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Pennsylvania COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring Dashboard Update for Jan.8-14: Case Increases Near 40,100; Percent Positivity at 12.7% and All 67 Counties with Substantial Transmission

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine today released a weekly status update detailing the state’s mitigation efforts based on the COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System [dashboard](#), highlighting a seven-day case increase of 40,088, a statewide percent positivity of 12.7% and all 67 counties with substantial transmission status.

The update includes the following:

- Level of **community transmission** as a basis for the recommendations for Pre-K to 12 schools to determine instructional [models](#).
- Data on **cases among 5-18-year-olds**.
- Cases that reported **visiting a business** among potential locations where exposures may have occurred.
- Updated **travel recommendations**.

The dashboard is designed to provide early warning signs of factors that affect the state’s mitigation efforts. The data available on the Early Warning Monitoring dashboard includes week-over-week case differences, incidence rates, test percent-positivity, and rates of hospitalizations, ventilations and emergency room visits tied to COVID-19. This week’s update compares the period of January 8 – January 14 to the previous seven days, January 1 – January 7.

“We continue to see great progress on bringing our statewide percent positivity rate down and I think that is due to Pennsylvanians continued commitment to wear a mask, avoid gatherings, wash their hands and practice social distancing,” Gov. Wolf said. “I believe we can continue these best public health practices to continue to bring the transmission of COVID-19 down in our communities and keep each other safe as we continue the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine.”

As of Thursday, January 14, the state has seen a seven-day case increase of 40,088 cases; the previous seven-day increase was 43,921 cases, indicating 3,833 fewer new cases across the state over the past week compared to the previous week.

The statewide percent-positivity went down to 12.7% from 14.4% last week. Every county in the state has a concerning percent positivity above 5 percent. This includes four counties with percent positivity at or above 20 percent, a decrease of 10 counties from the week before.

“As we continue to experience widespread community transmission of COVID-19, we continue our efforts to complete a case investigation with those who are diagnosed with COVID-19 to collect where they went and who they came in contact with while infectious,” Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. “We thank those who have participated in their case investigation and we continue to urge Pennsylvania to stay calm, stay alert, and stay safe by wearing a mask, avoiding gatherings, practicing social distancing, answering the call when public health professionals call, and downloading the COVID Alert PA app.”

Community Transmission

As of Friday’s data, all 67 counties were in the [substantial level of community transmission](#), the highest level of transmission.

For the week ending January 14, 67 counties were in the substantial level of transmission.

Cases Among 5-18-Year-Olds

The Department of Health is providing weekly data on the number of statewide cases of COVID-19 among 5 to 18-year-olds.

Throughout the pandemic, there have been 63,421 total cases of COVID-19 among 5 to 18-year-olds. Of that total, 5,376 occurred between January 8 – January 15. For the week of January 1 – January 7, there were 5,128 cases of COVID-19 among 5 to 18-year-olds.

Cases by [demographic group is available on the DOH website](#).

Business Visits

The Department of Health is providing weekly data on the number of individuals who responded to case investigators that they spent time at business establishments (restaurants, bars, gym/fitness centers, salon/barbershops) and at mass gatherings 14 days prior to the onset of COVID-19 symptoms.

It is important to note that due to the recent number of cases, the department is prioritizing case investigations to prevent outbreak. In addition to the need for people to answer the call, the significant number of cases helps contribute to the low percentages

in case investigation data. All of this reinforces the need for Pennsylvanians to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Of the 57,933 cases reported between January 3 – 9, 6.8 percent (3,933) provided an answer to the question as to whether they spent time at a business establishment.

Of those who did provide an answer, 0.3 percent, or 72, answered yes, they visited a business establishment 14 days prior to onset of symptoms:

- 34 percent (58) of those who said yes reported going to a restaurant;
- 44 percent (72) of those who said yes reported going to some other business establishment;
- 16 percent (28) of those who said yes reported going to a bar;
- 4 percent (7) of those who said yes reported going to a gym/fitness center; and
- 15 percent (25) of those who said yes reported going to a salon/barbershop.

Of the 57,933 confirmed cases, 6.8 percent (3,947) answered the question as to whether they attended a mass gathering or other large event. Of the 6.8 percent of cases, 7.4 percent (292) answered yes to whether they attended a mass gathering or other large event 14 days prior to onset of symptoms.

Compared to data [reported on January 11](#), this week's data saw an increase for people who reported going to a restaurant (34 percent vs. 17 percent last week). The data saw a decrease for people who reported going to some other business (44 percent vs. 51 percent last week), going to the bar (16 percent vs. 22 percent last week), going to the gym (4 percent vs. 9 percent last week), and going to a salon/barbershop (15 percent vs. 18 percent last week). The number of those who attended a mass gathering or other large event decreased to 7.4 percent from 6 percent compared to last week.

In addition to the traditional case investigation, the Department of Health launched the new [Connect & Protect Form](#) as a means to complete a digital case investigation. During the week of January 3 – 9 there were 959 forms completed and returned. When asked if the individual spent time at any business establishment two days before symptom onset or positive collection date if asymptomatic, 31 individuals answered yes:

- 42 percent (13) of those who said yes reported going to a restaurant;
- 10 percent (3) of those who said yes reported going to some other business establishment;
- 36 percent (11) of those who said yes reported going to a bar;
- 13 percent (4) of those who said yes reported going to a gym/fitness center; and
- 36 percent (11) of those who said yes reported going to a salon/barbershop.

The numbers above highlight business settings and mass gatherings as possible sites for transmission. It is important to note that currently Pennsylvania is experiencing widespread community transmission. With less than 10 percent of those asked about what types of businesses they visited or if they attended a mass gathering responding to the question, the department is again reminding Pennsylvanians that it is essential

that they answer the phone when case investigators call and to provide full and complete information to these clinical professionals.

Travel Recommendations

In November, the Department of Health provided an [updated travel order](#) requiring anyone over the age of 11 who visits from another state to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test or place themselves in a travel quarantine for 14 days upon entering Pennsylvania. Travel quarantine guidance was changed to 10 days on Dec. 5 based on new CDC guidance.

This order does not apply to people who commute to and from another state for work or medical treatment, those who left the state for less than 24 hours, or those complying with a court order, including child custody.

It is important that people understand that this [Order](#) is in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Pennsylvania. A concerning number of recent cases have been linked to travel, and if people are going to travel, we need them to take steps to protect themselves, their loved ones and their community, and that involves having either a negative test, or placing themselves in a quarantine.

Gov. Wolf continues to prioritize the health and safety of all Pennsylvanians through the COVID-19 pandemic. Pennsylvanians should continue to take actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, regardless of in what county they live. This includes wearing a mask or face covering anytime they are in public. COVID-19 has been shown to spread easily in the air and contagious carriers can be asymptomatic. Pennsylvanians are encouraged to wash their hands, social distance, avoid gatherings and download COVID Alert PA.