State Public Health Officials Announce Additional COVID-19 Resurgence Mitigations to Take Effect in Regions 5, 7, and 8 on November 11

Press Release - Monday, November 09, 2020

CHICAGO - Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) are announcing additional COVID-19 mitigation efforts that will be implemented in Region 5 (Southern Illinois), Region 7 (Will and Kankakee counties), and Region 8 (Kane and DuPage counties), beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, November 11, 2020. These regions are seeing a test positivity rate that remains above 8 percent and continues to rise after more than 14-days under Tier 1 mitigations, which exceeds the threshold set for establishing additional mitigation measures under the state's Restore Illinois Resurgence Plan.

Region 5 has been under Tier 1 of the state's resurgence mitigation plan since October 22 and Regions 7 and 8 since October 23, after seeing a 7-day rolling average test positivity rate of 8 percent or above for three consecutive days. However, the positivity rate has continued to significantly increase in these regions. Beginning November 11, Regions 5, 7, and 8 will face additional mitigations, such as a tighter gathering cap of 10 individuals rather than 25 and new table caps of six rather than 10 when eating out.

"The situation has worsened considerably in certain areas of the state, with massive increases in the rates of community transmission specifically in three regions. As a result, Regions 5, 7 and 8 - that's Southern Illinois, and Chicago's South and Western Suburbs - will join Region 1, Northwestern Illinois, in Tier 2 of our resurgence mitigations starting Wednesday," **said Governor JB Pritzker.** "Mitigations are only effective if they are followed. The end goal of mitigating the damage the virus is doing to people's lives is this: keep as much of our economy and our schools as open as possible in a safe manner, and when risk rates in the community surge up, take meaningful action to bring things back down in order to protect ourselves and the people we love."

"We continue to see COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths increase," **said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike.** "Science tells us that when you are in close contact with someone, there is an increased risk for virus transmission. We must reduce the opportunities for the virus to spread. Only when the virus can no longer sustainably spread can we end this pandemic. It will take all of us working together, so please, be part of the solution and not the problem and help us reduce the risk of spread."

For Regions 5, 7, and 8, additional mitigation measures taking effect November 11 include the following:

Bars and Restaurants

- Reduce party size from 10 to six individuals

Meetings, Social Events and Gatherings

- Maximum indoor/outdoor gathering size of 10 individuals
    - o Applicable to professional, cultural and social group gatherings
    - o This does not reduce the overall facility capacity dictated by general business guidance, such as office, retail, etc.
    - o Not applicable to students participating in-person classroom learning
    - o Not applicable to sports, see sports guidance

Organized Group Recreational Activities

- Limit to lesser of 25 guests or 25 percent of overall room capacity both indoors and outdoors
- Groups limited to 10 individuals or fewer
- Does not apply to fitness centers

These mitigations do not apply to schools.

From the onset of the pandemic, the Illinois Department for Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has launched a variety of small business and community relief programs. The administration continues to work aggressively to support small businesses impacted by the ongoing pandemic, distributing nearly $100 million to Regions 5, 7, and 8 thus far, including business grants and community funding. These programs are guided by an equity framework and seek to address the hardest hit communities with emergency relief dollars. For more information on programs available for businesses and communities, please visit **DCEO's website**.

Regions 5, 7 and 8 have seen alarming trends in recent months. As of today, Region 5 is seeing an average positivity rate of 11.5%, with more than twice as many COVID-19 patients entering a hospital each day compared to the summer peak in late August. Regions 7 and 8 each have positivity rates of 13%, with nearly one in seven tests in these regions coming back positive.

In response to the rising test positivity rate statewide, the administration continues to strengthen its nation-leading testing operation. Last week, Illinois surpassed 8 million tests and on November 6 the state reported a record high of 98,401 tests within a 24-hour period. Although the administration continues to build upon this progress, the state's rate of growth in positivity is outpacing the growth in testing. Given that testing remains readily available throughout the state, it is critical for residents to get tested before developing symptoms. To find the nearest testing center, please visit **DPH.Illinois.Gov/Testing**.

In the coming days, IDPH will continue to track the positivity rate in Regions 5, 7, and 8 to determine if mitigations can be relaxed, if additional mitigations are required, or if current mitigation should remain in place. IDPH has been working closely with local health departments in the three regions to provide education to the public and offer information to businesses and organizations on safe ways to reopen.

All 11 regions continue to operate under resurgence mitigation framework. A full list of mitigation measures pertaining to some businesses and industries may be found on the DCEO website **here**.

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