

COVID-19 Update

Talbot County Emergency Services
Clay Stamp, Director, Asst. County Manager
www.talbotdes.org



Talbot County Health Department
Dr. Fredia Wadley, Health Officer
<https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/>

Key Points for July 17

- ✓ Maryland reported 701 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, bringing the statewide number to 76,371.
- ✓ **TALBOT COUNTY'S POSITIVITY RATE HAS INCREASED TO 8.3%, REMAINING THE HIGHEST IN THE STATE.** The state positivity rate continues to decrease, at 4.43% as of today.
- ✓ Talbot County has a total of 226 confirmed COVID-19 cases and five deaths.
- ✓ Talbot County has received 54% of its totals positive cases in the last 30 days, with our first case reported 122 days ago.

For Immediate Release
July 17, 2020

Number of COVID-19 Cases Continues to Rise in Talbot County

“Talbot County is leading the state of Maryland, and that is not a good thing,” says Health Officer Dr. Fredia Wadley.

For several days, the county's positivity rate for COVID-19 cases has been the highest in the state at 8.3%. The positivity rate is a rolling 7-day average calculated by the Maryland Department of Health that indicates the number of people who test positive in relationship to the number of people tested. By comparison, the state's positivity rate was 4.3% on Friday.

“For many weeks, the number of cases in Talbot County and on the Eastern Shore was relatively low,” Dr. Wadley says. “That is no longer true. The number of cases is increasing faster now than it has at any time during this pandemic.”

Talbot County's total number of cases continues to rise, with a total of 226 reported as of Friday, July 17. Maryland had 707 new cases and 12 additional deaths, for statewide totals of 76,373 and 3,227 respectively. Hospitalizations are currently holding steady at 434.

The virus is affecting the county's racial groups differently, as is the case statewide and nationally. In Talbot County, 19.5% of those who have tested positive are African American, 28.7% are Hispanic, 35.2% are

COVID-19 Update

Caucasian, and 3.1% are other ethnicities. In 13.5% of the cases, it was impossible to determine race or ethnicity.

Cases continue to rise fastest in the Hispanic community. The Health Department is partnering with the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center in an effort to communicate directly to the county's immigrant community.

"More than half of our cases are coming from the Hispanic community right now," Dr. Wadley explains. "We plan to begin visiting Hispanic churches to better communicate methods for slowing the spread of the virus, and we are continuing to provide assistance when we have to isolate or quarantine a family member."

Dr. Wadley also is working with elected officials and law enforcement to determine what regulatory action can be taken to help flatten the curve in Talbot County. The Health Department will begin to take action against food establishments that are repeatedly found to be operating in an unsafe manner during the COVID-19 pandemic, including potentially suspending the licenses of repeat offenders.

"It's more important than ever that we continue doing the things that we know work," Dr. Wadley says. "People are tired of wearing masks, using hand sanitizer at every turn, and staying six feet away from people. But I cannot stress it enough. These are the measures that significantly reduce the likelihood of you getting sick."

The Talbot County Health Department continues to operate a test site in the parking lot at Easton High School on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. The hours changed recently, and the site is now open from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. because of the heat. Call (410) 819-5632 to make an appointment.

###

Where to Find More Information

- **CDC COVID-2019 Website:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- **Talbot County COVID-19 Information** www.talbotcovid19.org
- **Shore Regional Health COVID Information** <https://www.umms.org/shore/patients-visitors/coronavirus>
- **Maryland Department of Health Website:** <https://health.maryland.gov/pages/home.aspx>
- **Talbot County Health Department Website:** <https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/Pages/home.aspx>
- **Maryland COVID-19 Website:** <https://governor.maryland.gov/coronavirus>