

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Delaware County Weekly COVID-19 Updates

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The following COVID-19 update is brought to you through a collaboration of healthcare partners including Delaware County Health Department, Delaware County Emergency Management Agency, Delaware County Office of Information, and other major healthcare providers.

As of Oct. 6, Delaware County has reported 209 new cases of COVID-19 and 5 new deaths since the last county update on Sept. 29. The county's 7-day positivity rate is at 6.5%; the CDC suggests this number should be well under 5%. The Delaware County Health Department explained that additional positive cases may be present at Ball State University, as positive case reports are assigned based on one's permanent county of residence.

As of print, IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital is treating 24 confirmed cases, 15 of which are Delaware County residents.

“We continue to see a steady number of confirmed COVID-19 cases at IU Health Ball,” said Dr. Jeff Bird, president of IU Health East Central Region. “As a community, we must remain vigilant and cautious. Remember, we are all in this together and we know what we need to do; please continue to wear a mask, practice social distancing and prioritize hand hygiene.”

Despite the increase in new cases, deaths and 7-day positivity rate from the previous week, Delaware County Health Department said the county is expected to maintain its “yellow” ranking on the [Indiana State Department of Health](#) county metrics dashboard, which is updated every Wednesday at noon.

While Delaware County's COVID-19 status has improved over the past few weeks, local health experts caution continued diligence, especially with flu season upon us. Flu vaccinations are important now more than ever, they say.

“The elderly, chronically ill and pregnant patients should always get a flu shot to help prevent their getting influenza, but this year it is even more important to get the shot for all of us due the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Dr. Max Rudicel, chief medical officer at Open Door. “The flu shot won't protect you from getting COVID-19, but it can keep you from getting ill and having weakened defenses to fight off COVID-19.”

Following guidance from health officials, Ball State University is strongly encouraging all students and employees to get a flu vaccine. The university is partnering with Indiana Immunization Coalition, Inc. to administer vaccines to students and employees (as well as spouses and dependents) on Oct. 15 and 16 in Worthen Arena. The vaccines are free to those without insurance. Ball State is also hosting a drive-thru flu vaccine clinic on Tuesday, Oct. 13 for university employees and their immediate families.

The university's number of active cases of COVID-19 has continued to stay relatively low. As of print, [the university's COVID-19 dashboard](#) reports there an estimated 28 active cases among students and staff.

With decreasing COVID-19 cases among Mid-American Conference schools, which includes Ball State, the conference announced it will be resuming football competitions in November. Ball State President [Geoffrey S. Mearns spoke with WLBC's Steve Lindell](#) about the decision last week.

Muncie Community Schools, which had previously had to pause some of its athletics due to quarantined teams, also announced all of its sports teams are now back in action.

“Despite the occasional positive case, we continue to see tremendous compliance with policies and reporting,” said Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, director of public education and CEO of MCS. “Our principals and administrators are doing a tremendous job of contact tracing and communicating with families.”

MCS, as of Oct. 6, has 11 active cases and 133 people in quarantine across its entire school system.

In addition to flu season, health officials urge caution with upcoming Halloween festivities.

“While individual cities and towns may enact varying degrees of rules related to Halloween celebrations (such as trick-or-treating), we encourage our citizens to consider alternatives and encourage anyone participating in trick-or-treating to do so under additional precautions in addition to those used in year’s past,” the Health Department said in [a release](#). “In general, we caution against participation in or hosting of any Halloween gatherings that could result in prolonged or close exposure to large groups. These include but are not limited to traditional parades, indoor Halloween parties, indoor haunted houses, and large hayrides or bonfire activities.”

According to the release, the CDC identifies traditional trick-or-treating as a “higher risk” activity.

For more information on Delaware County’s COVID-19 total cases and deaths, as well as testing location information, visit [dcema.com](#).

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Staying Safe from COVID-19

To keep yourself safe from COVID-19 and to reduce the spread of the disease, wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds, wear a mask when inside public spaces or when in crowded areas, and practice social distancing.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who tested positive, schedule an appointment to get tested as soon as possible. Self-quarantine until you have received negative test results. A list of testing locations can be found on the [Delaware County Indiana Coronavirus hub](#).

Events with more than 250 attendees are required by the state government to be approved by the local health department. If you plan to host an event that may exceed 250 attendees, please contact the Delaware County Health Department at 765-747-7721.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People who have COVID-19 may exhibit any range of these symptoms, and some may even show no symptoms at all. Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after being exposed to the virus. Some symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Anyone with these symptoms should stay home as much as possible and limit their exposure to others. Children who have any of the above symptoms should be kept home from school. For more information, read the Indiana State Department of Health's guidelines for returning to school [here](#).

What should I do if I think I might have COVID-19?

If you have any of the above symptoms or have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you should immediately begin to self-quarantine to prevent spreading the disease to others. You should also call a local health clinic to arrange to be tested. Follow your doctor's orders and continue to self-quarantine until you receive negative test results.

Children who exhibit any of the above symptoms should NOT be sent to school. If your child shows any of the listed symptoms, keep the child home in quarantine and contact your healthcare provider for further guidance.

Where can I get tested?

Several local health clinics offer COVID-19 tests, including Meridian Health Services, Open Door Health Services, and more.

Open Door offers free community tests for individuals with or without symptoms, made available through a partnership with the Delaware County Health Department. (Insurance will billed if applicable.) Those who wish to get tested must register online in advance at opendoorhs.org/testing.

Open Door is also offering on-site testing. If you would like to have on-site testing at your organization or event, email info@opendoorhs.org.

For a complete list of testing locations in Delaware County, visit the [Delaware County Indiana Coronavirus Hub](#). Be advised that some locations may test only those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.