

# MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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

## Erie County reports 256 new cases of COVID-19; 10 deaths

Erie, PA — County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper and Erie County Department of Health announce 256 new cases of COVID-19 and 10 deaths reported on Dec. 29 in Erie County, increasing the total case count to 41,026 and increasing the total deaths to 669.

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](https://health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view](https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view)

### Benefit of vaccination

Erie County Department of Health highly recommends vaccination, including boosters, for all eligible residents of Erie County five years and older. 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](https://www.vaccines.gov)
- call 1-800-232-0233

For schedule of local vaccination sites, visit [eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine](https://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.

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## Importance of getting tested

Unvaccinated or vaccinated, testing is recommended if exposed to anyone who has COVID-19 or if exhibiting symptoms such as sore throat, 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 list of local testing sites, visit [eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-testing-information](https://eriecountypa.gov/covid-19/covid-19-testing-information).

Rapid testing results are available in 15 minutes at free mobile testing clinics organized by the Erie County Department of Health. No insurance is needed. 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](https://eriecountypa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/COVID-Testing-Info-Sheet-and-Consent-Form.pdf), printed and filled out in advance before going to the clinic. To follow up results, email [zheeter@lecom.edu](mailto:zheeter@lecom.edu).

- **Monday, Jan. 3, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at Saint John the Evangelist Parish Banquet & Conference Center, 1001 Main St. East, Girard

## Stay home, inform close contacts

To prevent the spread of infection to others, community members should stay home while waiting for test results. Those whose test results are positive, even if they do not have symptoms, should:

- stay home
- stay apart from others in their homes and, if possible, use a separate bathroom
- inform their close contacts to stay home and get tested

For guidance on quarantine and isolation, call the Erie County Department of Health at 814-451-6700.

## 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](https://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.

For guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19 at events and business establishments, contact Erie County Department of Health at [covidresponse@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:covidresponse@eriecountypa.gov). All other questions about COVID-19 can be directed to 814-451-6700 or [ecdhinfo@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:ecdhinfo@eriecountypa.gov).

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