

# MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** August 23, 2021

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Walter Ang  
Communications Specialist, Erie County Department of Health  
wang@eriecountypa.gov

**COUNTY OF ERIE**  
OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

## Erie County Department of Health orders universal masking for Erie County Schools

Erie, PA — County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper and the Erie County Department of Health held a press briefing today to announce a universal indoor masking order for all public or private pre-school, primary and secondary schools in Erie County. This order is effective immediately and will remain in effect until further notice.

Guests included Melissa Lyon, director of Erie County Department of Health and Dr. Howard A. Nadworny, infectious diseases physician and consultant for the Erie County Department of Health. Watch the press briefing [here](#).

The universal indoor masking order is in response to increased transmission of COVID-19 in Erie County and follows the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC recommends wearing a mask indoors for all people, including for those fully vaccinated, in areas with a substantial to high transmission rate of COVID-19. Erie County is currently in a high rate of transmission.

Wearing a mask that covers the mouth and nose has been proven to reduce the spread of infectious respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19. According to the CDC, studies on the effects of wearing masks have proved that there is no change in oxygen or carbon dioxide levels when people wear cloth and surgical masks while resting and exercising.

Erie County reports 35 new positive cases of COVID-19 as of 11:59 p.m. on Aug 22, 2021. Cases reported from the weekend are as follows:

Day	Positive cases reported
11:59 p.m. on Aug. 21	37
11:59 p.m. on Aug. 20	53

The total cumulative cases of COVID-19 in Erie County since March 2020 is 22,147 with 482 deaths (reported in NEDSS).

—MORE—

This [information](#) and other data such as reports on vaccination demographics can be found at [eriecountypa.gov/covid-19](http://eriecountypa.gov/covid-19). Related data is also available at the Pennsylvania Department of Health website [health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx](http://health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx). Data on transmission rates can be found in the CDC website [covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view).

## **Get vaccinated**

Vaccination helps the body prevent severe illness and lessens the likelihood of needing hospitalization. Nearly all hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19 have been among unvaccinated persons.

All unvaccinated residents are encouraged to get vaccinated. COVID-19 vaccines were developed by experts and are safe. Free vaccines are available for residents of Erie County ages 12 years and older. Finding vaccines in nearby locations can be done by:

- texting your ZIP Code to 438829
- visiting [vaccines.gov](http://vaccines.gov)
- calling 1-800-232-0233

A free mobile vaccination clinic organized by the Erie County Department of Health is available to the residents of Erie County.

- Wednesday, Aug. 25, 9 to 11 a.m. at Erie County Courthouse, 140 West Sixth St., Erie
- Saturday, Aug. 28, 1 to 3 p.m. at Empowered Life's Back to School Bash, Christ Community Church, 923 East Sixth St., Erie

No insurance is needed and walk-ups are welcome. For the schedule of upcoming mobile clinics and other free clinics, visit [eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine](http://eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine).

## **Get tested**

Community members are reminded to get tested for COVID-19 if exposed to anyone who is positive for COVID-19 or if exhibiting its symptoms such as coughing, difficulty breathing, fever or chills, muscle or body aches, vomiting or diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell.

Testing results can help determine appropriate care and treatment if needed. For schedule of upcoming mobile clinics and other free clinics, visit [eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-testing-information](http://eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-testing-information).

Questions about COVID-19 may be directed to Erie County Department of Health at 814-451-6700 or [ecdinfo@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:ecdinfo@eriecountypa.gov).

###