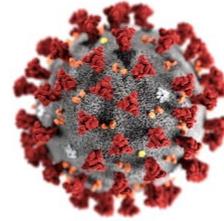




Mayor Brindle's COVID-19 Update December 29, 2020



The Department of Health reports 62 new cases of COVID-19 in Westfield from December 18 - 23. Due to the holidays, this data reflects six days of cases instead of the usual seven days we report. We will provide another update early next week that recaps the data for the entire month of December.

Of the 62 cases:

- 17 cases remain under investigation
- 13 cases had a positive household contact
- 8 cases were unable to be reached
- 8 cases had no known exposure
- 5 cases were exposed at work
- 3 cases were exposed by a friend
- 2 cases were hospitalized (ages 65 and 94)
- 1 case was associated with a long term care facility

The ages of these cases ranged from 1 to 94, broken down as follows:

- Age 9 and under: 8 cases
- Age 10-19: 7 cases
- Age 20-29: 12 cases
- Age 30-39: 7 cases
- Age 40-49: 6 cases
- Age 50-59: 12 cases
- Age 60-69: 2 cases
- Age 70-79: 6 cases
- Age 80-89: No cases
- Age 90 and above: 2 cases

These numbers reflect the Health Department's COVID numbers, inclusive of rapid tests, as they are a more accurate reflection of community spread than what is being reported by the state reporting system. Details on the official statewide numbers, which do not include rapid tests, can always be found on the NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard.

STATE AND COUNTY UPDATES

- Governor Murphy reported that, statewide, the number of COVID deaths in December is the most of any month since May. However, the statewide rate of transmission has remained below 1.0 since December 21.
- The State Department of Health reports that nearly 70,000 people in New Jersey received the COVID vaccine as of Monday. The first people to get the doses are health care workers (representing about 650,000 people in the state), as well as members and staff of long-term care facilities.

- As part of Phase 1A in New Jersey's COVID vaccination plan, health care workers can get vaccinated at the following locations in Union County: City of Elizabeth Health Department (418 Palmer Street), ShopRite Pharmacy of Clark (76 Central Avenue), and ShopRite Pharmacy of Elizabeth (865 West Grand Street). These sites are operating by appointment only and documentation of health care status will be required. For a full list of vaccination sites for health care workers throughout New Jersey, visit [covid19.nj.gov/pages/healthcare-worker-covid-19-vaccine-locations](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/VaccinePhasesFactSheet.pdf). For additional information about New Jersey's phased approach to COVID vaccinations, visit www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/VaccinePhasesFactSheet.pdf.

LOCAL UPDATES

- I'm thrilled to report that the Historic Preservation Commission has voted to recommend the historic designation of another property, 417 Prospect Street, at the request of its owner, Joyce Goldstein. Joyce has lived in the home, which was built in 1865, since 1980. I am very grateful to Joyce for her commitment to preservation, and to the HPC for their ongoing dedication to prioritizing voluntary designation and collaboration with property owners to save these pieces of Westfield's history. The addition of this property brings the total number of designations to five in the past two years, representing the most in recent Town history.
- As a reminder, the Town will begin its new curbside recycling service with Grand Sanitation on Monday, January 4. Information has been mailed to all households, which should arrive in the next few days, and is also available on our website at westfieldnj.gov/recycling. While accepted curbside items and biweekly service will remain the same, it's important to remember that collection zones and assigned pickup days have changed for 2021, so please take the time to familiarize yourself with the new information. A detailed online map of the new collection zones can be found at bit.ly/2021recyclingzones.
- The Conservation Center re-opens on Saturday, January 2 from 9:00AM to 3:00PM, where leaves, recyclable materials, and Christmas trees can be deposited without a permit each Saturday in January.
- Public Works expects to complete the second round of leaf collection by the end of this week, with the third and final pass expected to begin on Monday, January 4, followed by street sweeping as weather permits. As always, you can see the daily progress of the crews' pickup locations on our website (westfieldnj.gov/leafcollection), on the Town's Facebook page, or by subscribing to Town emails at westfieldnj.gov/townupdates.
- Tomorrow, I will share my 2020 Year in Review, detailing the progress against our goals in a uniquely challenging year. On Tuesday night, January 5, we will kick off our official proceedings for 2021 at the Annual Organization Meeting. During the meeting, we will make formal appointments to the 2021 Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Councils to continue to advance the fantastic work driven by our dedicated resident volunteers. I will also deliver the State of the Town Address to discuss the exciting possibilities for Westfield's post-pandemic future and how that shapes the upcoming year. The agenda and full details for joining the meeting via Zoom will be posted on our website and social media accounts.

