



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

News Release

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Covid-19 Cases Continue to Increase County Executive Urges Compliance Emphasizes Enforcement of Current Regulations

Announces Food Service Grant Program Awards and Early Plans for Vaccine Rollout

FREDERICK, Md. – December has seen a record number of new COVID-19 cases in Frederick County, now averaging over 115 new cases per day. More than 7,000 residents are now confirmed to have contracted the virus since the pandemic began in mid-March.

County health metrics reflect the increase in the virus and in community spread. The County's positivity rate is 8.1 percent, above the statewide average. The 7-day rolling average of new daily cases per 100,000 population has also increased and is above the statewide average. Total hospitalizations slightly exceed the peak experienced in the spring.

Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner urged residents to comply with the State mandate to wear face coverings in all public settings, both inside and outside, and practice social distancing and good hygiene.

“Without a doubt, Frederick County is experiencing a second wave of COVID-19 and it appears it will get worse before it gets better,” she said. “I know people are weary. But, we are facing our last big battle against the virus. We need to hunker down now and do our part to protect our health care workers, our first responders, or frontline workers, and to reduce the impact to our hospital.”

The County Executive clarified regulations recently passed by the Frederick County Board of Health noting that most of the adopted regulations codify directives and Executive Orders from the Governor. The Board of Health also provided health officials with more tools for enforcement. The County along with State leadership is focused on enforcement of existing directives and improved compliance.

The Health Department has hired additional staff to help enforce gathering size limits of 25 people or less as well as the mask mandate and business limitations put in place by the Governor. The Health Department will also utilize trained inspectors from partner agencies like liquor, building and permit inspectors to help educate businesses and their customers and take necessary corrective steps.

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Executive Gardner announced the results of the Food Service Grant Program. Grants to restaurants, caterers, bakeries, food trucks and other food service providers initiated in mid-November awarded over \$2 million in grants. Grants were awarded to more than 200 Frederick County businesses in two tiers. Tier one includes caterers, carry-out restaurants and food trucks. Each eligible business in this group will receive \$4,397. Tier two includes restaurants with seating, wineries, breweries and distilleries. Each successful applicant in this group will receive \$14,748.

County Executive Gardner was joined by Frederick County Health Officer, Dr. Barbara Brookmyer, who was happy to report that a vaccine is on the horizon and will likely be available in Frederick County in limited quantities sometime in December. Health care workers and nursing home staff and residents will likely be the first to receive the vaccine. Vaccines for the general public will follow but may not be available for a few months.

The Health Department is seeking feedback related to the vaccine, including interest and willingness to receive a vaccine as well as options for distribution of the vaccine. A survey will be released tomorrow and residents are encouraged to participate. The survey will be available online at frederickcountymd.gov/coronavirus and on social media beginning Friday, December 4.

Questions and concerns about the use of face coverings in businesses can be directed to the Frederick County Health Department's hotline, 301-600-6200, or by emailing them at <mailto:FCHDBusinessInfo@FrederickCountyMD.gov>.

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