



# COVID-19 UPDATE

**Thursday, December 17, 2020**

Here's what you will find in today's update:

## COVID-19 Information

- [COVID Data Trends](#)
- [Metrics Charts](#)
- [Prince George's County Metrics](#)
- [Maryland hospitalizations](#)
- [Nationwide Trends](#)
- [New County Restrictions](#)
- [Vaccine Update](#)
- [Vaccine Town Hall](#)
- [Vaccine Priority Groups](#)
- [Vaccine Benefits & What to Expect After Vaccination](#)
- [Testing Information](#)
- [FDA Approves Home Tests](#)
- [County Assistance Programs](#)
- [Maryland Financial Resources Guide](#)

## Other News

- Upcoming Meetings & Events
- Holiday Happenings
- Winter Weather Preparations
- Alert Bowie Notice

## COVID Data Trends

The County positivity has shown some decline in the last seven days, which is an encouraging sign that the rate of new cases may be slowing. New COVID hospitalizations have leveled off, but still remain concerning.

## New Announcements by Governor Hogan Today

At a late afternoon press conference, Governor Hogan provided an update on COVID and announced some new protocols to control the spread of the virus throughout the holidays.

## Observations about COVID in Maryland:

- Maryland's post-Thanksgiving surge did not rise to the levels seen in other states.
- COVID hospitalizations are down today.
- Our strongest defense against this virus continues to be the cooperation and the vigilance of the people of the state.
- You are safer at home for the holidays this year.

## New Protocols to Limit the Spread

- **Gathering Limits** – The Maryland Health Department has issued a public health advisory which lowers the gathering limit from 25 to 10 and advises Marylanders against all non-essential activities and holiday gatherings with people outside of your immediate household.
- **Expanded Travel and Testing Requirements** - The governor issued an emergency order that requires limiting travel to essential purposes only. Marylanders who travel out of state or those who travel to Maryland must obtain a negative COVID-19 test or self-quarantine for 10 days.

- **Suspension of Customer-Facing State Operations** – The State of Maryland has instituted mandatory telework for state employees; and beginning 12/21 will temporarily suspend all in-person, customer-facing operations at state facilities for two weeks.
- **Telework** - Businesses that can institute telework policies should do so, and in-person interactions should be limited as much as possible.

*(Note: The Governor has issued a special emergency order that exempts Santa Claus, his elves and reindeer from any and all travel, testing and quarantine requirements.)*

### Financial Assistance

The Governor also announced an additional \$180 million in immediate emergency economic relief to help those families and small businesses, including:

- \$50 Million for Hotels and Hospitality Businesses
- \$30 Million More for Restaurant Relief
- \$15 Million more for Entertainment Venues
- \$5 million for Rural Businesses
- \$40 Million to Boost Temporary Cash Assistance Benefits

He also encouraged Marylanders to support local restaurants this holiday season by using carryout or delivery services, giving to a local charity or food bank, and shopping at local small businesses.

### Key Metrics Charts

These charts provide data for the last seven days on key COVID-19 metrics that are being tracked and analyzed to identify trends and to make reopening decisions.

COVID-19 New Case Tracking							
	20715	20716	20720	20721	Bowie Cases	Prince George's Cases	Maryland Cases
Today	868 (+15)	833 (+3)	936 (+12)	1,228 (+10)	3,865 (+40)	49,068 (+350)	243,984 (+2,217)
16-Dec	+8	+8	+10	+14	+40	+486	+2,405
15-Dec	+3	+7	+9	+13	+32	+550	+2,401
14-Dec	+14	+5	+11	+15	+45	+394	+2,314
13-Dec	+12	+9	+14	+4	+39	+411	+2,638
12-Dec	+10	+10	+7	+15	+42	+542	+3,538
11-Dec	806	791	873	1,157	3,627	46,335	228,471

7-Day Positivity Rates				
	County Tests Completed	County %	State Tests Completed	State %
Today	371,660 (+1,507)	9.35%	5,160,976 (+29,546)	7.73%
16-Dec	+2,357	9.34%	+36,858	7.49%
15-Dec	+2,615	9.23%	+33,185	7.53%
14-Dec	+1,982	9.49%	+40,010	7.46%
13-Dec	+2,296	9.37%	+51,393	7.41%
12-Dec	+3,031	9.45%	+65,832	7.42%
11-Dec	+2,487	9.91%	+48,197	7.49%

