

# Williams County Health District

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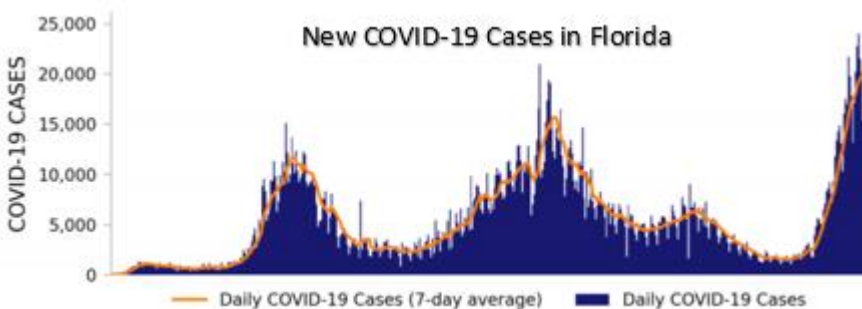
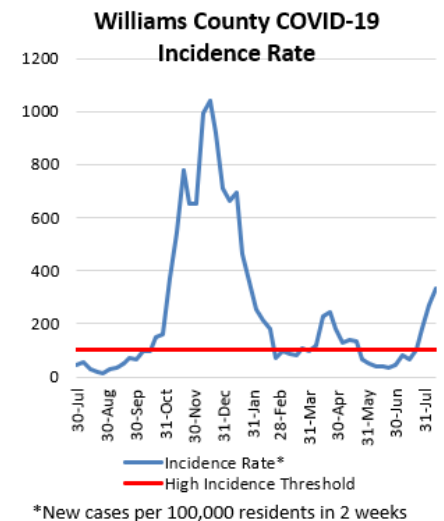
August 20, 2021

## COVID-19 Cases Increasing in Williams County: WCHD Issues COVID-19 Advisory

The Williams County Health Department reports a rapid increase of COVID-19 cases among Williams County residents. In the past month, Williams County's cases have increased from an average of 15 cases in one week to an average of nearly 70 cases in one week. In the past 7 days, there have been 81 new COVID-19 cases. Williams County's level of community transmission has increased from moderate transmission (yellow) in mid-July (incidence rate of 43) to high transmission (red) in August (incidence rate of 332). Last year, Williams County did not experience this level of spread until November.

When there is a rapid increase of cases in a community, hospitalizations and severe outcomes soon follow, as Williams County experienced last Winter with the Alpha variant. "The virus that Williams County faces this year is much different than the virus we experienced last year," says Jim Watkins, Health Commissioner. The Delta variant is more than twice as contagious as the Alpha variant with double the risk of hospitalization for all ages. The Ohio Department of Health reports that the Delta variant is spreading rapidly across Ohio and, as of mid-July, is associated with over 86% of Ohio cases.

"The trajectory we are seeing throughout Ohio mirrors the doubling of cases and hospitalizations first seen when the Delta variant became the dominant strain in southern states like Mississippi and Florida. The Delta variant is now the dominant strain in Ohio," states Watkins. Florida experienced rapid spread of the Delta variant is now reporting a new record for daily COVID-19 cases, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and CDC. COVID-19 hospitalizations in Florida are nearly triple the hospitalizations



recorded last year in August. “Williams County residents can learn from Florida’s rapid increase of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations and take precautions now. Our trajectory can be altered,” says Watkins.

The Williams County Health Department strongly advises unvaccinated Williams County residents and people with weakened immune systems to take precautions such as wearing a mask in public indoor settings and avoiding crowded situations with poor ventilation or limited social distancing. The health department continues to advise Williams County residents to get the COVID-19 vaccine because it offers the best protection against the Delta variant. Over 98% of COVID-19 patients in Ohio hospitals are unvaccinated and over 99% of COVID-19 deaths since January 2021 have been among Ohioans who have not received the COVID-19 vaccine.

It is important that Williams County residents do not wait to get the COVID-19 vaccine. It takes about five to six weeks to benefit from the protection provided by COVID-19 vaccine, from first dose to two weeks after completion of the series. For those who may still be considering vaccination against COVID-19, the vaccine is widely available. Healthcare providers across Williams County strongly support the COVID-19 vaccine and are providing free COVID-19 vaccines to our community.

The WCHD hosts free COVID-19 vaccination clinics at our Montpelier office each week. Make an appointment at the WCHD or with a local provider online at [bit.ly/WCVaccine](https://bit.ly/WCVaccine). You may also call the WCHD to make an appointment: 419-485-3141. Walk-ins are welcome during clinic hours: <https://bit.ly/3k0HHvc>. Talk to your healthcare provider about getting vaccinated.

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