



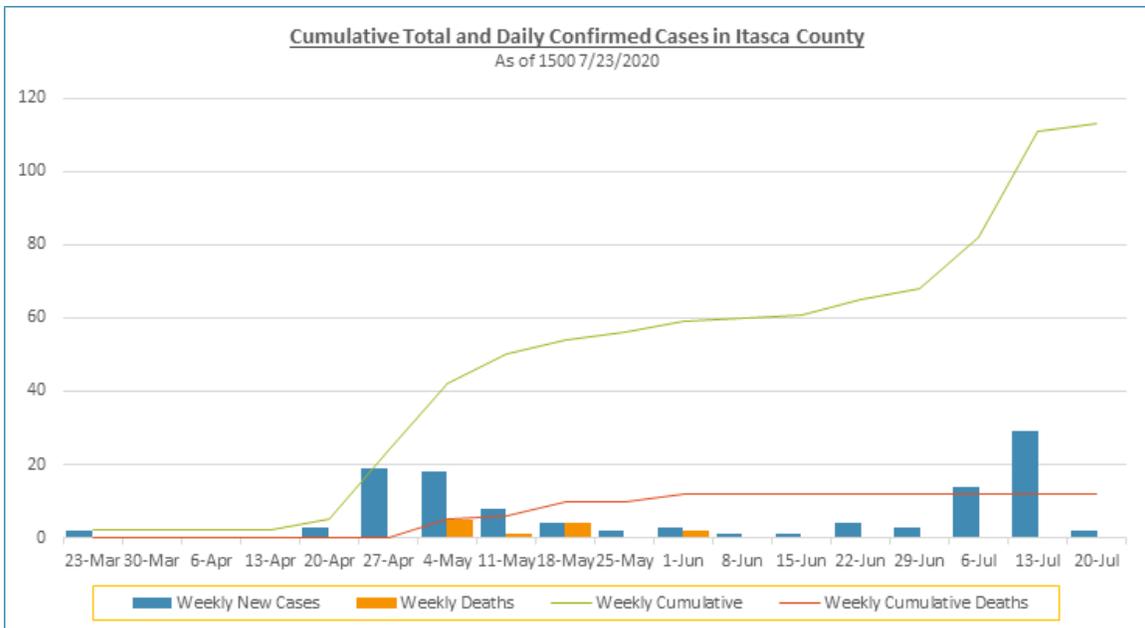
ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Visit us at: www.co.itasca.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEVEN MORE ITASCA RESIDENTS POSITIVE WITH CORONAVIRUS OVER WEEKEND

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **July 27, 2020**) – Another seven Itasca County residents have tested positive for COVID-19 since Friday, July 23, raising the total to 120, according to Kelly Chandler, department manager for Itasca County Public Health. The county has seen no additional deaths of county residents, leaving that total at 12 since early June.



Itasca County is not alone in its recently rising cases. All bordering counties have seen increases in residents testing positive for COVID-19, as has the State of Minnesota.

Cumulative case rates per 100,000 residents is an additional tool used by Minnesota Department of Health to compare one community to another. As of July 23, reported the department, the cumulative case rate per 100,000 residents for Itasca County is 25, Koochiching is 37, St. Louis is 15, Beltrami is 27, Aitkin is 15 and the state overall is 91.

Given a desire to reverse troubling trends, the state of Minnesota issued a statewide order mandating mask-wearing in all public indoor spaces and indoor businesses, unless one is alone,



which was effective July 25. Additionally, workers are required to wear a face covering when working outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, a face covering can include a paper or disposable mask, cloth mask, neck gaiter, scarf, bandanna, or a religious face covering. A face covering must cover the mouth and nose completely. The covering should not be overly tight or restrictive and should feel comfortable to wear.

Details of the new state order requiring masks may be found online at state websites or by calling the Minnesota Helpline at 1-800-657-3504 Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Questions or concerns among Itasca residents also may be directed to the Itasca COVID line, which is staffed 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday, and 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays for the next few weeks to address questions related to COVID-19, executive orders, etc. The Itasca COVID line number is 218-327-6784.

Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce announced today that it has received 22,000 disposable masks from the State of Minnesota for distribution at no cost to any Itasca County area *businesses*. Distribution of these masks by Chamber Staff will begin on Wednesday, July 29, and will continue until the supply is exhausted. The masks are being distributed in lots of up to 250 per request. Distribution will take place on a *first come-first served basis* and the masks *must be physically picked up* at the Chamber Information Center in the Depot Building (One NW Third Street, Grand Rapids) during regular business hours. Regular business hours for the Chamber Information Center are Weds., Thurs. and Fri. between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

-END-

Note to media: Itasca County Health Department will host 30-minute press briefings on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. as needed. The August 6 briefing will focus on plans for local schools. Recordings available. Contact anna.anttila@co.itasca.mn.us for more information.

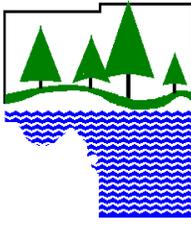
Itasca County Public Health media contacts

Kelly Chandler (218-327-6144 and kelly.chandler@co.itasca.mn.us) or Anna Anttila (anna.anttila@co.itasca.mn.us).

Helpful resources:

Fact sheet on Minnesota's mask mandate:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html>



Ideas for making a mask – sewn, non-sewn, and out of household items:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html>

How to wash cloth face coverings: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>

