

1.13.2022 Elected Officials Call Notes

Updated isolation and quarantine guidance was released by the CDC and NYS and adopted by Tompkins County. <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/factsheets/coronavirusfaq#qtandiso>

Self-Test Kits: Distribution to a variety of locations throughout our local municipalities. As a reminder these kits are earmarked for those who may not have access to test sites or ability to purchase. If a municipality has additional kits they may consider providing them to senior living facilities, community centers or childcare facilities. We are hopeful that additional tests will be coming from the State in the coming weeks and we will continue to distribute them through our various partners including working with libraries and foodbanks.

We currently have 21 hospitalizations and over 1500 active cases.

We are expecting additional information on the changes to contact tracing from New York State. We are waiting to issue a PR until we have these official changes.

We are preparing for the return of students from all three higher education institutions. We are working in coordination with the institutions to prepare for student arrival in the coming weeks. All three will be providing differing types of arrival testing and ongoing surveillance testing options. All three have mandated boosters for students and faculty.

The current law that allows for the local government virtual meeting option is set to expire on January 15th. However, there is a State bill that passed both houses late Tuesday afternoon that, when signed by the Governor, will extend the law until the end of the Executive's declared State of Emergency. The State of Emergency is now controlled by Executive Orders 11 and 11.1. The new expiration date will be dependent on how long the Governor continues the State of Emergency for COVID, but this is also expected to be extended at a minimum throughout the month and possibly longer.

We will begin homebound booster vaccines in the coming weeks.

Is the County expecting more kits and masks to distribute?

We are expecting more kits and will plan to work with libraries and foodbanks.

What do you think about the guidance for different types of masks changing?

The CDC's website is going to be the best resource.

The issue with masks is that the initial intention is not to protect the wearer, but to protect those they are around – as we're shifting and Omicron is more transmissible there's more talk about N95 & KN95 masks, which do often require fit-testing so people don't wear it inappropriately.

KN95 are tighter fitting. They do have a metal nose piece, which is a critical spot, so there is added benefit to wearing those.

Regarding mandating different types of masks, consider the CDC website and all of their context: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Consider reaching out to farmers, as they may lack access to healthcare, etc. for your self-test distribution.

How does one variant become more dominant?

Generally it is how easy it transmits, and how quickly. If something is more deadly it cannot transmit to as many people because it kills more of them or makes them severely ill (away from others/public typically, less exposures), whereas if something is causing less severe illness people may be more likely to be out and interacting with others and sharing the disease.

Do we have concrete numbers on boosters?

We do not have this as the state hasn't provided it yet.

Re: additional boosters, we need more time to assess that information at a national level before more information is available locally.