



Mayor Vieau - COVID-19 Situational Update

We are in this together!

The City of Chicopee has updates as the COVID-19 situation has warranted a centralized/increase in the distribution of information. These updates are intended to keep all informed of the actions being taken to reduce the impacts of Coronavirus on the community.

On Wednesday, January 12, 2022, the following City of Chicopee Departments have reported:

Mayor's Office

- The statewide numbers for infections continue to increase as Omicron is extremely contagious
- US numbers across every state is also increasing with the spread of the Omicron variant
- Our PCR test site was over worked again this week and individuals had to work in extreme cold conditions only allowed to wear rubber gloves and one set of clothing under the medical gowns. No coats or heavy sweaters were allowed under the gowns
- The state had 17,802 new cases which is double last week
- The state numbers indicated 116 new deaths yesterday which is an increase of almost double from last week
- The state had 2,970 cases in hospitals which is an increase of more than double the cases last week. Of those hospitalizations, there were 452 were in ICU which is 80 more than last week
- The state seven day average positivity remains well above 4% and is high at 22.78% which is more than double last week
- Testing is continuing with 91,106 molecular tests reported which brings the cumulative tests to 37,251,747 tests
- Vaccination opportunities are available to residents and we are at 68% vaccinated
- The group of 20-40 year olds remain the largest group of new cases based upon reports
- If you have symptoms you should be wearing a mask, it does not matter if you have COVID or the Flu, mask wearing is appropriate if you have respiratory symptoms
- We are at a point of needing everyone vaccinated to reduce the severity of the infection and encourage both COVID and Flu vaccinations
- If you are exposed to COVID you should wear a mask until you are tested for COVID
- We must ensure we do not over extend our hospital resources which are at an all-time high for COVID admissions and Bay State Medical system has over 300 COVID cases
- Routine and elective surgeries are being postponed for lack of hospital beds. This is disruptive to the health care system and places stress on those looking for procedures to be completed
- The National Guard again has been activated to cover hospital staffing needs

- The Governor has announced the purchase of 25 million at home tests but is targeting the schools for distribution. We have not been notified if Chicopee will receive any tests
- Chicopee has over 72 employees out with COVID related conditions since January and some have returned

Health

- City Case Counts
 - There are 643 open cases which is up more than 80 cases since last week
 - There are 32 deaths
 - 141 N/A
 - 7,478 recovered
 - A total of 8,211 cases to date
 - Today's cases will probably add another 60 cases to our total
- We are averaging 50 cases a day
- We continue to encourage vaccines
- The Massachusetts Health Department has indicated that the N-95 masks are safest for working environments. The cloth masks are not that effective and the surgical masks are only effective for about an hour. The N-95 are recommended for long term use
- If a person is wearing an N-95 or KN-95 mask in an occupational setting the mask must be fitted properly
- We have an adequate supply of KN-95 and N-95 masks
- A nurse will be starting on Tuesday to help the Health Department and City with cases and requirements

Police Department

- We continue services and patrols with eight officers out and have 14 returned
- We are working the test site which is active and stressful based upon demand
- The Police overtime account is running low on funding due to the number of officers out
- We have four officers who are members of the National Guard, but none have been activated to date

Fire Department

- Status quo on services with ten firefighters out on COVID leave
- The Fire Department will continue to have personnel at the Council on Aging site
- The Fire Department has lost two firefighters to the National Guard call out and no others have received orders yet

Emergency Management

- Status quo on staffing
- They will continue at the testing site as needed

Safety

- Status quo on staffing
- There were 341 tests administered on Monday and 150 tested positive for COVID which is a 44% positivity rate
- We continue with the call outs but may send everyone an e-mail to speed up the notification. There would be a call out to all positives in addition to the e-mail

- For testing on Tuesday we had closed due to the weather and lack of a way to keep testers from getting frostbite in the rubber gloves and surgical gowns
- As of 10:00 am today we had 201 tests administered and were on track for a record number of tests administered
- The message board was moved to Oak Street to inform those being tested to be ready with paperwork to speed testing
- We have ordered supplies, test kits, swabs, tubes, labels, and tissues which should be arriving this week
- We should be ready for Tuesday with the Monday holiday

DPW

- We are managing to be status quo on services, but are down seven employees due to COVID. We had been lucky with staffing but Omicron is hurting our staffing abilities
- The Waste Water Treatment Facility is especially hard hit and we are making due with our staff

COA

- Status Quo on staffing and services with everyone reporting to work
- They continue to have good attendance at programs and meals
- There is concern with six neighboring Senior Centers having closed, but so far we have not seen an influx of visitors to the Center
- The vaccination clinic had to turn away several individuals as we ran out of doses. The clinic administered 180 doses to both adults and children
- We are looking at scheduling another clinic in two weeks and have a clinic already schedule for February

Human Resources

- Status Quo on services
- An update to the mask mandate and COVID leave forms were emailed to all employees as a reminder
- The importance of mask wearing was emphasized

Library

- Full staffing and services but employees are getting concerned about COVID. We had one employee leave and another ask for vacation time with little notice
- We have three employees out with COVID
- The Library is slow after 6:00 pm and we are considering reducing hours due to staffing concerns and demand

Treasurer

- Status Quo on services

- If we can get through the next several weeks we may be alright based upon infection rates and vaccination rates increasing
- Severity is not as bad as Delta, but hospitalizations are a concern