

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 18, 2020**

**Department of Health Provides Update on COVID-19: 6,209 Patients Hospitalized and 1,246 Patients in the Intensive Care Unit**

*9,320 Additional Positive Cases of COVID-19, Hospitalizations Remain at Double Peak in the Spring*

**Harrisburg, PA** - The Pennsylvania Department of Health today confirmed as of 12:00 a.m., December 18, that there were 9,320 additional positive cases of COVID-19, bringing the statewide total to 538,655.

There are 6,209 individuals hospitalized with COVID-19, double the peak in the spring. Of that number, 1,246 patients are in the intensive care unit with COVID-19. Most of the patients hospitalized are ages 65 or older, and most of the deaths have occurred in patients 65 or older. More data is available [here](#).

The trend in the 14-day moving average of number of hospitalized patients per day has increased by nearly 5,300 since the end of September.

Statewide percent positivity for the week of December 4 – December 10 stood at 16.2%.

The most accurate [daily data is available on the website](#), with [archived data also available](#).

As of 11:59 p.m. Thursday, December 17, there were 216 new deaths reported for a total of 13,608 deaths attributed to COVID-19. County-specific information and a statewide map are available on the [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#).

Mask-wearing is required in all businesses and whenever leaving home. Consistent mask-wearing is critical to preventing the spread of COVID-19.

There are 38,208 individuals who have a positive viral antigen test and are considered probable cases and 640 individuals who have a positive serology test and either COVID-19 symptoms or a high-risk exposure.

There are 3,118,874 individuals who have tested negative to date.

In nursing and personal care homes, there are 46,545 resident cases of COVID-19, and 8,514 cases among employees, for a total of 55,059 at 1,421 distinct facilities in all 67 counties. Out of our total deaths, 8,047 have occurred in residents from nursing or personal care facilities. A county breakdown can be found [here](#).

Approximately 17,480 of our total cases are among health care workers.

**Statewide – The Wolf Administration has – since noon, Dec. 17:**

- Provided Department of Agriculture enforcement data.
- Provided Department of State enforcement data.
- Provided [Pennsylvania State Police enforcement data.](#)

**The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:**

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out, you are required to wear a mask when in a business or where it is difficult to maintain proper social distancing.
- Download the COVID Alert PA app and make your phone part of the fight. The free app can be found in the [Google Play Store](#) and the [Apple App Store](#) by searching for “covid alert pa”.

**Updated Coronavirus Links: Press Releases, State Lab Photos, Graphics**

- [Daily COVID-19 Report](#)
- [Press releases regarding coronavirus](#)
- [Latest information on the coronavirus](#)
- [Photos of the state’s lab in Exton](#) (for download and use)
- [Coronavirus and preparedness graphics](#) (located at the bottom of the page)
- [Community preparedness and procedures materials](#)

All Pennsylvania residents are encouraged to sign up for AlertPA, a text notification system for health, weather, and other important alerts like COVID-19 updates from commonwealth agencies. Residents can sign up online at [www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts](http://www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts).