

MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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COUNTY OF ERIE
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Erie County provides drive-thru COVID-19 testing

Erie, PA — Erie County Department of Health highly recommends vaccination, including boosters, for all eligible residents of Erie County five years and older as the community prepares for upcoming holiday gatherings.

Testing is also recommended. To prevent the spread of infection to vulnerable loved ones, community members whose test results are positive should decline from attending gatherings, stay home and apart from others in their homes.

Testing is recommended for those visiting from out of town, for those exposed to anyone who has COVID-19 or if exhibiting symptoms such as coughing, difficulty breathing, fever or chills, muscle or body aches, vomiting or diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell.

Erie County Department of Health will hold a free drive-thru COVID-19 testing clinic on **Wednesday, Dec. 22, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at the Erie County Department of Public Safety, 2880 Flower Rd, Erie. The Information Sheet and Consent Form can be downloaded from eriecountypa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/COVID-Testing-Info-Sheet-and-Consent-Form.pdf, printed out and filled up in advance before going to the clinic.

Rapid testing results are available in 15 minutes. No insurance is needed. To follow up results, email zheeter@lecom.edu. For list of other local testing sites, visit eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-testing-information.

Stay home, inform close contacts

Community members whose test results are positive should inform their close contacts. Even if they do not have symptoms, those who have COVID-19 and those identified as their close contacts should cooperate with all public health recommendations, including staying home, to prevent the spread of infection to others.

For guidance on isolation and quarantine, call the Erie County Department of Health at 814-451-6700. For guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19 at events and business establishments, contact Erie County Department of Health at covidresponse@eriecountypa.gov.

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New cases

The reported new cases of COVID-19 in Erie County are as follows:

Day	Positive cases reported
Dec. 19	79
Dec. 18	95
Dec. 17	203

The total case count is now 39,480. Total deaths remain at 648.

Information on cases and deaths in Erie County and other data such as reports on vaccination demographics can be found at the Erie County Government website <https://eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/positive-cases-in-erie-county/>. Latest recommendations and related data is also available at the websites of

- Pennsylvania Department of Health health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view

Benefit of vaccination

The benefit of vaccination is that it helps the body prevent severe illness and lessens the likelihood of needing hospitalization. If having concerns or questions about vaccines, approach healthcare professionals or contact the Erie County Department of Health at 814-451-6700 for facts and answers.

Free vaccines are available for residents of Erie County ages 5 years and older. To find vaccines in nearby locations:

- text ZIP Code to 438829
- visit vaccines.gov
- call 1-800-232-0233

For schedule of local vaccination sites, visit eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine. Not all locations can offer COVID-19 vaccines to children 5 to 11 years old. Call ahead to check availability.

Masking order

Wearing a mask that covers the mouth and nose has been proven to reduce the spread of infectious respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19. 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.

A universal indoor masking order for all public and private pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in Erie County is in effect until further notice. A copy of the order can be found at eriecountypa.gov/covid-19.

Erie County currently has a high rate of transmission, according to the CDC. CDC guidelines recommend all people, including those who are fully vaccinated, should wear masks indoors in areas with substantial to high transmission rates of COVID-19.

All other questions about COVID-19 can be directed to 814-451-6700 or ecdhinfo@eriecountypa.gov.

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