



Columbia County Board of Supervisors

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CHAIRMAN'S PRESS RELEASE

20 DAYS, 979 NEW CASES IN COUNTY

Since the beginning of January, Columbia County has experienced 979 new positive cases of COVID-19, reported Columbia County Department of Health Director Jack Mabb on Wednesday. That includes a total of 265 new cases over the past five days. Sixty-five new cases were recorded on Wednesday, the fourth-largest single-day total in the county over the course of the pandemic.

"I think we are no longer seeing new cases from the Christmas surge – it's possible we're still seeing cases from New Year's," said Director Mabb. "This is primarily a community spread."

There are currently 33 individuals hospitalized, and five in the ICU. With one death at The Grand at Barnwell, there have now been 56 deaths in the county from the virus.

Director Mabb said the Ghent Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, The Grand at Barnwell, and Livingston Hills are all experiencing outbreaks of the virus among residents and staff.

ADVISORY: Please note that the numbers distributed in Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell's coronavirus press releases are morning results provided to the county Department of Health via the state reporting system. Updated numbers are issued again by the state in the afternoon, ordinarily past the time this press release is distributed. Consequently, there may be discrepancies in the numbers that appear here versus the final daily numbers shown on the DOH website and elsewhere.

COUNTY DOH RECEIVES 500 VACCINES FOR THE WEEK

Please know that there will be times when NYS directs that the vaccine be given to specific groups. While our Department of Health does this, there will be no link posted for a period of time.

At this time, NYS has directed that the COVID Vaccine designated to our county be given to specific groups in 1A, 1B & 65+. While our Department of Health continues to provide the vaccine to these groups as directed by the state, currently, there are no links available for appointments be the general public. As this slow process moves forward, please check back for available appointments. NYS Dashboard & Other COVID Vaccine Info Links:

<https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/home/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-resources-info/>

CDC COVID Vaccine Info: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>

"Through the five PODS we've done to this point, we think we could easily do 500 vaccines in a day. "We're ready," said Director Mabb.

COUNTY VACCINATION INFORMATION PHONE LINE

The Columbia County Department of Health has introduced a dedicated telephone number for those inquiring on their vaccination eligibility: 518-697-5560. The line is active Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This phone line provides general info about vaccine availability in Columbia County. It does not determine eligibility for the vaccine. To check on vaccination distribution procedures and other vaccine-related information, residents may to consult the New York State Department website at <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>

The Columbia County Department of Health does not have the authority to define vaccination categories.

COUNTY DOH CONTINUES TO URGE PATIENCE

As work continues to resolve issues pertaining to coronavirus vaccine distribution in New York State, Columbia County Board of Supervisors Health & Human Services Committee Chair Rob Lagonia has compiled the following Q&A list to help clarify questions county residents may have regarding the county's vaccine efforts.

- The Columbia County Department of Health is doing COVID vaccines.
- The vaccine currently being used is Moderna.
- The county Department of Health makes a request for vaccinations to the state in the early part of the week and does not know how many it will actually receive -- sometimes much less than requested. Once we know for sure how many it has received we open a POD and open a link on the Columbia County Health department website. If you are eligible and the POD is still open, you can sign up. Approximately 18 people are booked every 15 minutes. Once those time slots are full it moves to another slot. Once the POD is completely full the link is closed out.
- At this time the Columbia-Greene Community College is the vaccine site.
- At the site you will be supplied with a link/QR code that you can use to sign up for the second shot.
- Once given the shot you will be required to wait on site for between 15-30 minutes to make sure you have had no adverse reaction.
- Please continue to check the Columbia County Department of Health website (<https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com>) for PODs and links that are open. We will post them as soon as they open.
- Given the limited supply at this point it will take months for everyone to get vaccinated.
- Please understand that vaccination information is changing all of the time. As the information changes we will put up the newest information we have.
- All of the employees at the Columbia County Department of Health have done a fantastic job with Covid. They have worked tirelessly in a very challenging situation. Every day they all roll up their sleeves and do whatever is necessary to make it through the day. Please understand that they are just as frustrated as all of you. They are willing to help anyone that needs help or have questions that need answering. Some days they get thousands of calls, so please be patient.

For additional information, visit <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/news/covid-19-vaccine-information>

You may also contact the New York State COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline at 1-833-697-4829 or <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov> to register for the vaccine in the Capital District area. Residents are advised to understand that by calling the state hotline, or going to the website and registering to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, travel somewhere outside of Columbia County may be necessary to receive it.

CORONAVIRUS TESTING SITES (as of 1-8-2021)

New York Testing Site, University at Albany. By appointment only at 888-364-3065 or www.covid19screening.health.ny.gov; WellNow Urgent Care, 446 Fairview Avenue, Hudson. 518-267-3496. May be out-of-pocket costs; Columbia County Department of Health, 518-828-3358. Check www.columbiacountynyhealth.com for scheduled walk-up and drive-thru clinics; Greene County Department of Health, by appointment only on Wednesdays from 5-6:30 p.m., 518-719-3600..

