



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ITASCA COUNTY SEEING IMPROVED COVID RATES

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **Dec. 15, 2020**) – Itasca County is seeing more of its residents hospitalized with COVID-19, while the number of new cases is trending lower.

As of 9:00 a.m. Dec. 15, the number of Itasca positive cases of COVID-19 identified has been 171 over seven days and 447 over 14 days. Currently hospitalized are 71 Itasca County residents, with 16 of them in intensive care.

The 14-day case rate per 10,000 Itasca residents has dipped below 100 for the first time since mid-November. As of Dec. 12, the rate is 99.6.

“From the numbers, we can see that Itasca residents are doing more of the right things and preventing more COVID cases,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health division manager. “We have miles to go before we can relax, though. We will be wearing masks, keeping six feet of physical distance and avoiding gatherings for months still. Thank you for every sacrifice as we all work to keep our health care systems functioning and our neighbors out of the hospital. It matters.”

Itasca County does not yet have details of how many doses of vaccine it will receive and when, however local public health and emergency officials have been planning for months so that local systems are ready.

For those seeking testing, call ahead to Essentia Deer River, Scenic Rivers and Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital for details. Also, state-provided tests are available through the National Guard Armory in Hibbing (<https://www.primarybio.com/r/hibbing>) and an at-home test ordered online (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/athome.html>).

If you experience even mild symptoms that resemble a cold or allergies, stay home and seek testing. If you are waiting for COVID test results, stay home. If you have a positive test, your household members also need to quarantine for 14 days from last exposure.

Itasca residents with questions or concerns may leave them at the Itasca County COVID message line, with calls returned 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday. The Itasca COVID line number is 218-327-6784. Current local data and information also can be found at the county’s website here: <https://www.co.itasca.mn.us/798/COVID-19-Coronavirus-Information>



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Note to media: Itasca County Health Department will host 30-minute press briefings on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. as needed. The next scheduled briefing will be Dec. 17, with updates from area health care providers. 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).