Infection Rates			Cases per 100K Persons		
	County Infection Rate	State Infection Rate		County Cases per 100K	State Cases per 100K
16-Dec	1.06	1.01	Today	52.99	45.17
15-Dec	1.06	1.01	16-Dec	52.44	45.84
14-Dec	1.07	1.02	15-Dec	51.53	46.40
13-Dec	1.07	1.03	14-Dec	50.76	46.39
12-Dec	1.07	1.03	13-Dec	50.93	46.40
11-Dec	1.08	1.04	12-Dec	52.39	45.60
10-Dec	1.08	1.04	11-Dec	53.62	48.34
14-Day Weighted Average	1.08	1.05			

Key	
<b>Cases</b>	Represents the daily number of new positive cases.
<b>Positivity Rate</b>	The 7-day positivity rate is a rolling weekly average of the percent of new cases relative to the number of tests conducted. The goal is a positivity rate consistently below 5%.
<b>Cases per 100K persons</b>	Measures how widespread the virus is in a community. The goal is to have fewer than 5 new cases per 100K persons.
<b>Infection rate</b>	Shows how many people are infected by each positive case. The goal is an infection rate at or below 0.9.
<b>Data sources:</b> Except for the infection rate, all data provided here is from the State of Maryland's COVID dashboard. The infection rate is tracked by <a href="http://www.covidactnow.org">www.covidactnow.org</a> . It is subject to adjustments and may have a 1 to 3-day lag time in reporting.	

## Prince George's County Metrics

Key Metrics	Current status*	Goal
Positivity rate	<b>9.35</b>	Remain below 5%
Cases per 100K	<b>52.99</b>	New cases below 5 per 100K (low risk)
Infection rate	<b>1.06</b>	Low risk range (<0.9)

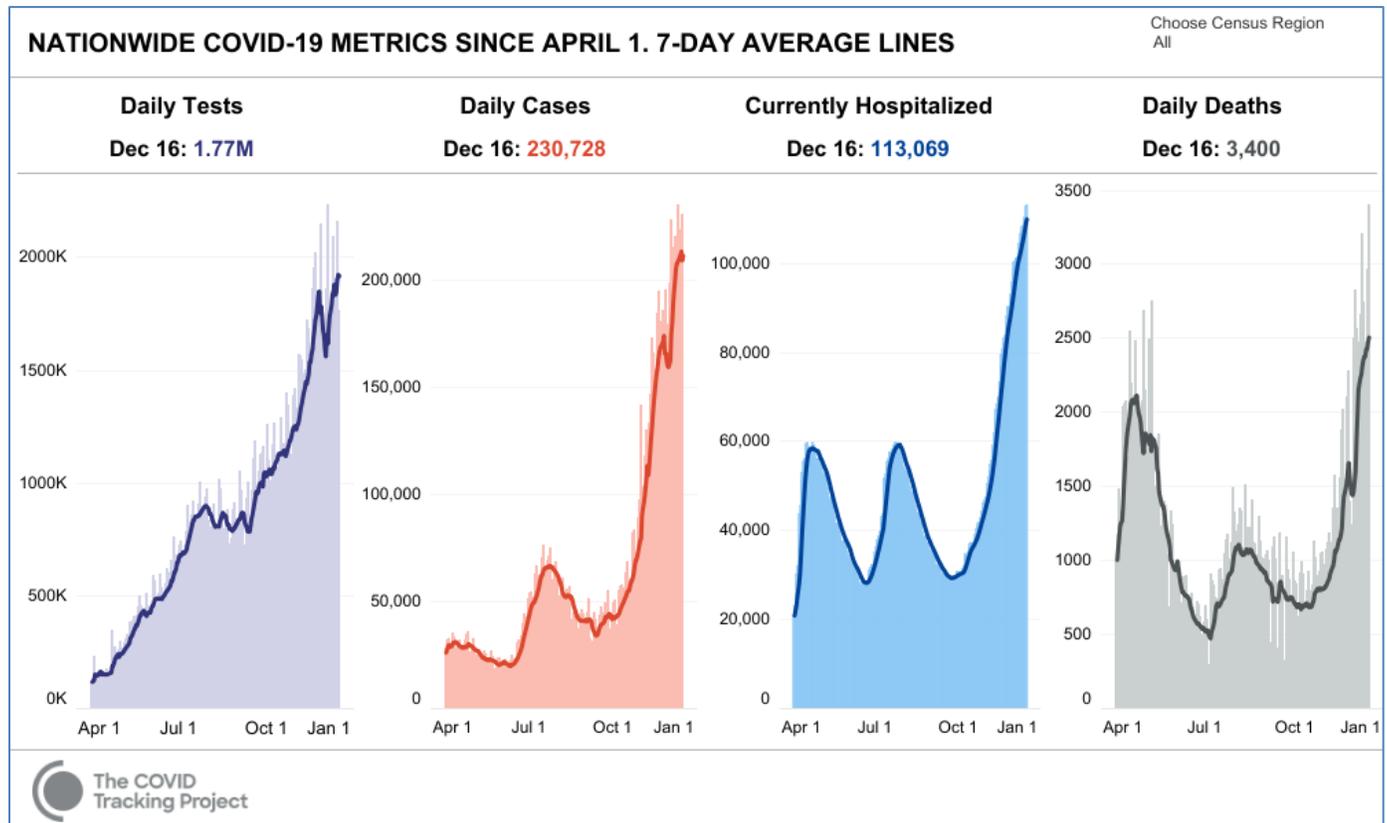
(\*) Green represents a decrease in these figures. Red represents an increase and black signifies no change.

