



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2021

Dallas County Reports 215 New Positive 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Cases and 10 Deaths, Including 33 Probable Cases

DALLAS -- As of 2:00 pm March 17, 2021 Dallas County Health and Human Services is reporting 215 additional positive cases of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Dallas County, 182 confirmed cases and 33 probable cases. There is a cumulative total of 250,028 confirmed cases (PCR test). There is a cumulative total of 37,423 probable cases (antigen test). A total of 3,330 Dallas County residents have lost their lives due to COVID-19 illness.

Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) is providing initial vaccinations to those most at risk of exposure to COVID-19 and over 174,000 total doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered at the Fair Park mega-vaccine clinic, which started operations on Monday, January 11. Vaccine operations for both first and second doses at Fair Park will continue through Saturday.

The additional deaths being reported today include the following:

- A woman in her 30'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 50's who was a resident of a long term care facility in the City of Desoto. He had been critically ill in an area hospital and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 60'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 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
- A man in his 60'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 60's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. He had been hospitalized and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A woman in her 60's who was a resident of the City of Dallas. She expired in an area hospital ED 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 Seagoville. He had been critically ill in an area hospital and had underlying high risk health conditions.
- A man in his 80'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.

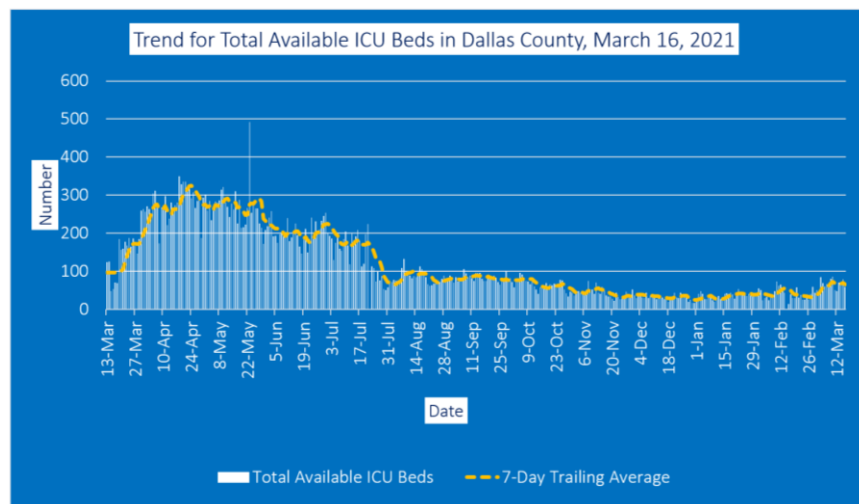
To date, a total of eleven cases of the SARS-CoV-2 variant B.1.1.7 and one case of a B.1.526 variant have been identified in residents of Dallas County. One was hospitalized and five had history of recent domestic travel outside of Texas. The provisional seven-day average of daily new confirmed and probable cases (by date of test collection) for CDC week 9 was **291**, which is a rate of **11.0** daily new cases per 100,000 residents. The

