

Pike County Health Department

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Across Illinois

PCHD News Release IDPH Centralizing Contact Tracing Throughout the State

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Pike County, IL – With the surge in COVID-19 cases across the State, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has decided to centralize COVID-19 contact tracing in order to get information about isolation and identifying close contacts to infected individuals as soon as possible during times when cases are surging, and to decrease the burden on local health departments across the state. Beginning December 28, 2021, all positive cases entered into the State's data systems associated with a cell phone number will receive an automated text message from IDPH. The initial outgoing text will read: IDPH COVID: There is important info for you. Call 312-777-1999 or click: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/confirmed-or-possible-covid-19.html>

Individuals who call the number in the text will be considered as "opting in" for an interview. Public health officials will prioritize case investigations for individuals who are 65 years and older and are at higher risk of severe illness, per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations. This population will receive an additional text message if the individual does not respond to the initial message.

While most confirmed cases will be traced through the State Contact Tracing Surge Center, local health departments will continue to respond to cases in high-risk settings, including congregate facilities. Local health departments will also be able to see details about cases so they can identify any potential clusters or outbreaks and can request those cases be transferred from the Surge Center for further contact tracing. Additionally, local health departments will continue to have oversight of schools, daycares, and congregate setting, including assistance with mitigation strategies and outbreak management.

Currently, there are 168 active cases of COVID-19 in Pike County. In the month of December, there were 786 new cases of COVID-19 reported to Pike County Health Department (PCHD), which is the most cases per month in Pike County since the beginning of the pandemic. Sadly, PCHD was notified of 6 COVID-19 related deaths in December. In November, there were 197 new cases of COVID-19 and 2 COVID-19 related deaths.

PCHD is providing FREE COVID testing at the health department located at 606 W Adams St. in Pittsfield. Testing will be offered **Monday – Thursday from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm**. Please follow signage for COVID testing. **Participants will need to remain in their vehicle and park in the designated area.** A staff member will come to your vehicle to administer the test.

Please note that this testing is NOT a rapid test. Tests results will be available in 2-3 days.

Participants will receive instructions via email on how to retrieve their results. If the participant does not have an email address, PCHD will call with **POSITIVE** results only.

Follow posted signage to enter the testing site. Testing will be drive-thru. Please stay in your car. PCHD staff will gather necessary information for testing and oversee self-collection of the COVID-19 test. Results of the test will be available approximately 48-72 hours from test date.

PCHD also provides free COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots. Clinics will be every Thursday in December and January, 1:30 – 4:30 pm at the health department. Please go to www.pikecountyil.org for more information.

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