



ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ITASCA COUNTY COVID RATES LOWEST SINCE AUGUST

Omicron was the only variant found here in January

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **March 4, 2022**) – Itasca County continues to climb down from its record-high levels of COVID over the winter. Two more weeks of lower rates of infection bring the county back to rates last seen in August 2021.

During the week Feb. 25 to March 2, Itasca County had 61 laboratory-confirmed infections, bringing the county’s 14-day case rate per 10,000 residents down to 25.9. Sadly, two additional deaths have been attributed to COVID.

Itasca County Public Health has received results from the state from their sampling of virus variants in Itasca County. The only variant found here in January was Omicron. The Delta variant was prominent during the fall and through December. Last summer, the Alpha variant was here.

While the COVID news is better here right now, it is not the case everywhere. “We encourage local families to be very thoughtful over the next several weeks if they are traveling,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health division manager. “Nobody wants to bring COVID infection home to loved ones and neighbors. If you haven’t yet, get your vaccine booster – they work! Bring a good mask and a few antigen tests, then have a wonderful time. We could all use a break.”

Vaccines continue to be available throughout the county and rates of vaccination are ticking up. So far, 62 percent of those eligible (ages 5 and older) have received at least a first dose.

Those between ages 5 and 18 who have received their initial COVID vaccination series (two doses of Pfizer/Moderna or one dose of J&J) may be registered for a drawing to win a VISA gift card. A \$100 card will be awarded to a student from each school in Itasca County. Additionally, four \$50 and eight \$25 cards will be given away. Register online by using this Google Form (type exactly into your browser): forms.gle/9h8Gf9yXiGJ6RnSk7. Registrations end March 31.

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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