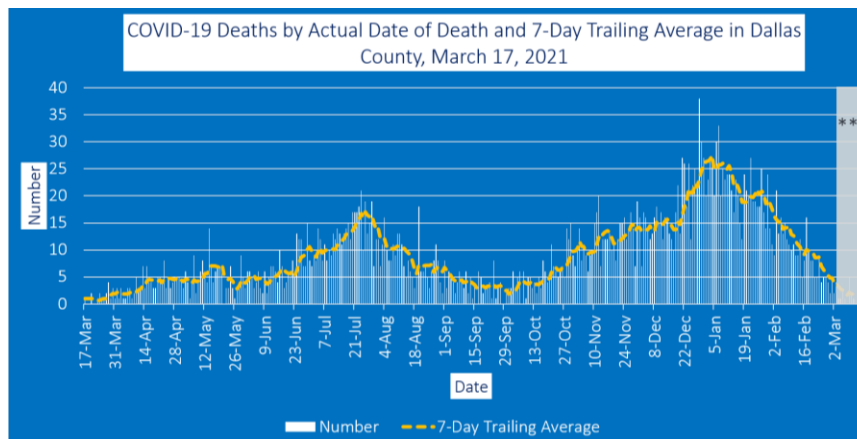
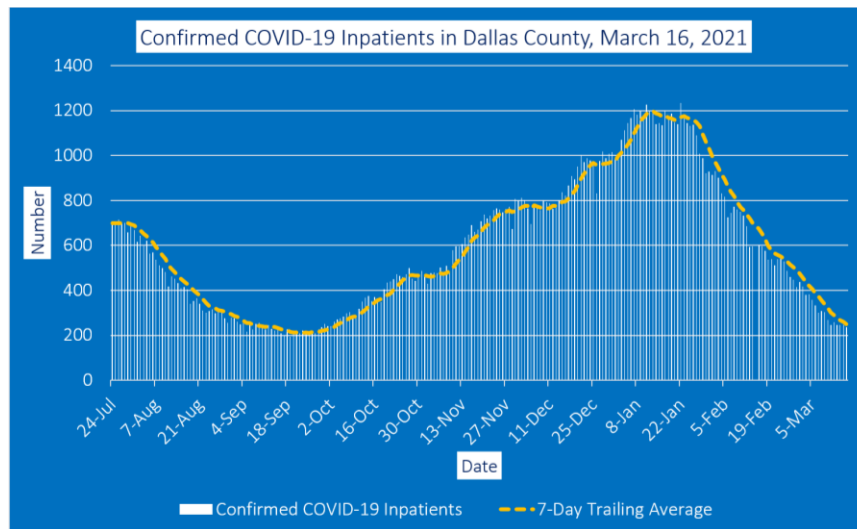
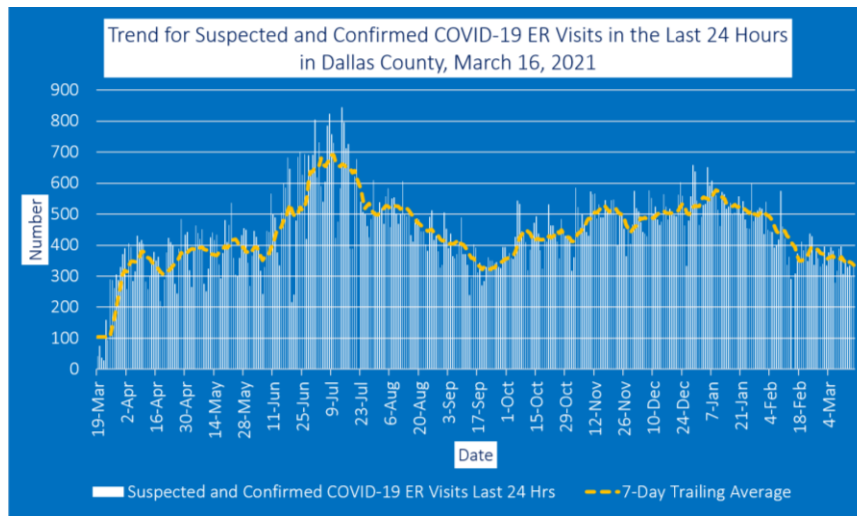
percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 remains high, with **9.9%** of symptomatic patients presenting to area hospitals testing positive in week 9 (week ending 3/6/21).

During the past 30 days, there were 1,714 COVID-19 cases in school-aged children and staff reported from 504 separate K-12 schools in Dallas County. There are currently 30 active long-term care facility outbreaks. A cumulative total of 4,236 residents and 2,335 healthcare workers in long-term facilities in Dallas have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Of these, 988 have been hospitalized and 652 have died. About 22% of all deaths reported to date have been associated with long-term care facilities. Twelve 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. A cumulative total of 416 residents and 205 staff members in congregate-living facilities in Dallas have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

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 more detailed summary reports updated Tuesday and Friday evenings are 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 237 COVID-19 patients in acute care in Dallas County for the period ending on Tuesday, March 16. The number of emergency room visits for COVID-19 like symptoms in Dallas County was 335 for the same time-period, which represents around 12 percent of all emergency department visits in the county according to information reported to the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council. Please be mindful of following CDC travel guidance over spring break and spring holidays. We remain concerned for additional waves due to a potential rise in variants and because community spread remains high creating an environment for cases to reignite. We encourage everyone to follow public health guidance, continue masking and avoid crowded and non-essential indoor settings. Updated UTSW forecasting indicates hospitalizations between 150-250 and daily case counts of 460 by April 1. You can find additional information on risk-level monitoring data [here](#).





“Today we report an additional 215 new COVID positive cases and 10 deaths. The numbers continue to improve. Currently our R-naught factor, which is the replication factor of current COVID cases, is .69. This means that for every 100 cases of COVID in the community now, they will be replaced by 69 cases. This number ties for the steepest drop we’ve seen since the beginning of COVID. Also, our positivity rate at hospitals is below 5%. This number was many multiples of that only two months ago.

The reason for the steady improvement is vaccination, and while the State continues to shortchange Dallas and Tarrant counties on their vaccinations, thousands of people in both counties are getting vaccinated each and every day. This is also happening in Denton and Collin counties, and on a lesser scale, in all of our North Texas

counties. You do not need to live in the county where you are vaccinated. Sign up to be vaccinated in any place you're willing to drive.

Today a person asked me what their 35-year-old daughter could do to become vaccinated. I asked if she had registered anywhere and they said no because they believed that she was too young to be vaccinated. However, they were concerned because she has a serious debilitating condition and other underlying health conditions. This person likely will qualify very quickly due to an underlying health condition and is an example of why people need to register in order to get a shot. Even if you do not feel that you qualify currently, register on as many websites as you can, so that when your time comes, you'll be registered and among the first people to be able to get a shot in your group. In the meantime, keep wearing your mask, washing your hands, and avoiding those large crowds, and together, we will defeat COVID," 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-based 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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