

This Month in Public Health

in Seneca County
August 9, 2021, Edition

Hot News:

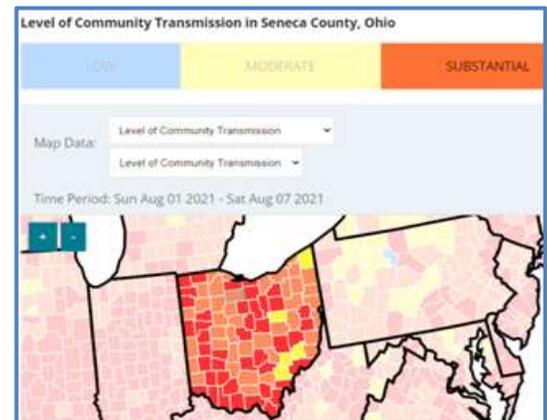
Effective immediately, Seneca County General Health District recommends all residents wear masks in indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status, because the county is experiencing **SUBSTANTIAL** levels of community transmission of **COVID-19**. This recommendation reflects CDC's updated [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention Strategies](#) issued on July 27, 2021, based on emerging evidence of the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant.

The Current Status of COVID-19 in Seneca County and Beyond

- The U.S. is experiencing a HIGH level of community transmission of COVID-19. **Ohio and Seneca County are currently experiencing SUBSTANTIAL levels of community transmission.**

What does this mean?

- Level of community transmission is based on the number of new cases in the last 7 days per 100,000 population and the number of tests in the last 7 days that have a positive result. **SUBSTANTIAL** community transmission means there are 50 - 99.9 new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days OR 8-9.99% of COVID-19 tests being positive). **HIGH** community transmission is when there are ≥ 100 new cases per 100,000 in the past 7 days or $\geq 10\%$ of tests are +.



	# of cases in the last 7 days per 100,000 population	% of tests in the last 7 days that are + for COVID-19	Level of Community Transmission
United States	210.3	10.1%	HIGH
Ohio	92.3	5-7.9%	SUBSTANTIAL
Seneca County	57.99	4.15%	SUBSTANTIAL

For the United States:



- Current 7-day moving **average of daily new cases = 89,977** (previous 7-day average = 67,274). Compared to the lowest value of 11,943 new cases seen on June 19, 2021, this is a whopping 682.9% increase!

For Ohio: (Note: Ohio reports 2-week averages and 21-day trends, in comparison to the CDC reporting 7-day averages.)



This data was reported 8/8/2021; data often lags over the weekend, so actual number of cases may be higher.

- There were 125.1 new cases per 100,000 residents during the 2-week period of 7/22-8/4/2021, up from 77.4 the previous week. There are now 60 counties with at least 100 cases per 100,000.
- The Delta variant is the dominant strain of COVID-19 in Ohio. 86.4% of lab sequenced cases involve the Delta variant (7/4-7/17), in comparison to <1% of sequenced cases in May.
- 98% of hospitalized cases in Ohio since Jan 1 have been persons that were not fully immunized.
- 50.01% of Ohioans have begun and 46.46% have completed their COVID-19 vaccination series (as of 8/8/2021).

Hospitalizations and Vaccination Status	
Number of people hospitalized in Ohio since Jan. 1, 2021, due to COVID-19.	
Total hospitalizations	18,662
Hospitalizations among people who are not fully vaccinated*	18,367
Hospitalizations among people who are fully vaccinated*	295

For Seneca County:

- There have been a total of 5,419 cases of COVID-19 in Seneca County per ODH, through 8/8/2021).
- There have been 24 new cases over the past two weeks (from 7/22-8/4/2021). While this ranks #86 in the state, our rate of new cases more than doubled over the previous week (going from 18.1 to 43.5 cases per 100,000).
- 41.6% of local residents have begun and 39.3% have completed their COVID-19 vaccination series (as of 8/8/2021).
- Only 7.25% of residents below the age of 20 have been vaccinated, meaning that nearly all students in our middle and high schools are at risk for COVID-19 infection.

Current CDC COVID-19 Guidance

CDC announced updated [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention Strategies](#) on July 27, 2021, based on emerging evidence of the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant.

- **All people, regardless of vaccination status, should wear masks in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission.**
- **Universal indoor masking is recommended for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place.** (More information about these prevention strategies is outlined below.)

Current COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools from Ohio Department of Health

The Ohio Department of Health issued its [COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools](#) guidance late last month and followed it on Aug 5 with [K-12 quarantine guidance](#) to guide quarantine decisions after a student or staff member is exposed to someone with COVID-19 [in the classroom setting](#).

- **VACCINATIONS:** ODH strongly recommend vaccinations for staff and eligible students. Vaccines are our best tool to protect students and prevent the spread of the virus.
- **MASKING:** ODH strongly recommends that those who are unvaccinated wear masks while in school. However, ODH initially stopped short of recommending universal masking. It now “strongly recommends the use of face masks in K-12 settings, particularly for those who are not fully vaccinated”.
- **OTHER PREVENTION STRATEGIES:** ODH recommends other prevention strategies be layered on top of vaccinations and masking. These include increasing ventilation, maintaining physical distances of at least 3 ft (and preferably 6 ft), handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfection, staying home when sick and getting tested, and contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation.

ODH provides the following quarantine guidelines for K-12 settings:

- Quarantine is not necessary for students and adults possibly exposed to COVID-19 in school settings, regardless of vaccination status, when ALL of the following prevention measures have been in place:
 - Masking for all students and staff (regardless of vaccination status).
 - Physical distancing is maximized (at least 3 ft between desks).
 - Documented COVID-19 prevention policies (e.g., identification of individuals experiencing symptoms, strategies to increase ventilation, protocols for cleaning, etc.).
- The guidelines also address when quarantine is necessary for an exposed student or staff member when not all prevention measures are in place. These vary based on the exposed person’s vaccination status and mask usage.

Check Up from Your Neck Up!

- Mental/behavioral health is a major factor in our overall well-being. Brief screenings are the quickest way to determine if you or someone you care about should connect with a behavioral health professional. The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties has a [Mental Health Screening Tool](#) on its website. It’s completely anonymous and confidential, and immediately following the brief questionnaire you will see your results, recommendations, and key local resources. Feel free to share this link with others!
- The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board also recently placed benches in 4 Seneca County parks to encourage us to make some time and reap the healing benefits of enjoying the outdoors. Evidence shows that spending just 15 minutes outdoors improves our physical health, lowers stress, boosts mood, and improves sense of well-being. The benches are located at:
 - Garlo Heritage Nature Preserve- located on the east side of the lake loop trail
 - Forrest Nature Preserve- located at the front entrance near trail head, by kiosk and restroom
 - Tiffin University Nature Preserve- located near the half way point on the loop trail
 - Steyer Nature Preserve- located near the trail head, off main parking lot