## Maryland Hospitalizations

Hospitalization Data Tracker		
Currently Hospitalized:	1,702	-3.4%
Acute Care:	1,308	-4.0%
Intensive Care	394	-1.2%
Ever Hospitalized	24,136	9.8%

## A Look at Nationwide Metrics

The graphic below provides a nationwide look at four key metrics - new tests, new confirmed cases, hospitalizations, and new deaths.



## New Prince George's County Restrictions Are Now in Effect

As of December 16, 2020, the following changes are now in place:

- Indoor dining will not be permitted at restaurants. Carryout and delivery service can continue.

- Outdoor dining can continue with capacity reduced to 50%\*.
- Casinos must reduce their capacity to 25%.
- Retail establishments must limit numbers to 25% of capacity.
- County compliance efforts will increase to ensure that the new restrictions are followed.
- The changes will remain in effect until January 16, 2021.

(\* *Outdoor dining can include a tent or enclosure with a roof and a MAXIMUM of three sides. At least one side must be completely open at all times, from floor to ceiling height. It cannot be enclosed on four sides with a roof. If all sides are closed, it is considered indoor dining. Restaurant owners are required to obtain permits for outdoor dining.*

### Vaccine Update

As of December 16, the federal vaccine effort, Operation Warp Speed, is reporting that shipments of the vaccine were delivered to every delivery site identified by public health jurisdictions for the first wave of COVID-19 vaccine shipments.

The federal government is projecting that 20 million people will be vaccinated in December, 30 million people in January, and 50 million people in February. By the first quarter of 2021 potentially 100 million people could be immunized, which is approximately the size of the U.S. significant at-risk population (elderly/65 and older, healthcare workers, first line workers, and people with comorbidities).

Today, the FDA’s Advisory Committee will meet to review Moderna’s application for Emergency Use Authorization. The FDA has independently verified the results provided by Moderna. In anticipation of approval by the FDA this week, Moderna has almost 6 million of its vaccines ready for shipment.

Vaccine Manufacturer	Status	Details
Pfizer-BioNTech	Emergency Use Authorization approved.	Ages 16+, patients need 2 doses, 21 days apart
Moderna	Emergency Use Authorization submitted. FDA advisory committee recommends approval on 12/17.	Ages 18+, patients need 2 doses, 28 days apart
Johnson & Johnson	A second phase 3 trial is underway.	
Astra Zeneca/Oxford	Phase 3 trials underway.	
Novavax	Phase 3 trials beginning soon.	

### Prince George’s County Town Hall on Vaccinations

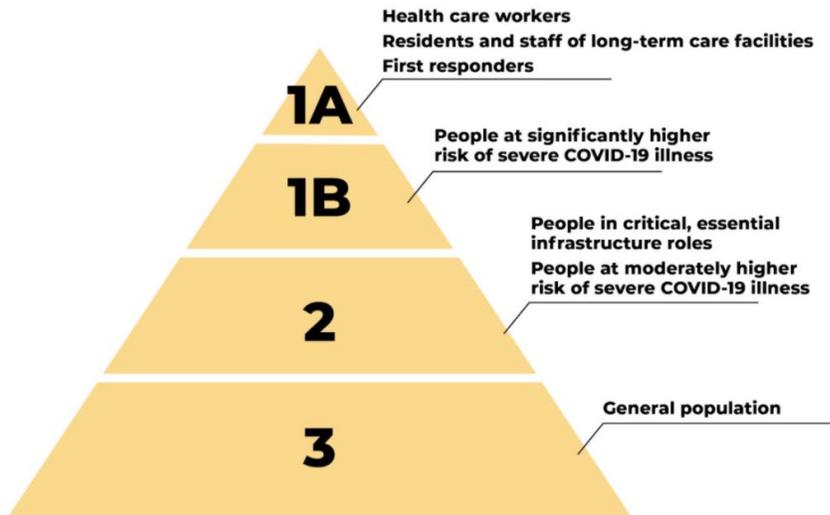
One of the major challenges going forward with COVID will be to convince all segments of the population that they should get the vaccine when it is available. To address this, Prince George’s County is launching a “Proud to be Protected” campaign to educate and motivate county residents to get vaccinated. One of the first steps in this effort will be a town hall meeting on December 17 at 7 p.m. to educate the public about who can get the vaccine, how it will be administered, the need for two doses of the vaccine, and how the County’s plans to roll out the vaccines. Participants will be able to ask questions of the panel of experts and voice their concerns on the call. To register for the tele-town hall, or to submit your questions or concerns, please [click here](#).

