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Latest COVID-19 Trends; SlowCOVIDNC App; NCDHHS Provides Voting Guidance

NCDHHS Communications [news@dhhs.nc.gov]

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 4:53 PM
To: Steve Johnston

View this email in your browser

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) NC UPDATE

Oct. 16, 2020
Latest COVID-19 Trends

North Carolina's COVID-19 trends are moving in the wrong direction, with record high numbers of cases being reported. In addition to our positive cases increasing, our hospitalization numbers are increasing as well. These increases are concerning, particularly as we head into flu season. We can turn these trends around, just as we have throughout this pandemic, by relying on the science and remaining vigilant.

No matter how small the number of people you are with, if you don't live with them, you need to wear a mask over your mouth and nose, you need to keep your distance, and you need to wash your hands frequently. We can slow the spread and support North Carolina's recovery by practicing the 3 Ws, and now with flu season here, getting a flu shot.

To help slow the spread of COVID-19, please be the one to answer the call if you are contacted by a contact tracer, and download the SlowCOVIDNC app. All information is private during the call and is never shared with a contact, and the SlowCOVIDNC app is completely anonymous and does not collect, store or share personal information or location data.

This is a tough time for everyone. NCDHHS has wellness resources available to help you navigate through this time on the COVID-19 Response website. Go to the Hope4NC website for specific steps you can take to improve and maintain your mental wellbeing, and for additional resources to help you cope during this stressful time.

If you leave home, know your 3 Ws!

WEAR a cloth mask over your nose and mouth.

WAIT 6 feet apart. Avoid close contact.

WASH your hands or use hand sanitizer.

Download the SlowCOVIDNC App to Slow the Spread

More than 150,000 people have downloaded SlowCOVIDNC, the official exposure notification app of North Carolina, but we need more to help slow the spread of COVID-19. SlowCOVIDNC alerts users when they may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The app relies on users to anonymously submit their positive result to notify others. The more people who download and use SlowCOVIDNC, the more we can slow the spread.

The app is completely anonymous and does not collect, store or share personal information or location data. Download for free on the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Learn more about the SlowCOVIDNC app in these frequently asked questions, and share resources and materials about the app.

SlowCOVIDNC

Slow the spread of COVID-19 and **protect** yourself, your loved ones & your community – simply by using your phone.

Welcome to SlowCOVIDNC

NCDHHS Provides Voting Guidelines to Protect North Carolinians

NCDHHS is providing guidelines for voters and local polling locations to help protect the health of North Carolinians during the voting process. In addition, NCDHHS and the NC Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management provided personal protective equipment (PPE) to local election boards and voting locations.

North Carolina residents who plan to vote in-person should wear a face mask throughout the voting process, stay 6 feet apart from others while at the polling location, and wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after voting. Election workers at voting locations must routinely clean and disinfect high-touch areas with an EPA-approved disinfectant, especially during peak voting times. See all election guidance on the NCDHHS website.

More COVID-19 News

- NCDHHS submitted its COVID-19 Vaccination Plan to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The goal of the plan is to immunize everyone who is eligible for and wants a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Applications are now being accepted for the N.C. Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Evictions (HOPE) Program, which will assist eligible low- and- moderate-income renters experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- New county-level data has been added to the COVID-19 NC Dashboard on the County Map by Cases section of the main dashboard page. Users are now able to view county-level case data by date ranges.
- DHHS has released updated guidance and new resources to support educators, school staff and administrators as more schools open up for in-person instruction under Plan A (K -5 only) and Plan B. See all school-related public health guidance and resources.
- DHHS strongly recommends that alternative Halloween activities, instead of the traditional door-to-door trick-or-treating, be increased as much as possible.

COVID-19 Testing

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should get tested. If you are sick, use the Check My Symptoms tool to help you determine if you need a COVID-19 test. People who do not currently have symptoms but may have been exposed to COVID-19 should also get tested, especially people from historically marginalized communities, including Latinx/Hispanic, Black/African American and American Indian populations, who have been disproportionately affected by the virus.

North Carolina has upcoming community testing events scheduled in **Alamance, Brunswick, Cabarrus, Chatham, Chowan, Cumberland, Davidson, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Gaston, Gates, Greene, Guilford, Hoke, Iredell, Lee, Lenoir, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Moore, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Randolph, Rowan, Sampson, Stanly, Wake, Warren and Wayne** counties. For an up-to-date list of events, visit the Community Testing Events webpage. Many events offer testing at no cost. For more details about a specific event, call ahead before you go for a test.

COVID-19 testing is also provided at some local health departments, doctor and clinician offices, hospitals and clinics, many pharmacy sites and retail outlets, and other community locations. Some people who work in long-term care facilities and other high-risk settings may be tested through their work. You can find testing sites by using the Find My Testing Place tool online.

Get the Latest Information

- Visit the NCDHHS COVID-19 Response website for information, a data dashboard, updates, live briefings and more.
- Go to North Carolina's COVID-19 Information Hub for resources, information and

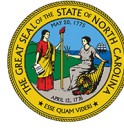assistance across state government, including the latest news releases.
- Follow NCDHHS on social media for advance notice of press briefings and a recap.

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