



April 20, 2022

With the approval of a second COVID booster dose, the number of appointments for last week's clinic jumped. DCHD administered approximately 130 shots, over 100 of which were Moderna second boosters. It's good to see interest in the additional protection, as IDPH is reporting a steady rise in COVID cases throughout the state, due mostly to the BA.2 omicron subvariant. In fact, while Douglas County is still in the low transmission category, neighboring Champaign County recently was upped to medium transmission.

The three metrics by which transmission level is determined are: *total new COVID cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, new COVID hospital admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, and the 7-day average percentage of staffed inpatient beds that are COVID patients*. Right now in Region 6, 54 of 153 ICU beds are available, meaning 99 are filled. Of the 306 ventilators in the region, 278 are available, meaning 28 are in use.

Current FDA age approvals for COVID vaccines are: age 18+ for J&J and Moderna, and age 5+ for Pfizer. Moderna has announced it will soon be seeking authorization for two small-dose shots for children age 6 months to 6 years, and is also seeking dosage approval for older children and teens, but as of today neither of these has happened. The Moderna vaccine is approved for ages 6-12 in Europe and Canada. Pfizer continues to work on its COVID vaccine regimen for children under 5, with an announcement expected soon.

Where does Douglas County stand in vaccination numbers? Recent IDPH figures show 51.81% have at least one dose, 48.04% are fully vaccinated (primary series completed), and 4,514 boosters have been administered. Testing at our J600 facility is seeing an uptick as well, with 46 appointments on the schedule from April 11-15.

Masking news ...

Under the heading of surprise announcements, on April 18 a federal judge in Florida ruled the mask mandate on public transportation was overreaching and unenforceable, bringing an immediate end to the requirement of masks on public transit and associated hubs, in airports and on airplanes. In order to align with this federal ruling, the following day the State of Illinois issued Executive Order 2022-06, reflecting these changes.

It should be noted that local municipalities retain the right to establish their own mitigations, including masking requirements on public transportation. Additionally, the CDC continues to recommend that the immune-compromised, those who cannot be vaccinated, and those in congregate facilities wear masks to protect the vulnerable; and that masks be worn in areas of high transmission. Getting vaccinated and staying up-to-date on all recommended boosters is still considered the most effective tool in fighting the spread of COVID-19.

1250 East US HWY 36
Tuscola, IL 61953



Public Health
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Telephone: (217) 253-4137
FAX: (217) 253-3421

Douglas County Health Department

Health coverage for immigrants ...

I have attached information about available healthcare coverage options for people who don't qualify for other programs due to their immigration status. An explanation of these programs, eligibility requirements, and contact information is listed. You can also find this information on DCHD social media.

As always, thank you for your support of our efforts and let us know if there are other ways we can be of help.

Colleen Lehmann, public health liaison
Douglas County Health Department
217-253-4137 ext. 1229
Colleen.lehmann@douglascountyil.com