



Tioga County Public Health Department

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Tioga County

PRESS RELEASE

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Tioga County Weekly Update for February 23, 2022 – March 1, 2022

On Sunday New York State Governor, Kathy Hochul announced that the New York State school mask mandate would be lifted starting on Wednesday, March 2, 2022. Masks are no longer required on school buses or in the school setting for students, staff, and teachers. The mask mandate has also been lifted for child care programs. This decision comes after the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated their mask guidance.

School districts are now be following the New Masking Guidance Update released from New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) on March 1, 2022. In this guidance NYSDOH notes that masks are still required upon returning to school for those who test positive for COVID-19 on days 6 – 10. Regardless of one's vaccination status, the NYSDOH still recommends wearing a mask for 10 days after a known exposure to a positive case. If a student or staff member has a known exposure to a positive case while at school, districts should notify the affected individuals or their parent/guardian of their exposure. Schools are still encouraged to improve ventilation, encourage vaccination, conduct surveillance testing, and provide access to free testing.

The NYSDOH recommends that students, staff, and teachers continue wearing a mask if they feel more comfortable for personal reasons. They should also wear a mask if they know they were in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Those who are immunocompromised should discuss the need to wear a mask with their health care provider and continue to take extra precautions.

Anyone who is symptomatic, regardless of vaccination status, should stay home until they test negative or for 5 days from symptom onset. Exposed students, staff, and teachers may remain in school as long as they are wearing a well-fitting mask and undergo recommended testing. If a cluster of new COVID-19 infections is identified within a school, Tioga County Public Health will work with the school district on mitigation measures to prevent further spread of the virus.

Parents/guardian who have questions should refer to their school district's website to view updated information specific to their school's mask policy.

Tioga County Public Health will continue to monitor and be vigilant about COVID-19 cases and will identify clusters if they develop in the community or in a school.

COVID-19 case breakdown in Tioga County from February 23, 2022 – March 1, 2022

(Please Note: Data does not include positive at-home tests)

- **New Cases:** 52
- **Hospitalizations:** 3
- **(Known) Deaths:** 0
- **Current Active Cases:** 18

New York State Case Investigators are now conducting abbreviated interviews with positive cases and do not ask vaccination status (among other questions) when conducting their interview.

COVID-19 Resources:

- COVID-19 Vaccine Locations: <https://www.vaccines.gov/>
- Find a COVID-19 Test Site Near You: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>
- COVID-19 State Run Testing Locations: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing>
- New York State Data Dashboard: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing-tracker>
- Tioga County Public Health Website: ph.tiogacountyny.gov
- Tioga County Public Health Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/tiogacountypublichealth>