



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 26, 2020

Dallas County Reports 1,318 New Positive 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Cases and 10 Deaths Including 229 Probable Cases

DALLAS -- As of 2:00 pm December 26, 2020, Dallas County Health and Human Services is reporting 1,318 positive cases of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Dallas County, 1,089 confirmed cases and 229 probable cases. There is a cumulative total of 161,278 confirmed cases (PCR test). There is a cumulative total of 19,528 probable cases (antigen test). A total of 1,554 Dallas County residents have lost their lives due to COVID-19 illness.

The additional deaths being reported today include the following:

- A woman in her 20's who was a resident of the City of Irving. She expired in an area hospital ED, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 50's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He expired in an area hospital ED, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A woman in her 50's who was a resident of the City of Seagoville. She 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 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 Garland. He had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A woman in her 70's who was a resident of the City of Irving. She had been critically ill in an area hospital, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A woman in her 70's who was a resident of the City of Irving. She expired in hospice care, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 70's who was a resident of the City of Rowlett. 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 Dallas. He expired in an area hospital ED, and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 80's who was a resident of a long-term care facility in the City of Lancaster. He expired in the facility, 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 50 was to **1,722**, which is a rate of **65.3** daily new cases per 100,000 residents. The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 remains high, with **23.3%** of symptomatic patients presenting to area hospitals testing positive in week 50 (week ending 12/12/20). Since the beginning of the pandemic, 3,864 healthcare workers and first responders have been reported with COVID-19 in Dallas County.

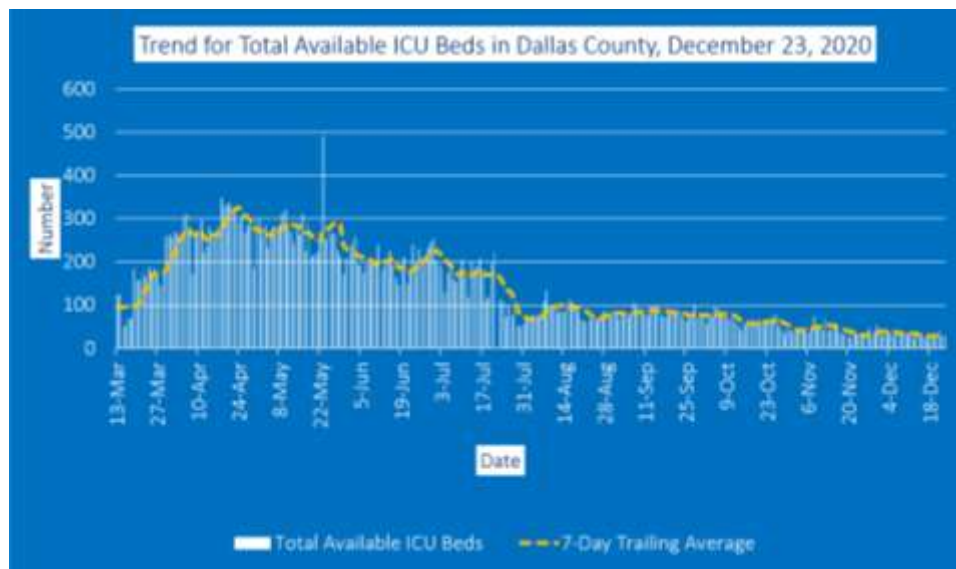
Over the past 30 days, there have been 4,955 COVID-19 cases in school-aged children and staff reported from 764 separate K-12 schools in Dallas County, including 692 staff members. Since the beginning of the pandemic, 21 school nurses have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

