

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## Delaware County Weekly COVID-19 Updates

**Release Date: October 15, 2020**

*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. Delaware County weekly COVID-19 updates are released every Thursday and include information from the Indiana State Department of Health county metrics dashboard, which is updated every Wednesday afternoon.*

Delaware County is experiencing a spike in positive COVID-19 cases. As of Oct. 15, the Delaware County Health Department reported 389 new cases and 5 new deaths since the last update on Oct. 6. These new numbers bring the county's 7-day positivity rate to 9.4%, giving Delaware County an "orange" ranking on the Indiana State Department of Health's county metrics map—a downgrade from a "yellow" ranking during the previous two weeks. In order from best to worst, the colors are blue, yellow, orange and red.

"Until very recently, the caseload and severity of illnesses experienced in East Central Indiana were manageable, with the majority of cases not needing hospitalization," said Jammie Bane, administrator of Delaware County Health Department. "We're seeing some changes to this now, with single-digit hospitalization numbers in the past to numbers approaching 50 at some points now."

As of Oct. 15, IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital is treating 51 positive cases, 43 of which are Delaware County residents. According to Dr. John Peterson, who serves on the Delaware County Board of Health, IU Health Ball Memorial has the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the entire IU Health hospital system.

"It looks like we're at the beginning of a second surge here in the county and in East Central Indiana," Peterson said in a [video update](#) from the Delaware County Commissioners and Board of Health. "The doctors in the community and the administrators at the hospital and the nursing staff are all doing an excellent job of staying on top of things; coordination between different aspects of the medical community has never been better, ... and now it's the citizens' time to really step up and not let our guard down."

Dr. Donna Wilkins, Delaware County Health Officer, said it's important for everyone to not just wear a mask, but to wear one properly. Masks should cover one's mouth and nose, she explained, and cloth masks should have three layers of fabric.

"Masks can prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection by 70–90 percent," Peterson said. "The vaccine that will hopefully be coming out over the next year is probably only going to be 70 percent effective. So mask-wearing, it turns out, is a critical piece."

In addition to wearing a mask, health officials continue to encourage social distancing, avoiding crowds and frequent hand washing.

“The virus doesn’t really care if you’re tired of these restrictions,” Peterson said, noting that many people have become more lax about these precautions, especially with Indiana now being in Stage 5 of the Governor’s reopening plan.

Despite the recent increase in cases, Governor Holcomb announced Wednesday that the state would remain in Stage 5.

“It’s our time as citizens of Delaware County to step up and try to reduce these numbers,” said Shannon Henry, president of the Delaware County Commissioners. “We can do this, but it’s going to take all of us working together.”

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