### Priority Groups for Vaccine Distribution in Maryland

Based on the Maryland Vaccination Plan, vaccines will be distributed in the state according to the information provided in the graphic below.

# Priority Groups

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## COVID-19 Vaccine Benefits and What to Expect after Vaccination

Vaccines help the body develop natural protection against the virus by triggering an antibody response to the virus. The Pfizer vaccine and the various vaccine candidates awaiting approval are not live vaccines, which means they will not cause recipients to become infected with the virus. Vaccinations protect the recipient and will help to prevent the spread of the disease.

The CDC has published an article, [What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#), highlighting key facts with a list of common side effects and helpful tips.

The agency has also published the following COVID-19 updates:

- [Post Vaccine Considerations for Residents](#)
- [View the CDC's Facts on COVID Vaccination](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

## COVID Testing – Pop Up Site Friday in Upper Marlboro

Please visit the Prince George's County [COVID-19 testing webpage](#) for site locations and testing schedules. You'll also find links there to information about [State of Maryland testing locations](#). If you have additional questions about the County's testing program, call the coronavirus hotline at 301-883-6627 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Monday through Friday.



### **FDA Approves Home Tests**

The FDA has now issued an Emergency Use Authorizations for another COVID home test. The BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Home Test is authorized for prescription use at home with self-collected nasal swab samples from individuals ages 15 years or older, or with adult-collected nasal swab samples from individuals ages four years or older, who are suspected of COVID-19 by a healthcare provider within the first seven days of symptom onset.

Earlier this week the FDA approved the first over the counter at-home diagnostic test for COVID-19. The Ellume COVID-19 Home Test is a rapid, lateral flow antigen test, a type of test that runs a liquid sample along a surface with reactive molecules. The test detects fragments of proteins of the SARS-CoV-2 virus from a nasal swab sample from any individual two years of age or older. The Ellume COVID-19 Home Test uses an analyzer that connects with a software application on a smartphone to help users perform the test and interpret results. Results are delivered in as little as 20 minutes to individuals via smartphones. The test will sell for about \$30 and should be available in 2021.

[NIH Press Release about the Home Test](#)

A third test was approved by the FDA in November. Manufactured by Lucira, this test will require a prescription and will not be ready for widespread distribution until early spring.

### **County Assistance Program**

- **Restaurant Resiliency Fund** - The Prince George's County COVID-19 Restaurant Resiliency Fund was established to assist restaurants and food service establishments adversely affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Businesses may receive a grant up to \$25,000 to support COVID-related costs

including personal protection equipment (PPE), winterization for outdoor seating, interior improvements to support social distancing, expenses to create or expand takeout and/or delivery services, marketing, and operating expenses (rent, payroll, inventory, insurance, utilities). Apply today before the **December 18 deadline**. To apply, please [click here](#).

- **Food Distribution Sites**



The County continues to work hard to address food insecurity in Prince George's County, and we want to provide information on upcoming distribution locations for our Stand Up & Deliver program.

**Friday, December 18** at 12:30 PM (Prepared Meals)

- Beltsville Seventh Day Adventist
  - 4220 Ammendale Road, Beltsville, MD
- Faith Temple No. 2 Free Will Baptist Church
  - 211 Maryland Park Dr, Capitol Heights, MD

**Monday, December 21** at 12:30 PM (Groceries)

- St Paul Church
  - 6419 Marlboro Pike, Forestville, MD

**Tuesday, December 22** at 12:00 PM (Prepared Meals)

- Community of Hope A.M.E. Church
  - 3737 Branch Avenue, Temple Hills, MD
- First Baptist Church of District Heights
  - 7234 Lansdale Street, District Heights, MD

### **Maryland COVID-19 Financial Resources Guide**

The Office of the Commissioner of Financial Regulation has created a Financial Relief Guide for Marylanders. The guide summarizes the COVID-19 financial relief programs and consumer protections available to Maryland residents and is a very useful resource for all.

