



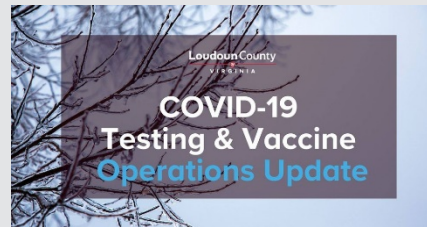
All About Algonkian

Juli E. Briskman | Algonkian District Supervisor



As we work through another winter with COVID-19, it's important to have the most up-to-date information.

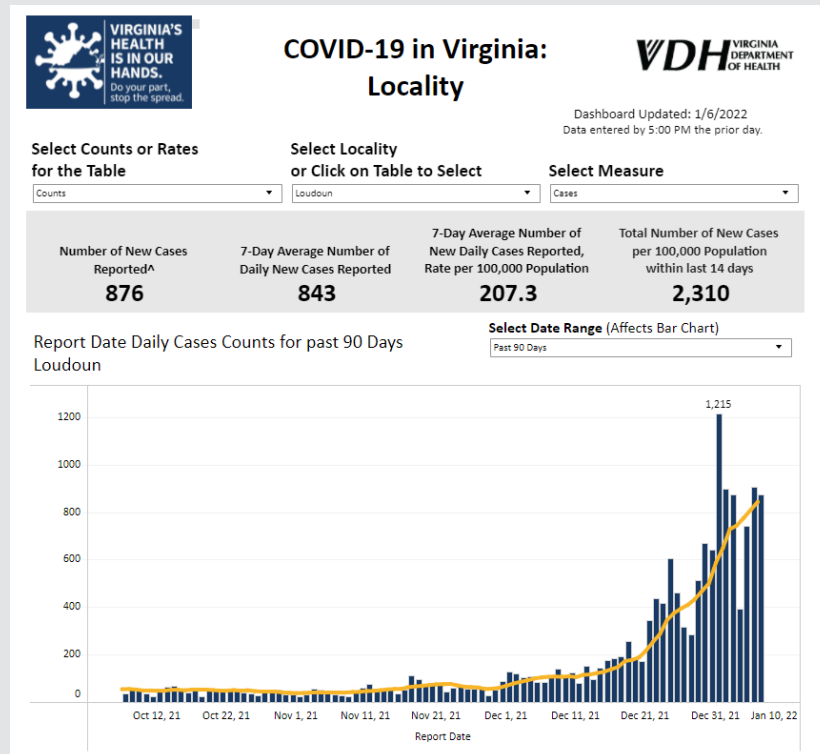
The [Omicron variant](#) has hit Virginia tremendously hard and hit Northern Virginia first. Last month's 7-day-average was about 60 cases; now its 843 cases, over a 10-fold increase (see chart below). Previously, the testing positivity rate was below 5%, however now we have now surpassed 30% with Omicron largely to blame for this most recent spike. We are in a *high transmission* period, which give the virus a greater change to spread and mutate.



You may have already seen, but tonight's expected inclement weather has forced the county to cancel the COVID-19 testing event scheduled for tomorrow at Philip A. Bolen Memorial Park. The county is also rescheduling all Friday appointments at the COVID-19 vaccination clinic at Dulles Town Center.

The good news is that [Loudoun County is amongst the highest vaccinated counties in the State](#). More than 81% of adults over the age of 18 are fully vaccinated and over 90% have received at least one dose. Additionally, Loudoun has been successful in vaccinating newly eligible 5- to 11-year-olds. As of December 29, 22,410 children in this age range have received their first dose of Pfizer. This accounts for 48.2% of all children ages 5-11 in the County, surpassing the State average of 30.6%.

Vaccination is critical in combating the spread of the virus, but unfortunately it's not enough on it's own. About a week ago, the health directors of all of NOVA jurisdictions sent a joint letter to their respective school superintendents asking that administrators implement all available mitigation efforts as school was coming back into session. [Read the letter here.](#)



(Source: [Virginia Department of Health; COVID-19 Data In Virginia; Locality](#))

Our hospitals are also feeling the brunt of this winter surge. The previous peak for COVID admissions at INOVA was reached last January at 50. However this week, Innova had 59 cases, the highest record, according to President Susan Carroll who spoke at the Tuesday Board Business meeting.

Hospitals stays are shorter however compared to Spring of 2020 where a COVID patient typically was in the hospital for 8 days. Now it's closer to 2-3 days, which is directly attributable to vaccinations. The

unvaccinated are still the at the highest risk for contracting, spreading, and developing sever symptoms based on hospital admissions numbers.

To help our hospitals, please do not go to the ER if you think you need a test or unless you have severe symptoms. Contact your doctor and/or visit a testing site or use a home test.

A testing event is scheduled for Sterling this weekend, see information below.

At that same meeting, Dr. David Goodfriend, the Director of Loudoun County Health Department, shared that barring a new variant, it is possible for us to reduce the level of transmission to the point that children may not need to wear a mask to school. We can only achieve this if we all continue to do our part to reduce risk and minimize the spread of COVID-19. He said he will be watching for at least two cycles or four weeks of extremely low transmission, however, before he can make that recommendation.

Health officials say the best way to prevent the newly identified Omicron, or other COVID-19 variants from impacting Loudoun County, and to decrease COVID-19 cases is to follow proven prevention strategies:

- Everyone age 5 and older who has not already received a COVID-19 vaccination is encouraged to do as soon as possible
- Wear a mask in all indoor public settings
- Wear an N95 mask, not a gator or cloth mask
- Stay 6 feet away from people who do not live in your household
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds
- Stay home when sick
- Avoid contact with sick people

Know the [signs and symptoms of COVID-19](#) and remember to get tested if you're symptomatic, or if potentially exposed to COVID-19, regardless of your vaccination status. Find information on how to schedule an appointment at the Loudoun County vaccination site at loudoun.gov/covid19vaccine. Find other locations at vaccines.gov

**Get your kids ages
5-11 vaccinated
against COVID-19
today!**

Loudoun County
VIRGINIA



Click here to make an appointment now

ADDITIONAL WALK-IN COVID-19 VACCINE EVENTS

Loudoun County Public Schools will host walk-in COVID-19 vaccine events in coordination with the Loudoun County Health Department and Giant Pharmacy. All COVID-19 vaccines offered at the events will be free of charge.

Monday, January 10th from 4:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.

Sterling Elementary School

200 W Church Rd, Sterling, VA 20164

Monday, January 10th from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Sugarland Elementary School

65 Sugarland Run Drive, Sterling, VA 20164

FREE COVID-19 TESTING IN STERLING ON SATURDAY

Priority Health is offering free COVID-19 testing in Sterling from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Latino Mercado & Cocina on Saturday.

The event will be conducted via drive through lanes only and an appointment is required. Testing is only available until the allocated test kits are depleted at the site. The address is 107 Free Court, Sterling, VA 20164.

Register today at [this link](#).

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