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NCDHHS

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NCDHHS Updates County Alert System, Shows Continued Progress in NC

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services today updated the COVID-19 County Alert System, which shows six red counties — a decrease from 27 red counties on the previous Feb. 22 County Alert System and the fewest red counties in the state since the start of the County Alert System.

RALEIGH

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services today updated the COVID-19 County Alert System, which shows six red counties — a decrease from 27 red counties on the previous Feb. 22 County Alert System and the fewest red counties in the state since the start of the County Alert System.

"North Carolinians are pulling together to slow the spread of the virus by getting vaccinated and keeping up the 3Ws," said NCDHHS Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D. "While we are pleased with the improving trends, there is still more work to do to protect each other."

Today's update also lists 34 orange counties and 60 yellow counties — both changes from 40 orange counties and 33 yellow counties on Feb 22. (/news/press-releases/ncdhhs-updates-county-alert-system-shows-progress)

North Carolina's key metrics continue to move in a positive direction with decreasing trends in numbers of COVID-19 cases reported each day, people being hospitalized with COVID-19, people in the intensive care unit and the percent of tests that are positive. NCDHHS also announced (/news/press-releases/covid-19-cases-declining-rapidly-north-carolina-long-term-care-settings)Thursday case rates are down more than 15-fold in long-term care facility settings. The department is also now expecting K-12 schools to open for in-person instruction (/news/press-releases/ncdhhs-updates-guidance-k-12-schools-instructs-schools-open-person-instruction) for students to the fullest extent possible.

With vaccine supplies are still limited, there are critical actions North Carolinians can continue to take to slow the spread of COVID-19, regardless of whether their county is currently in the yellow, orange or red tier. Individuals, businesses, community organizations and public officials all have a responsibility to take these recommended actions listed in the County Alert System report, in addition to following the requirements in existing Executive Orders (https://www.nc.gov/covid-19/covid-19-orders-directives?mc_cid=522054584f&mc_eid=0ec5f349aa) and NCDHHS

guidance. (https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance?mc_cid=522054584f&mc_eid=0ec5f349aa)

Individuals should continue to wear a mask, maintain their physical distance from others when outside their home and avoid crowds, especially when indoors. Those who are over 65 or are at higher risk for developing serious illness should stay home as much as possible, unless they have been vaccinated. Continued adherence to the 3Ws (https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/slow-spread/know-your-ws-wear-wait-wash?mc_cid=522054584f&mc_eid=0ec5f349aa) – wearing a face mask, waiting six feet apart and washing hands often – along with more North Carolinians getting vaccinated (https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/vaccinations?mc_cid=ae54b0c29f&mc_eid=764de28299) is slowing the spread of the virus.

Red and orange counties need to do even more to slow the spread of COVID-19 in their communities; it is strongly recommended these counties go further and build upon current requirements outlined in the County Alert System.

The COVID-19 County Alert System gives individuals, businesses and community organizations and public officials a tool to understand how their county is faring and to make decisions about actions to take slow the spread of the virus, and it uses COVID-19 case rates, the percent of tests that are positive and hospital impact within the county to categorize counties into the following tiers:

- Yellow: Significant Community Spread
- Orange: Substantial Community Spread
- Red: Critical Community Spread

This press release is related to: