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Friday, June 17, 2022

CHAIRMAN'S PRESS RELEASE

COUNTY CASE RATE REMAINS LOW

COVID-19 cases

As of Wednesday, per the CDC, Columbia County's rate of new COVID-19 cases remains in the low risk category. Also as of Wednesday, the CDC-reported current average of new daily cases per 100,000 of population stood at 14.9. The positive test rate is 8.7 percent.

On Monday this week, the DOH recorded 25 new cases, with 14 on Tuesday, 10 each on Wednesday and Thursday, and 13 as of noon today. So far, there have been 223 new cases in June.

Currently, there are eight country residents in Columbia Memorial Health, with three in the ICU and two of those on ventilators; four at Albany Medical Center; one at St. Peter's; one at Northern Dutchess; and one at Westchester Medical Center, for a total of 15 individuals hospitalized. There have been no deaths this week.

"It's very encouraging for the summer to see this steady decline in positive cases, although I'm still concerned about our number of hospitalizations not coming down, and those in the ICU," said county Department of Health Director Jack Mabb. "Those numbers indicate that this virus has legs."

Director Mabb noted the DOH has pre-ordered the COVID-19 vaccine for children six months old and above. "We're waiting for CDC approval and for New York State to allow us to dispense it. It's possible we could be doing it Thursday of next week. Parents who are interested in us doing the shots for them should stay tuned and be aware we may be doing them next Thursday. If it's not this coming Thursday, it would be the following Thursday," he said.

Although New York State has lifted the mandate for mask wearing while inside a business, local health care officials continue to encourage the wearing of masks while indoors, particularly for those with health problems.

Additional information on daily COVID-19 cases and more can be found on the Columbia County Department of Health's website at <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com>

Opioid spike

Earlier this week, Columbia County experienced an opioid spike, with three overdoses in a 24-hour period on Monday and Tuesday, reported county DOH RN Kristy Frederick.

"Surrounding counties are experiencing the same thing," Frederick said, with Ulster County reporting 10-plus ODs and Greene County two this week.

She added that anyone in need of Narcan and/or Narcan training is advised to contact county DOH or Greener Pathways at 518-291-4500.

County vaccination and infection rates

As of Saturday, May 28, the Columbia County Department of Health had administered 11,288 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Second doses now number 9,563. The vaccine administered is Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson. Note: J&J – a one dose vaccine – is added as a first shot.

Third shots (boosters) of Moderna or Pfizer now number 4,056. Fourth shots (boosters) of Moderna or Pfizer now number 602. Johnson & Johnson boosters number 64.

Pediatric first shots number 587, with 576 second shots and 19 boosters.

The total number of Columbia County residents by all vaccine providers, as shown on the NYS COVID-19 vaccine tracker website:

45,523 have received at least one dose, or 76 percent of the county's 59,916 population.

Student testing, home testing and affirmation reports

The DOH continues to provide testing for students and staff of Columbia County schools who need a negative test to return to school. This will be by appointment only at the DOH Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:45-3:30 p.m. Parents may contact (518) 828-3358 X1251 to schedule these appointments when needed. This testing will still only be for staff/students of Columbia County schools who need a negative COVID test to return to school.

Also available on the county DOH website is information on filing home testing reports as well as affirmation letters of quarantine and/or isolation that may be required by employers.

Upcoming DOH vaccination clinics

Director Mabb issued a reminder that the DOH continues to offer vaccine clinics at Columbia-Greene Community College on Thursdays from 3-5:30 p.m. throughout the month of June. All vaccines are available on a walk-in basis. For additional information, contact the county DOH at 518-828-3358.

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> 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 Friday afternoon, Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell 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 Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Management Office.