



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 16, 2020

Dallas County Reports Record High Number of New Cases and Hospitalizations with 2,438 New Positive 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Cases and 12 Deaths Including 496 Probable Cases

DALLAS -- As of 12:00 pm December 16, 2020, Dallas County Health and Human Services is reporting 2,438 additional positive cases of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Dallas County, 1,942 confirmed cases and 496 probable cases. There is a cumulative total of 149,533 cases (PCR test). There is a cumulative total of 16,697 probable cases (antigen test). A total of 1,403 Dallas County residents have lost their lives due to COVID-19 illness.

The additional deaths being reported today include the following:

- A man in his 40's who was a resident of the City of Garland. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 50's who was a resident of the City of Seagoville. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 50's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He was found deceased at home, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A woman in her 60's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. She had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of a long-term care facility in the City of Dallas. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He had been hospitalized, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Richardson. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Cedar Hill. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of a long-term care facility in the City of Dallas. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.

The provisional seven-day average of daily new confirmed and probable cases (by date of test collection) for CDC week 49 has increased to **1,647**, which is a rate of **62.5** daily new cases per 100,000 residents—the highest case rate in Dallas County since the beginning of the pandemic. The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 remains high, with **21.6%** of symptomatic patients presenting to area hospitals testing positive in week 49 (week ending 12/5/20).

Over the past 30 days, there have been 4,520 COVID-19 cases in school-aged children and staff reported from 735 separate K-12 schools in Dallas County, including 681 staff members. Of these cases, 534 have been associated with extracurricular activities, including athletics.

There are currently 93 active long-term care facility outbreaks. Over the past 30 days, a total of 848 COVID-19 cases have been reported from these facilities, including 317 staff members. Of these cases 32 have been hospitalized, and 33 have died, including 2 deaths of staff members. Twenty-six outbreaks of COVID-19 in congregate-living facilities (e.g. homeless shelters, group homes, and halfway homes) have been reported in the past 30 days associated with 165 cases, including 6 hospitalizations. One facility has reported 89 COVID-19 outbreak cases since October.

Of all confirmed cases requiring hospitalization to date, more than two-thirds have been under 65 years of age. Diabetes has been an underlying high-risk health condition reported in about a third of all hospitalized patients with COVID-19. Of the total confirmed deaths reported to date, about 22% have been associated with long-term care facilities. New cases are being reported as a daily aggregate, with a more detailed summary report updated Tuesdays and Fridays. Tuesday's data summary is available at:

<https://www.dallascounty.org/departments/dchhs/2019-novel-coronavirus/daily-updates.php>

Local health experts use hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and ER visits as three of the key indicators as part of determining the COVID-19 Risk Level (color-coded risk) and corresponding guidelines for activities during our COVID-19 response. There were 838 COVID-19 patients in acute care in Dallas County for the period ending on Tuesday, December 15. The number of emergency room visits for COVID-19 like symptoms in Dallas County was 565 for the same time-period, which represents around 22 percent of all emergency department visits in the county according to information reported to the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council. This is a record high number of hospitalizations in Dallas County. You can find additional information on risk-level monitoring data [here](#).

On December 3, Trauma Service Area E (TSA E), which includes Dallas County and the greater Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, reached seven consecutive days where the percentage of COVID-19 confirmed patients in regional hospitals, as a percentage of available hospital beds, exceeded 15 percent. According to Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-32 (GA-32), this makes TSA E an area with high hospitalizations and certain occupancy reductions are automatically triggered by reaching this threshold.

Additionally, the chart below is from the December 15, 2020 Dallas County Health and Human Services 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Summary. The chart shows a summary of confirmed and probable cases and deaths since late June in Dallas County.

Summary of weekly COVID-19 confirmed and probable cases, deaths, and percentage positive laboratory tests, Dallas County (CDC Weeks 25 - 49)