[Financial Resources Guide](#)

## **Other News**

### **Upcoming Meetings & Events**

- 12/17 – County Town Hall Meeting on Vaccine Distribution. 7 p.m.
- 12/25 – Christmas holiday – City offices closed. No trash or recycling collection
- 1/1 – New Year's Day holiday – City offices closed. No trash collection. Recycling collection will take place for those on the Friday schedule
- 1/4 – City Council Meeting

## Virtual Holiday Happenings

This year, celebrate the holidays with a variety of festive City-sponsored virtual events:

- **Holiday Tree Lighting**  
The debut broadcast was Sunday, December 6. The tree lighting was prerecorded and can be viewed on YouTube and the city website. The video showcases the lighting of multiple trees and sites throughout the City, a message from the Mayor, and some holiday music.
- **Santa Calling** Parents, complete an online request for Santa or Mrs. Claus to call your child (aged 8 or younger).
- **Breakfast with Santa** video. Children can enjoy Santa's reading of *Twas the Night Before Christmas*, then join Mrs. Claus in creating holiday crafts (pick up free craft kits now available at City Hall during regular business hours).
- **Letter to Santa Mailbox** Children may send an electronic letter to Santa and receive a response from the North Pole.
- **December Read Aloud** Community members read seasonal books for our youngest residents. Enjoy stories celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah & Kwanzaa at [www.cityofbowie.org/bowiereadsaloud](http://www.cityofbowie.org/bowiereadsaloud).
- **Gratitude Board** With everything going on in the world, we could all use a reminder about the little things we're all grateful for - friends, family, pets, coworkers, neighbors, and more! Send us a brief message and/or photo that expresses your gratitude via email to [CSAdminStaff@cityofbowie.org](mailto:CSAdminStaff@cityofbowie.org). Please limit messages to no more than 15 words. Messages and/or photos will be posted on our Virtual Holiday Happenings page, and some will be featured in an album on our Facebook page.
- **Holiday Recipe Cookbook** Are your holiday recipes the talk of the family? Share your favorite appetizer, side dish and dessert recipes to be included in our online Holidays in Bowie cookbook. Email your pictures and typed recipes to [CSAdminStaff@cityofbowie.org](mailto:CSAdminStaff@cityofbowie.org).

Watch the broadcasts on:

- YouTube - [@CityofBowieMD](https://www.youtube.com/@CityofBowieMD)
- On the web - [www.cityofbowie.org/broadcasts](http://www.cityofbowie.org/broadcasts)

## Winter Weather Preparations

While our first snowstorm has been a low impact one so far, it is a very good reminder that winter is here and it's time to get prepared for a big storm.

The City's Public Works Department is doing just that. It has its equipment ready and has lined up contractors to supplement our crews when needed. (\*) Residents are also urged to make their own winter weather preparations by doing the following:

- Make sure your car and your furnace are ready for winter weather.
- Have a scraper in your car and a blanket (in case you break down).
- Have canned food and a flashlight on hand at home in case the electricity goes out.
- Make sure you have a snow shovel or line up someone now to do your shoveling.
- Check that your smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector are in working order.
- View our [2019 video on how to put together a winter weather emergency kit](#) for your vehicle.
- Visit [www.cityofbowie.org/snow](http://www.cityofbowie.org/snow) for more cold weather tips.

The City's complete Snow Removal Policy is on our website. The most important points to remember are that when the snowfall is less than two inches, only main drives, hills and collector roads are treated. During larger storms and in severe icing conditions, all streets will be plowed/treated beginning with the

most heavily traveled roads and progressing through to side streets and cul-de-sacs.

Cars must be removed from the streets when two or more inches are forecast so that plows can clear the streets most efficiently. Clearing sidewalks in front of homes is the responsibility of the resident.

During and after a storm, dangerous road conditions may be reported to 301-809-2344 between the hours of 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. After business hours, dangerous conditions can be reported to the Bowie Police Department Call Center at 240-544-5700.

*(\*) Some salting operations have been taking place today due to the wintery mixture.*

#### **Alert Bowie Notice**

If you are receiving this update via Alert Bowie, please note that Alert Bowie SMS text messages will now show as coming from a different sender. The new sender ID is 88911 instead of the current Sender ID 89361.

This sender ID change was initiated by our vendor, Everbridge, to help avoid confusion when people are receiving messages from different sources. The new sender ID will be used exclusively by all local and state government agencies. Other organizations and companies using the Everbridge product will continue to be delivered with the old sender ID.