I know we are all ready to welcome a new year and put 2020 behind us, and I'm asking everyone again to please exercise caution and put all best practices in place when celebrating New Year's Eve. As much as we all want to send this year off, please do so responsibly -- without indoor gatherings and keeping at a safe distance outdoors -- in order to help stop the spread of COVID.

Thank you, as always, for continuing to look out for each other. Happy New Year!

The Department of Health reports 71 new cases of COVID-19 in Westfield from December 11 - 17. Of these cases:

- 21 cases had no known exposure
- 14 cases had a positive household contact
- 13 cases were unable to be reached
- 12 cases remain under investigation
- 6 cases had known exposure
- 2 were hospitalized (ages 79 and 72)
- 2 cases were exposed by a friend
- case refused the interview

The ages of these cases ranged from 2 months old to 79, broken down as follows:

- Age 9 and under: 6 cases
- Age 10-19: 6 cases
- Age 20-29: 13 cases
- Age 30-39: 9 cases
- Age 40-49: 10 cases
- Age 50-59: 13 cases
- Age 60-69: 9 cases
- Age 70-79: 4 cases
- Age 80-89: No cases
- Age 90 and above: No cases
- Age unconfirmed: 1 case

These numbers reflect the Health Department's COVID numbers, inclusive of rapid tests, as they are a more accurate reflection of community spread than what is being reported by the state reporting system. Details on the official statewide numbers, which do not include rapid tests, can always be found on the NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard.

The state's seven-day average for new cases is down 3.5% from a week ago, but 27.6% higher than a month ago. Today, Governor Murphy reported that statewide hospitalizations, transmission rate, and positivity rate all decreased -- not yet over enough consecutive days to form a trend, but moving in the right direction.

The Governor also reported that New Jersey is on schedule to open six vaccine “mega sites” across the state in early January to vaccinate the frontline health care workers who are part of Category 1A in the following locations:

- Bergen County: Meadowlands Complex
- Morris County: Rockaway Townsquare Mall
- Middlesex County: New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center
- Burlington County: Moorestown Mall
- Gloucester County: Rowan College of South Jersey
- Atlantic County: Atlantic City Convention Center

These sites are also expected to accommodate the 1B category of essential workers, before moving to the 1C category of adults 65+ with high-risk medical conditions. In addition, 200+ satellite vaccination sites are expected to open over time in hospitals, federally qualified health centers, urgent care centers, chain pharmacies, and localized sites created in coordination with county and local health departments.

The state is also in final preparations to administer vaccinations to staff and residents at long-term care facilities beginning December 28.

At a more local level, Regional Health Officer Megan Avallone reports the wonderful news that Union County could receive the initial doses of the vaccine as early as next week. Once the vaccine is received, Union County will begin rolling out its vaccination plan for the 1A category of health care workers.

It’s important to remember that the state’s plan aspires to a 70% vaccination level, which will take time. Please continue to keep up with best practices like social distancing, avoiding indoor gatherings, and wearing a face covering -- all of which remain critically important in helping to slow the spread while we wait for the vaccine.

Thank you for continuing to do your part. Have a great weekend everyone!