

Jon Doemel, County Executive
Doug Gieryn, Director/Health Officer

Office Hours: M-F 8:00am-4:30pm
Toll-Free: 800-250-3110
Fax: 920-232-3370

health@co.winnebago.wi.us
www.winnebagohealth.org



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Winnebago County
Health Department**

112 Otter Avenue
Oshkosh, WI 54903-2808
Phone: 920-232-3000

211 N Commercial Street
Neenah, WI 54956
Phone: 920-727-2894

Find us on Facebook and Twitter
@WinnebagoHealth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winnebago County Reaches Substantial Level of Community Spread of COVID-19 and Issues Updated Guidance on Indoor Masking

Oshkosh, Wis. (August 5, 2021) - The Winnebago County Health Department announced the county has reached [substantial level](#) of community transmission of COVID-19. Recent [guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) call for masking for everyone in areas with substantial and high transmission of COVID-19. In accordance with new CDC guidelines, the health department recommends wearing masks in all indoor public settings and crowded outdoor venues, regardless of vaccination status. [Updated COVID-19 recommendations](#) for Winnebago County can be found on the health department's [website](#).

"Cases and hospitalizations have trended up since early July and are likely to continue. We need to work together to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and the impact it has on our community, schools and local economy," said Doug Gieryn, Winnebago County Health Officer/Director. "To help minimize the spread of this virus locally, we need to vaccinate and mask up to protect those not yet vaccinated and those with an insufficient immune response to the vaccine."

The Winnebago County Health Department continues to urge community members to get vaccinated. Local COVID-19 cases are dominated by the faster spreading Delta variant. Vaccination remains the single best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

"Hospitalizations are rare for fully vaccinated persons," added Gieryn. "The best way to continue our path back toward normal is to increase the levels of vaccination in Winnebago County."

"I understand that citizens across the county are able and willing to take different risks," said Winnebago County Executive Jon Doemel. "Each citizen must determine which mitigation efforts are best for them. Other governments, schools and businesses may institute requirements as they determine based on CDC and health department guidance. I respect any organization's attempt to implement mitigation requirements, and ask the community to do the same. We will continue to advise best practices for our residents. Vaccination is the best mitigation tool."

The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at preventing severe illness which can lead to hospitalization or death. Wearing masks, in addition to getting vaccinated, will help prevent the spread of the virus and protect those who are unvaccinated or immunocompromised. Vaccines are widely available throughout Winnebago County. Visit www.wcvaccine.org to find a location nearby.

The new [CDC guidelines](#) also recommend that fully vaccinated people who have come into close contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 be tested 3-5 days after exposure and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days after exposure or until a negative test result. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, should get tested and isolate until test results are known. There are several ways to get tested for the virus. Contact your doctor to ask if your primary healthcare clinic provides testing. If testing is not available, visit www.winnebagopublichealth.org or call the Winnebago County Health Department at 920-232-3026 to find a free community testing site. [Free at-home collection kits](#) are also available from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Fluctuations in cases may lead to changes in the CDC category of transmission, which is updated daily on [the CDC map](#). For questions related to COVID-19 and the most up-to-date guidance, visit www.winnebagopublichealth.org or call the Winnebago County Health Department's COVID-19 hotline at 920-232-3026.

###