Also, Community Care Physicians, Latham. 518-863-3600. 12-7 p.m.; Priority 1 Urgent Care, Guilderland, 518-867-8040; Whitney Young, Albany, 518-465-4771; Rite Aid, Colonie, 518-267-3496; CareMount Medical Urgent Care, Rhinebeck, 844-484-6564; CVS-Valatie, 518-758-2200; CVS-Red Hook, 845-758-9612.

Also, Central Med Urgent Care, 1662 Central Avenue, Albany, 518-240-1456, bills insurance; Walgreens Rapid Testing, 41 Holland Avenue, Albany, 518-426, 2976.

EmUrgentCare locations offer COVID-19 tests for patients without symptoms at the following locations: 98 Wolf Rd., Albany; 11835 US-9W, West Coxsackie; 2976 US-9W, Saugerties; 5 New Karner Rd., Guilderland. The telephone number for all locations is 518-264-9000. Check for out-of-pocket costs.

Price Chopper test locations with testing hours from 7-9 a.m. on Tuesdays: Chatham, Clifton Park, Latham, Troy, Wilton. Other Price Chopper locations and times: Ft. Edward, Tuesday, 7-10 a.m.; Glenmont, Wednesday, 7-10 a.m.; Johnstown, Tuesday, 7-11 a.m.; and Schenectady, Wednesday, 12-2 p.m.

Pine Plains Pharmacy: 2965 Church Street, Pine Plains, 518-398-5588. Monday-Saturday by appointment only.

AT-HOME COVID-19 TEST AVAILABLE

LabCorp currently offers an at-home COVID-19 test at <https://www.pixel.labcorp.com/at-home-test-kits/covid-19-test-home-collection-kit>

This test does not detect antibodies or immunity. It is designed to determine active infection with the virus that causes COVID-19.

After completing a short eligibility survey, choose a billing option, which can be through personal insurance, the use of federal funds to cover the cost of this test on your behalf if you're uninsured, or with a credit card. The test kit will arrive via FedEx. After collecting and returning your sample, the average time to deliver results is one-two days from when your sample is received at the lab, according to LabCorp.

COUNTY DOH FLU SHOTS AVAILABLE

The flu vaccine will be offered by appointment only at the regularly scheduled immunization clinic every Tuesday from 1-3:30 p.m. at Columbia County Department of Health at 325 Columbia Street, Hudson. An evening immunization clinic is also available on the third Tuesday of each month from 4-6 p.m. All clinics are by appointment only.

The flu vaccine is the best protection we have from the flu and its complication, and has become even more critical in the time of COVID-19. Talk to your doctor before getting the flu shot if you have ever had a serious allergic reaction to eggs or a previous flu shot, or have a history of Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

The DOH accepts the following insurance plans: Blue Shield of North East New York, CDPHP, Fidelis, Medicare Part B, MVP, Medicaid, and United Health Care. Other senior plans may be billed, including some Blue Cross Blue Shield plans. If you are uninsured or underinsured, you may be eligible for a lower fee or no fee for the flu vaccine. All others are expected to pay a fee of \$42 for the flu vaccine, with the exact cash amount or checks accepted. Debit or credit cards are not accepted.

DONATION INFORMATION

Masks: Those wishing to donate cloth masks to the county stockpile may contact the county Emergency Management office at 518-828-1212 or cceoc@columbiacountysheriff.us. Or Supervisor Rob Lagonia at rlagonia@austerlitzny.com

Monetary: Monetary donations intended for the purchase of coronavirus testing kits and much-needed equipment for emergency responders, medical personnel, and others on the front lines of the coronavirus fight are advised to send a check in care of Columbia County, with coronavirus noted in the memo field. The check can be sent to the Columbia County Controller's Office, 401 State Street, Hudson, NY 12534. All money received is being placed in a dedicated account.

PPE: Those wishing to make donations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as N95 masks, face shields, and gowns, are advised to contact the Emergency Management Office at 518-828-1212. If no one answers, leave a message and someone will return the call.

Food: Donations should be directed to the county Office for the Aging (518-828-4258) and local food pantries.

DISCLAIMER

It is the county's intention to issue accurate information regarding the coronavirus situation under conditions that can change by the minute. For the most up-to-date, accurate information, visit the County Department of Health's website at <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/home/coronavirus-covid-19> or their Facebook page @: <https://www.facebook.com/Columbia-County-Department-of-Health-469399129790791/>. The state's coronavirus website, with up-to-the-minute information, can be located at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the county will issue a press release on the coronavirus situation. The releases can be found on the Columbia County website and the Facebook pages of the Board of Supervisors, Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Management Office.