



**ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER

1209 SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Grand Rapids MN 55744

Hearing impaired number TDD: 218-327-5549

(218) 327-2941

[www.co.itasca.mn.us](http://www.co.itasca.mn.us)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**COVID RATES DROP AGAIN IN ITASCA COUNTY**

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **Feb. 24, 2022**) – Itasca County, like much of the country, is seeing strong decreases in rates of new COVID infections. Fifty Itasca residents received laboratory-confirmed diagnoses of COVID between Feb. 17 and 23, half that of the previous week. As measured by a 14-day rate per 10,000 residents, Itasca County now stands at 35.9, down significantly from the county’s all-time high in January of 172.

This good news comes against the tragic backdrop of two more COVID-related deaths among Itasca County residents. In February 2022 alone, nine Itasca neighbors have been taken by COVID, with a pandemic total of 139.

Vaccinations are the most effective weapon against COVID and remain available at clinics, pharmacies and special events across the county. Testing also is an important tool for keeping families, coworkers and communities protected. Highly accurate PCR tests can be accessed at Scenic Rivers Clinics, Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital and Essentia Deer River and Grand Rapids. At-home antigen tests are available at retailers throughout the county.

Each U.S. home is eligible for four free antigen tests shipped to them through the U.S. Postal Service (<https://special.usps.com/testkits>) and the State of Minnesota offers a free at-home PCR test using a saliva sample (<https://learn.vaulthealth.com/state-of-minnesota/>).

Itasca residents with questions or concerns may leave them at the Itasca County COVID message line, with calls returned 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Itasca COVID line number is 218-327-6784.

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**Itasca County Public Health media contact:** Kelly Chandler, 218-327-6144 and [Kelly.Chandler@co.itasca.mn.us](mailto:Kelly.Chandler@co.itasca.mn.us).