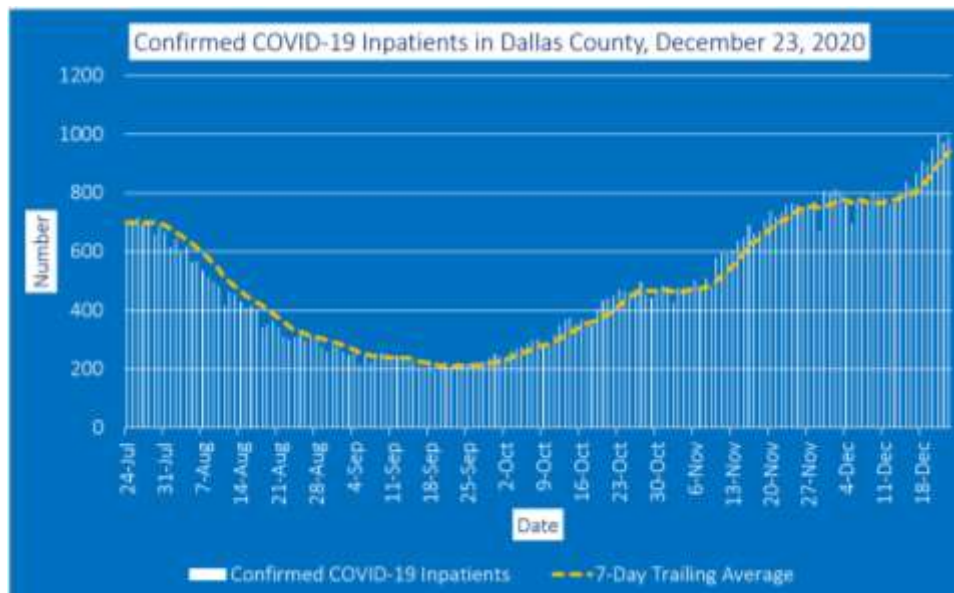
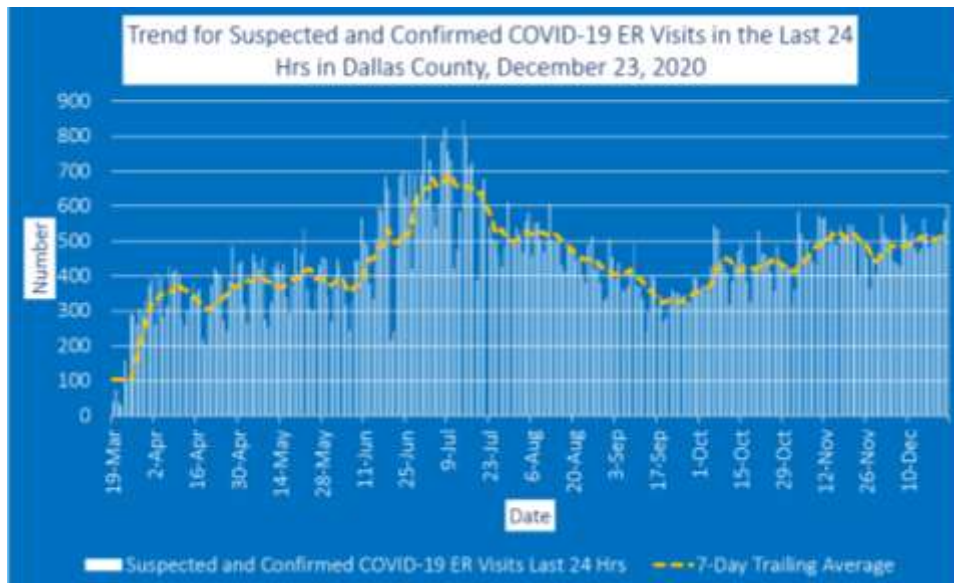
There are currently 100 active long-term care facility outbreaks. Since the beginning of the pandemic, a total of 2,696 residents and 1,590 healthcare workers in long-term facilities in Dallas have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Of these, 640 have been hospitalized and 323 have died. About 22% of all deaths reported to date have been associated with long-term care facilities. Thirty-nine 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 172 cases, including 6 hospitalizations. One facility has reported 93 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. New cases are being reported as a daily aggregate, with a more detailed summary report updated Tuesdays and Fridays 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 989 COVID-19 patients in acute care in Dallas County for the period ending on Wednesday, December 23. The number of emergency room visits for COVID-19 like symptoms in Dallas County was 602 for the same time-period, which represents around 24 percent of all emergency department visits in the county according to information reported to the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council. These numbers remain near records highs and hospital and public health officials are concerned about additional increases following the holidays. Given the regional and national surges, the ability to flex or hire additional staff may be more limited. Hospitals are our last defense and they are being stretched. Please take personal responsibility to stop the spread of COVID-19 by following public health guidance. Avoid meeting outside your household, avoid indoor settings such as restaurants, bars, and malls, and stay home to the fullest extent possible. #StayHomeStaySafe was critical to our success in the spring and summer and with higher numbers today we must commit to that strategy again. 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.





“Today we report 1318 cases and 10 deaths from the data processed late Wednesday that we would have reported on Thursday if not for the holiday. It’s good news that we are reporting less deaths than we have seen in other days this week. I hope everyone had a restful, safe and joyous Christmas Eve and Christmas.

Let's keep making the smart decisions and small sacrifices necessary to help our healthcare heroes help keep us safe in this time of high spread. This includes avoiding crowds by thinking ahead and utilizing online and curbside shopping for returns and after Christmas sales. Similarly, it requires thinking ahead for fun ways to celebrate New Years that are also safe and follow doctors' advice to avoid crowds and forgo family and friend get-togethers.

It won't always be like this. In fact, next year, our celebrations should be back to large and community-wide. But for now, patriotism and public health dictates that we continue to make those smart sacrifices that will keep not only ourselves and our family safe, but make our community and our country strong during this time of high spread. I'm thankful for all of you and the courage you've shown all year and I look forward to a better 2021 for all of us," 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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