

Public Health Officials Announce Tier Three Resurgence Mitigations to Take Effect Statewide on Friday Following Sharp Increase in COVID-19 Cases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

As State Reports Record-Breaking Daily Case Totals and Hospitalizations, New Mitigations Aimed at Saving Lives, Protecting Economy, and Preventing Another Stay at Home Order “Tier 3 boils down to this: if you don’t need to do it, don’t.” – Gov. Pritzker

CHICAGO – With a new wave of COVID-19 surging across the state of Illinois, the Midwest and the nation, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced additional COVID-19 resurgence mitigations will take effect in every region across the state in an attempt to slow the spread of the virus. Tier 3 mitigations build on the Resurgence Mitigation Plan released in July to suppress the spread of the virus and prevent hospitals from becoming overrun. This latest round of mitigations aims to limit gatherings and encourages residents to stay home as much as possible and follow proper safety measures when out in public. The mitigations carefully balance the paramount goal of saving lives while preserving the option for in-person learning for children and protecting as much of the economy as possible from the continued impacts of the virus.

The Tier 3 resurgence mitigations will take effect statewide at 12:01 am on Friday, November 20, 2020.

“To stop this spread and preserve some semblance of the holidays, all of us need to do more than just wear our masks now – though masks are mandatory throughout the state. The simple fact is that COVID-19 is spreading so quickly and so widely, and our hospitals are beginning to experience real strain and at the current infection rate they will be overwhelmed. So whenever possible, we need you to stay home,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “I’m hopeful that by limiting our in-person interactions, we will succeed at avoiding a stay at home order like what we had in the spring – when the choice between saving lives and saving livelihoods was even more stark. Tier 3 may allow us to do both. Like in other states like Michigan and California and Washington, it’s our best effort to avoid a stay-at-home order and save lives.”

The first tiers of the Resurgence Mitigation Plan initially suppressed the virus and protected the progress Illinois made towards bending the curve during the Spring, while allowing each of the state’s eleven regions to progress through the phases based on local metrics. But with COVID-19 spread now exponential in every region of the state, our statewide positivity rate at record highs and hospitalizations already surpassing our Spring peak, an additional tier of more stringent, statewide mitigations is required to combat the surge and preserve hospital capacity.

“There is no denying that the state is headed in the wrong direction with increased cases, hospitalizations, and deaths,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “There also is no denying that reducing the opportunities for the virus to spread can reverse our direction. This includes staying home as much as possible, wearing a mask and keeping social distance when we do have to go out, and not gathering with people outside our households. Until a vaccine is widely available and people understand the importance of being vaccinated, we must continue to take preventive actions to stop the transmission of the virus. Right now, our preventive actions are the best way to prevent new cases, hospitalizations, and deaths.”

While this latest round of mitigations does not include a stay at home order, if the mitigations are not adhered to and cases continue to rise in the weeks ahead, another order may be required. For all regions, additional

mitigation measures taking effect Friday, November 20th include guidance for the following settings and industries:

- Retail
- Personal Car Services
- Health and Fitness Centers
- Hotels
- Manufacturing
- Bars and Restaurants
- Meetings and Social Events
- Offices
- Organized Group Recreational Activities
- Indoor Recreation, Theater, Cultural Institutions

As they have since the start of COVID-19, grocery stores across the state will remain open and available. Child care facilities may continue to operate subject to guidelines from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. School districts and officials should continue to follow the extensive guidance released by the Illinois State Board of Education in August to make decisions related to in-person and remote learning at the local level. View the complete list of Tier 3 resurgence mitigations on the state's COVID-19 website [here](#).

To prevent the further spread of COVID-19, Illinois residents are urged to stay home as much as possible and celebrate upcoming holidays with members of their household. Illinoisans over the age of two years are required to wear a face covering when out in public and social distancing is not easily achievable. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or who may have been in contact with someone exhibiting symptoms should seek out testing and quarantine at home; anyone who has tested positive for the virus should isolate at home as directed by their physician or local health department.

IDPH will continue to track the positivity rates and hospital capacity metrics in regions over a 14-day monitoring periods to determine if mitigations can be relaxed, if additional mitigations are required, or if current mitigation should remain in place. In order for a region to move back to Tier 2 mitigations, a region must experience less than 7-day 12 percent test positivity average for three consecutive days AND greater than 20 percent available intensive care unit (ICU) and hospital bed availability for three consecutive days AND declining 7-day COVID hospitalizations average in 7 out of the last 10 days. Follow the latest regional metrics at: <https://dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics>

In response to the rising test positivity rate statewide, the administration continues to strengthen its nation-leading testing operation. Last week, the state reported a record high of 114,370 tests within a 24-hour period, now averaging more than 97,800 tests per day. Although the administration continues to build upon this progress, the state's rate of growth in positivity is outpacing the growth in testing. It is critical to get tested before developing symptoms, as testing remains free to all Illinois residents and readily available throughout the state. To find a testing center near you, please visit [DPH.Illinois.Gov/Testing](https://dph.illinois.gov/Testing).