

From: Maurice Jones <mjones@townofchapelhill.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 4, 2022 5:30 PM
To: Town Email Users
Subject: Town Manager's COVID Update 1-04-22

Hello Everyone,

Happy New Year! I hope you and families had a relaxing and safe holiday season. Unfortunately, the Omicron COVID-19 variant has spread like wildfire through our nation in the last few weeks. So I wanted to provide you with a few updates and reminders about how we're proceeding in our efforts to keep people safe during this time.

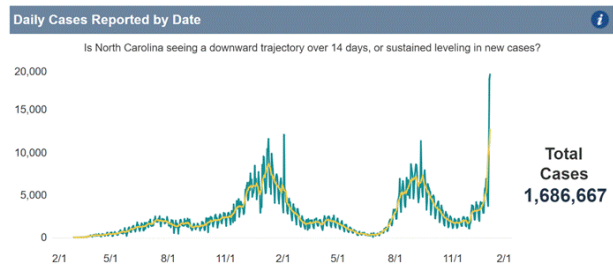
Give Space and Mask Up

Omicron is proving to spread much more easily than previous COVID viruses. Keeping our distance from one another is one of the important tools in our coronavirus toolbox. I am encouraging those who can work remotely to do so to limit potential exposures, at least for a few weeks. Anyone who is in the office, remember to keep at least 6 feet away from non-household members, and wear a face covering over your mouth and nose when you are near others and in shared spaces (hallways, restrooms, shared work spaces, etc.). This includes eating and drinking—you need to eat and drink by yourself since you'll need to remove your mask in those circumstances. And, if you can conduct meetings remotely, please do so.

Watching the Numbers

COVID-19 numbers in North Carolina made an unimaginable jump last week, far surpassing the Delta surge (11,337 single-day record) and the original surge (12,079 single-day record) with 19,620 new cases on New Year's Day. The percent-positive among those testing far exceeded pre-

Omicron numbers as well, now jumping to 30% this week. You can see the latest data at covid19.ncdhhs.gov/.



As for Town employees, we've seen an increase in positive cases as well. Twelve employees are currently out after testing positive for coronavirus. We have had 96 positive COVID-19 cases since March of 2020, with 19 of those cases being recorded in the last few weeks. So, nearly 20% of our overall total have occurred recently. Please be careful.

Weekly Testing

Weekly testing continues among employees who have chosen not to submit being fully vaccinated to Human Resource Development (HRD). The surge in cases has made getting an appointment for testing more difficult, so I encourage everyone to plan ahead until we see some relief.

Vaccines and Boosters

This surge is why our public health professionals continue encouraging everyone to get vaccinated. If you are eligible, get boosted as well. It's not too late.

Vaccines are free, and the supply is abundant. If you have questions, visit yourspotyourshot.nc.gov.

Public Meetings Staying Virtual

The Mayor has informed me that all public meetings of the Town Council and Advisory Boards and Commissions will remain virtual through January. With another surge in cases, now is not the right time to bring elected officials and volunteers, plus staff and residents, into our buildings while the work can still be done remotely.

Stay Well

Continue to take care of yourself. We will get through this. Thank you for all you do to make Chapel Hill the exceptional place that it is.

Resources

- Submit employee questions and concerns to the Office of Risk Management at 919-969-5035, rallen@townofchapelhill.org
- Contact the Town's Wellness Clinic: 919-968 2796, <https://chapelhillwellnessatwork.org/>
 - Please call first
 - Please note: the Town's Wellness Clinic does not have the capability to test for coronavirus; the staff can recommend whether you should seek additional medical guidance
- Your Blue Cross and Blue Shield health plan provides video diagnosis options. Visit <https://member.carefirst.com/members/health-wellness/video-visit.page>.
- Contact the Ombuds at ombuds@townofchapelhill.org or 919-265-0806
- If you need to talk with someone about personal problems and/or work-related problems that may impact your job performance, health, mental and emotional well-being, call 1-800-272-7255 or visit guidanceresources.com.

All the Best,
Maurice

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