
CLEVELAND COUNTY

PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

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Cleveland County COVID-19 Numbers Going in Wrong Direction

Practice the 3 W's – Wear, Wait, Wash

SHELBY, NC – As of today, there have been a total of 2,956 cases of COVID-19 in Cleveland County. Of those, 197 are currently active, twenty (20) are currently hospitalized, and eighty-one (81) residents have died from the virus.

Cleveland County had a total of 640 cases in August, 686 cases in September, and has had a total of 616 cases thus far in October, which is an average of approximately 29 new cases each day. At this rate, by the end of October, we will have had a total of approximately 906 cases for the month. The rate of COVID-19 cases in Cleveland County is 302 cases per 10,000 residents, one of the highest rates in our region.

“One may suggest that our number of cases are increasing at a more rapid rate now than they were in months prior due to increased testing capacity,” Cleveland County Deputy Health Director DeShay Oliver said. “While I would agree that we are doing more testing now than we were in months prior, with over 2,000 tests being administered weekly, we are also seeing an increase in the percent of individuals who are testing positive in proportion to the total number of tests being done. During the first week of September, we saw our percent positive dip as low as 5.5% and it has now increased to 9.5% compared to state’s rate of 7.4%.”

While Cleveland County’s rates remain higher than the state’s rates, after weeks of continued stabilization and decreases, North Carolina is also beginning to see increases in rates of new daily cases, percent of positive tests, hospitalizations and deaths.

“There are a number of factors that could be contributing to the increases we are seeing in Cleveland County and are beginning to see across the state,” said Oliver. “The cooler weather is more hospitable to the virus and as temperatures get colder, more people are participating in indoor activities. People are going more places and many are not as diligent about social distancing and wearing face coverings as they were just a month ago. I think many people are

experiencing quarantine fatigue and are ready for the things to return to normal. Acting as though things are back to normal does not make them more normal. The coronavirus is still very much alive in Cleveland County and if we don't continue to do our part, we risk having to go backwards. One of the things I think almost everyone can agree on is we need our kids to be able to go back to school. This cannot happen if we can't stop widespread community transmission of the virus. Now more than ever, we must remain vigilant in practicing the three W's of wearing a cloth face covering over our nose and mouth, waiting six feet apart, and washing our hands. I believe that we, as a community, can work TOGETHER to stop the spread."

Cleveland County Public Health Center is also encouraging everyone 6 months of age and older to get their flu shot. Flu season in combination with COVID-19 has the potential to severely impact hospital capacity. The flu vaccine is now available at the Cleveland County Public Health Center as well as most healthcare provider offices and minute clinics.

"The same practices that help prevent coronavirus also help prevent the flu. I urge everyone to do their part to protect loved ones and our community by, again, wearing a face covering, waiting six feet apart, and washing your hands frequently. These simple yet very effective steps can make a huge impact when we all do them together," said Oliver.

You can receive local COVID-19 updates by following the Cleveland County Health Department's Facebook page @clevelandcountyhealthdepartment. You may also view additional county and state COVID-19 data and information on the NC DHHS COVID-19 Dashboard available at: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard>.

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