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Pennsylvania COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring Dashboard Update for Jan.1-7: Case Increases Near 42,300; Percent Positivity at 14.4% and All 67 Counties with Substantial Transmission

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine today released a weekly status update detailing the state’s mitigation efforts based on the COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System [dashboard](#), highlighting a seven-day case increase of 42,322, a statewide percent positivity of 14.4% and all 67 counties with substantial transmission status.

The update includes the following:

- Level of **community transmission** as a basis for the recommendations for Pre-K to 12 schools to determine instructional [models](#).
- Data on **cases among 5-18-year-olds**.
- Cases that reported **visiting a business** among potential locations where exposures may have occurred.
- Updated **travel recommendations**.

The dashboard is designed to provide early warning signs of factors that affect the state’s mitigation efforts. The data available on the Early Warning Monitoring dashboard includes week-over-week case differences, incidence rates, test percent-positivity, and rates of hospitalizations, ventilations and emergency room visits tied to COVID-19. This week’s update compares the period of January 1 – January 7 to the previous seven days, December 25 – December 31.

“Although I am grateful to see our statewide percent positivity decrease for yet another week in a row, we still have more work to do to keep our friends and loved ones safe from further spread across our communities,” Gov. Wolf said. “As Pennsylvanians travel within their communities, I want to take the opportunity to remind them to stay safe by wearing a mask, social distancing and avoiding gatherings of people. If you travel somewhere where they are not doing so, I encourage you to make the right choice to leave.”

As of Thursday, January 7, the state has seen a seven-day case increase of 42,322 cases; the previous seven-day increase was 41,228 cases, indicating 1,034 more new cases across the state over the past week compared to the previous week.

The statewide percent-positivity went down to 14.4% from 15.0% last week. Every county in the state has a concerning percent positivity above five percent. This includes 14 counties with percent positivity at or above 20 percent, a decrease of seven counties from the week before.

“We continue to report widespread community transmission as COVID-19 remains a threat in our communities,” Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. “We need to stay calm, stay alert, and stay safe by wearing a mask, avoiding gatherings, practicing social distancing, answering the call when public health professionals call, and downloading the COVID Alert PA app.”

Community Transmission

As of Friday’s data, all 67 counties were in the [substantial level of community transmission](#), the highest level of transmission.

For the week ending January 7, 67 counties were in the substantial level of transmission.

Cases Among 5-18-Year-Olds

The Department of Health is providing weekly data on the number of statewide cases of COVID-19 among 5 to 18-year-olds.

Throughout the pandemic, there have been 58,045 total cases of COVID-19 among 5 to 18-year-olds. Of that total, 5,128 occurred between January 1 – January 7. For the week of December 25 – December 31, there were 3,929 cases of COVID-19 among 5 to 18-year-olds.

Cases by [demographic group is available on the DOH website](#).

Business Visits

The Department of Health is providing weekly data on the number of individuals who responded to case investigators that they spent time at business establishments (restaurants, bars, gym/fitness centers, salon/barbershops) and at mass gatherings 14 days prior to the onset of COVID-19 symptoms.

It is important to note that due to the recent number of cases, the department is prioritizing case investigations to prevent outbreak. In addition to the need for people to answer the call, the significant number of cases helps contribute to the low percentages in case investigation data. All of this reinforces the need for Pennsylvanians to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Of the 51,260 cases reported between December 7 – January 2, 4.5 percent (2,309) provided an answer to the question as to whether they spent time at a business establishment.

Of those who did provide an answer, 0.3 percent, or 134, answered yes, they visited a business establishment 14 days prior to onset of symptoms:

- 17 percent (23) of those who said yes reported going to a restaurant;
- 51 percent (68) of those who said yes reported going to some other business establishment;
- 22 percent (30) of those who said yes reported going to a bar;
- 9 percent (12) of those who said yes reported going to a gym/fitness center; and
- 18 percent (24) of those who said yes reported going to a salon/barbershop.

Of the 53,947 confirmed cases, 4.4 percent (2,388) answered the question as to whether they attended a mass gathering or other large event. Of the 4.2 percent of cases, 7 percent (101) answered yes to whether they attended a mass gathering or other large event 14 days prior to onset of symptoms.

Compared to data [reported on January 4](#), this week's data saw an increase for people who reported going to a bar (22 percent vs. 19 percent last week) and going to a salon/barbershop (18 percent vs. 16 percent last week), going to some other business (51 percent to 34 percent last week), going to the gym (9 percent vs. 5 percent last week). The data saw a decrease for people who reported going to a restaurant (17 percent vs. 39 percent last week). The number of those who attended a mass gathering or other large event decreased to 6 percent from 7 percent compared to last week.

The numbers above highlight business settings and mass gatherings as possible sites for transmission. It is important to note at this time Pennsylvania is experiencing widespread community transmission. With less than 10 percent of those asked about what types of businesses they visited or if they attended a mass gathering responding to the question, the department is again reminding Pennsylvanians that it is essential that they answer the phone when case investigators call and to provide full and complete information to these clinical professionals.

Travel Recommendations

In November, the Department of Health provided an [updated travel order](#) requiring anyone over the age of 11 who visits from another state to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test or place themselves in a travel quarantine for 14 days upon entering Pennsylvania. Travel quarantine guidance was changed to 10 days on Dec. 5 based on new CDC guidance.

This order does not apply to people who commute to and from another state for work or medical treatment, those who left the state for less than 24 hours, or those complying with a court order, including child custody.

It is important that people understand that this [Order](#) is in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Pennsylvania. A concerning number of recent cases have been linked to travel, and if people are going to travel, we need them to take steps to protect themselves, their loved ones and their community, and that involves having either a negative test, or placing themselves in a quarantine.

Gov. Wolf continues to prioritize the health and safety of all Pennsylvanians through the COVID-19 pandemic. Pennsylvanians should continue to take actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, regardless of in what county they live. This includes wearing a mask or face covering anytime they are in public. COVID-19 has been shown to spread easily in the air and contagious carriers can be asymptomatic. Pennsylvanians are encouraged to wash their hands, social distance, avoid gatherings and download COVID Alert PA.

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