

ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

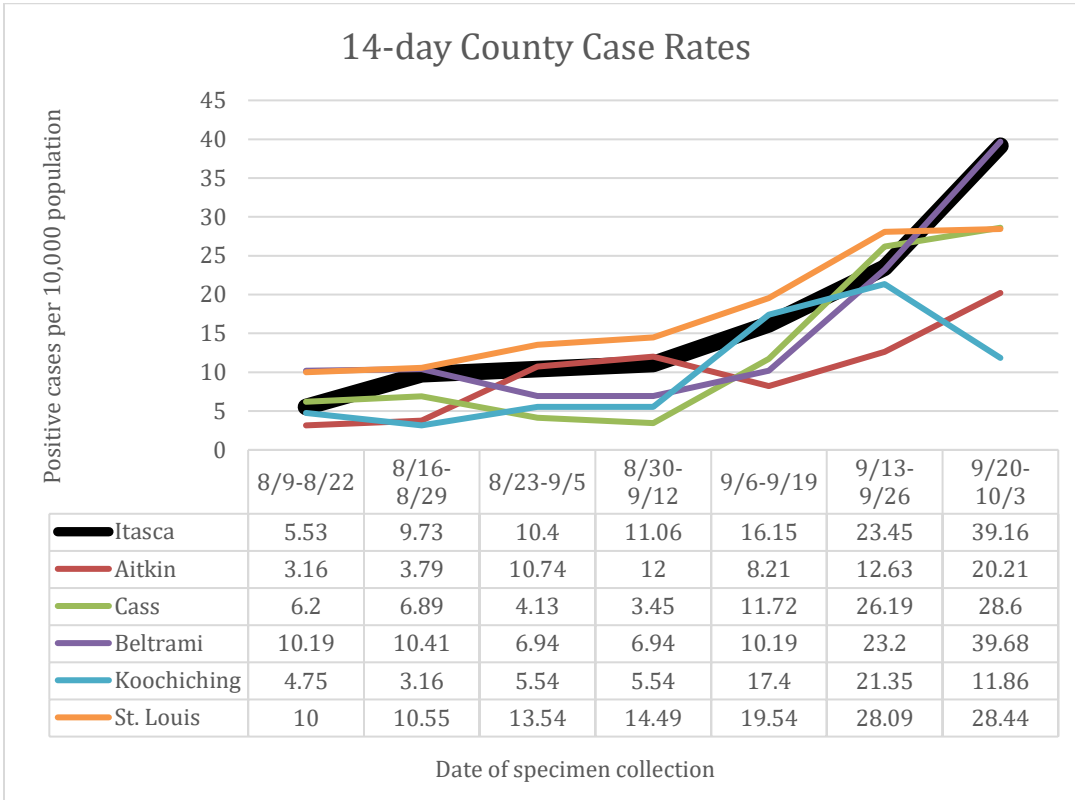
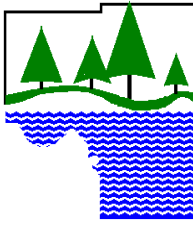
ITASCA AND BELTRAMI COUNTIES LEAD REGION IN COVID CASES

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **Oct. 19, 2020**) – Itasca County has seen its first reduction in its 14-day positive case rate since late August. The rate was 52.4 positive cases per 10,000 people as of Oct. 12, dropping to 51.2 on Oct. 15. Even though a slight change, it is a sign that rising local trends can be reversed, according to health officials.

“As winter races toward Itasca County, it is helpful to remember that this pandemic, like snow, thankfully will not last forever,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health department manager. “In the meantime, as we must move indoors, it is essential that we wear masks, keep six feet of distance, and avoid crowds. Our schools, our businesses and our family members are depending on every person to do their part.”

As of 8 a.m. on Oct. 19, total cumulative positive COVID-19 cases diagnosed in Itasca County stood at 685, with 219 identified in the past 14 days and 100 in the past 7 days.

According to Minnesota Department of Health data, Itasca County and Beltrami County currently lead the region in 14-day trends (based on date of specimen collection). As of Oct. 15, the state reported the following 14-day case rates per 10,000 residents: Beltrami 39.68, Itasca 39.16, Cass 28.60, St. Louis 28.44, Aitkin 20.21, Koochiching 11.86. Many counties, including Itasca, additionally calculate this rate for their communities based on local understanding of current situations.



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, as of 10.15.2020

Itasca County has created a local dashboard with current local data, including positive COVID cases by ZIP code. It is at: <https://www.co.itasca.mn.us/798/COVID-19-Coronavirus-Information>

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.

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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 briefing will be Oct. 29. 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).