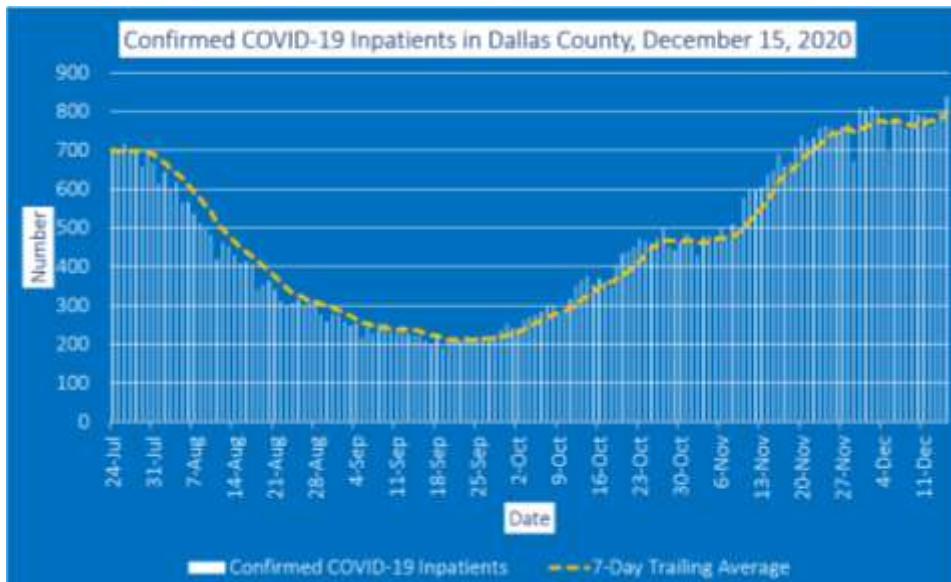
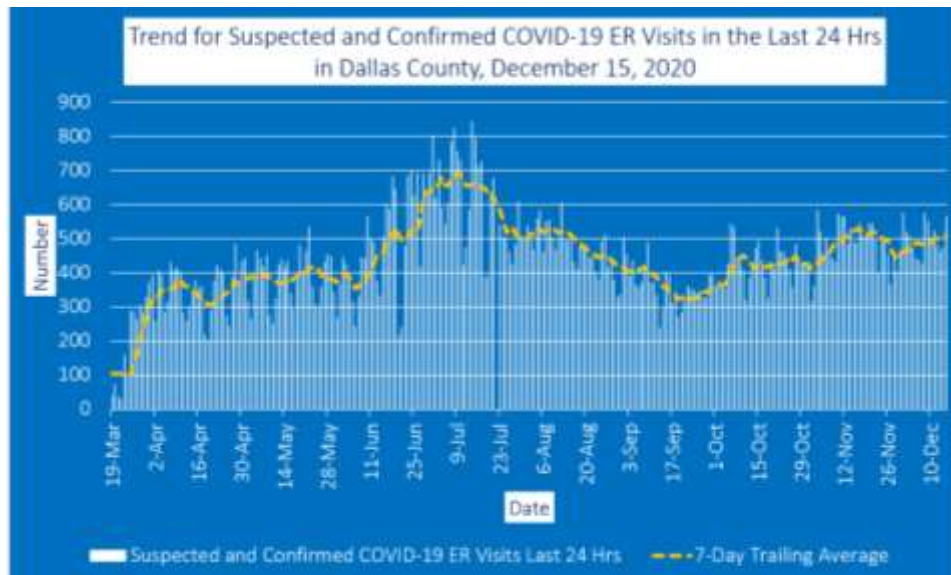
CDC Week	Week Ending	Total Confirmed and Probable Cases	Total School-Aged Cases (5 to 17 years)	Daily Average New Confirmed and Probable Cases*	Daily Average New Confirmed and Probable Deaths**	Percentage of Tests Positive for SARS-CoV-2***
25	6/20/2020	5,854	472	836	5	26.9%
26	6/27/2020	8,610	647	1,230	8	30.5%
27	7/4/2020	8,942	699	1,277	9	30.0%
28	7/11/2020	9,191	865	1,313	9	26.6%
29	7/18/2020	6,601	688	943	11	21.7%
30	7/25/2020	4,521	493	646	15	19.3%
31	8/1/2020	3,350	418	479	12	15.9%
32	8/8/2020	2,844	320	406	9	14.0%
33	8/15/2020	2,158	183	308	9	13.2%
34	8/22/2020	1,757	187	251	6	11.2%
35	8/29/2020	2,195	188	314	6	10.8%
36	9/5/2020	2,068	162	295	3	10.5%
37	9/12/2020	1,870	198	267	3	9.7%
38	9/19/2020	2,240	239	320	2	11.4%
39	9/26/2020	2,497	261	357	2	10.7%
40	10/3/2020	2,656	306	379	2	10.0%
41	10/10/2020	3,578	452	511	2	11.5%
42	10/17/2020	4,473	554	639	2	14.3%
43	10/24/2020	5,299	691	757	4	15.1%
44	10/31/2020	5,438	616	777	5	15.0%
45	11/7/2020	7,722	944	1,103	5	15.3%
46	11/14/2020	10,075	1,307	1,439	7	19.8%
47	11/21/2020	9,993	1,214	1,428	6	20.4%
48	11/28/2020	8,309	879	1,187	6	21.7%
49	12/5/2020	11,528	1,625	1,647	4	21.6%

* For 7-day time period for respective CDC week by date of test collection

** For 7-day time period for respective CDC week by date of death

*** Percentage positive PCR tests in symptomatic patients presenting to area hospital emergency department reporting surveillance data





“Today’s number of 2,438 cases is 250 more new cases than we have ever experienced in any one day. We also are reporting 12 more deaths from COVID today. With the unprecedented high spread we are experiencing, it is important that people plan ahead to avoid crowds. Holiday shopping for both food and gifts can be done online or over the phone with curbside or at-home delivery. Although this requires a little more planning, it will be well worth it in keeping you, your family, your community and ultimately your country a little bit stronger.

Masking around anyone who you do not live with while in an indoor setting is also critical to protecting you and the community at large.

Now is the time for the small sacrifices of patriotism as we protect not just ourselves but people we don't even know from the COVID virus, recognizing that any outbreak will eventually lead to someone, whether you know them or not, getting the virus and having a very bad outcome. By avoiding crowds, and avoiding spreading the virus, we protect not only those we know and love, but that person we may not know who will pay a heavy price for others' get-togethers or attendance at crowded venues. It's up to all of us to use the two 'vaccines' we have at our disposal now, the mask and the doctors' fact-based recommendations, until the vaccine shot can be available for everyone," said Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins.

All Dallas County COVID-19 Updates and Information can be found here:

<https://www.dallascounty.org/covid-19/> and all guidance documents can be found here:
<https://www.dallascounty.org/covid-19/guidance-health.php>

Specific Guidance for the Public:

- [Dallas County COVID-19 Related Health Guidance for the Public](#)
- [Dallas County Measures for Protecting An Institution's Workforce from COVID-19 Infection: Employer/Employee Guidance](#)
- [Dallas County Guidance for Individuals at High-Risk for Severe COVID-19](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends taking everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don't live in your household.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others and continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to seek medical care
- Wash your hands often and with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and help young children to do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-base hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces daily using a regular household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve, not your hands. Immediately wash your hands.
- Monitor your health daily. Be alert for symptoms. Take your temperature and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

Additional information is available at the following websites:

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- CDC Travel Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- DSHS: <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>
- DCHHS: <https://www.dallascounty.org/departments/dchhs/2019-novel-coronavirus.php>

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