20s.

Public health officials are observing businesses blatantly disregarding mitigation measures, people not social distancing, gathering in large groups, and not using face coverings. Mayors, local law enforcement, state's attorneys, and other community leaders can be influential in ensuring citizens and businesses follow best practices.

Several counties are taking swift action to help slow spread of the virus, including increasing testing opportunities, stressing the importance of testing to providers, hiring additional contact tracers, working with schools, and meeting with local leaders.

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. A county is considered at the warning level when at least two of the following metrics triggers a warning.

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- **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.
- **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 performed.** 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, 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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