

OKALOOSA COUNTY COVID-19 KEY METRICS

Ending March 6, 2021

This report covers the period of February 15 – March 6, 2021. March 7, 2020 marks the anniversary of the press release announcing the first case of COVID-19 in Okaloosa County. As of March 6, 2021, Okaloosa has 19,238 COVID-19 cases, an increase of 1,214 cases since the last report.

Variant Update:

It should be assumed that the UK (B.1.1.7) variant is the dominant strain circulating in Florida. Florida has identified 642 cases of the UK variant, 5 cases of the Brazilian (P.1) variant and one case of the South African (B.1.351) variant. The UK variant has been diagnosed in two NW Florida counties.

Wearing of a properly fitted mask (snug against face and under the chin; covering nose and mouth) remains the most effective way to prevent transmission along with staying at least 6 feet apart from others, avoiding moderate-to-large size gatherings and poorly ventilated spaces.

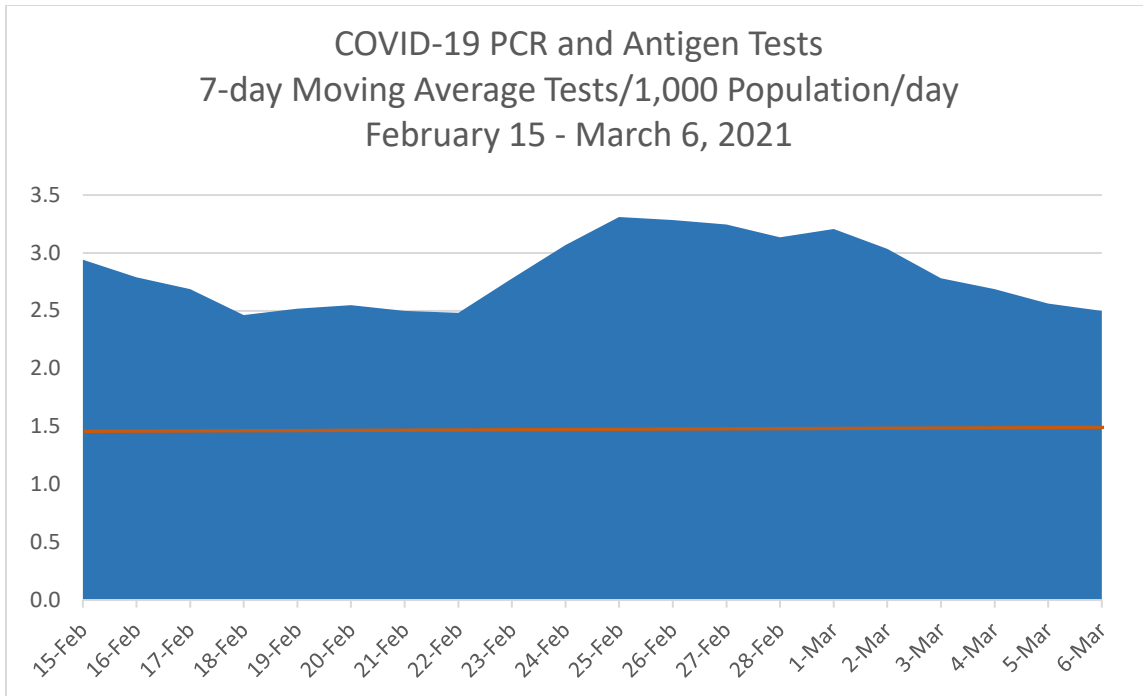
COVID-19 Diagnostic (PCR) and Screening (Antigen) Testing Per Capita

Reports daily and 7-day moving average total test results received / 1,000 population / day. This is a key indicator to assess trends in numbers of new cases and percent positivity of COVID-19 tests.

RATIONALE: The number of cases and percent of positive tests can be interpreted only with comprehensive surveillance and testing of suspect cases in the order of 1.5 /1,000 population/day.

TARGET: 1.5 tests / 1,000 population / day*

*Resolve to Save Lives. Tracking COVID-19 in the United States. Essential Indicators. July 21, 2020.



Okaloosa County meets or exceeds this key metric. There has been no decline in testing services and in the past 7-days, Okaloosa averaged 521 test results reported per day.

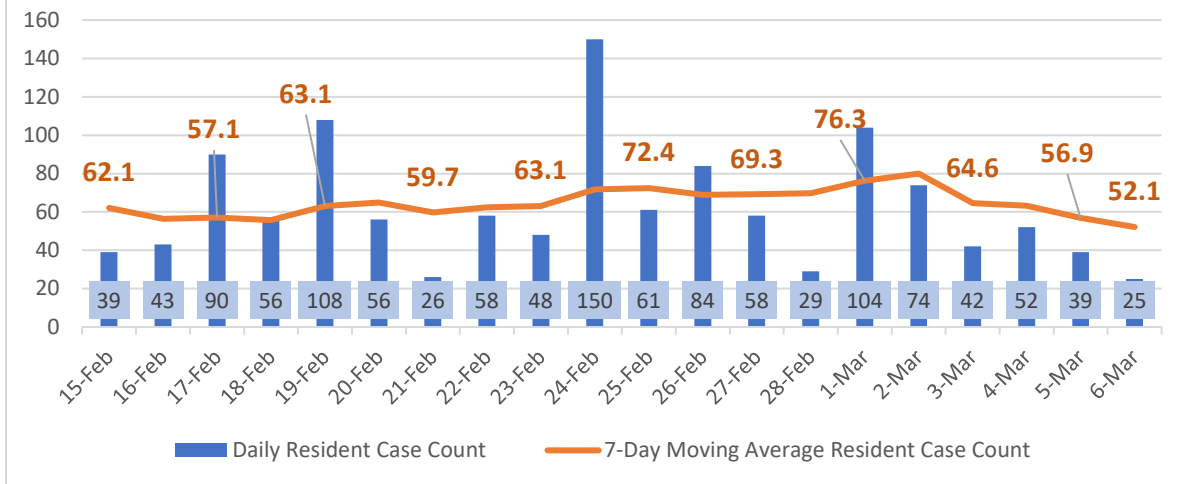
New Confirmed or Probable COVID-19+ Resident Cases over past 14 days:

Reports daily number and 7-day moving average of confirmed (PCR+) or probable (Antigen+) cases.

RATIONALE: Daily new cases reflect the proportion of the outbreak captured by surveillance systems. Number of new cases gives a sense of the size of the epidemic/outbreak in Okaloosa County.

TARGET: Decreasing case count over 14 days. *CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President’s Plan for Opening Up America Again. May 2020.

Okaloosa County Resident Case Counts Daily and 7-Day Moving Average February 15 - March 6, 2021



While the average daily case count ranged about 65 cases per day between February 15 – March 6, 2021, the next few weeks will bear watching. Okaloosa is seeing a small decline in number of new cases over the past 4 days. The best news would be seeing this decline in new cases continue, despite moving into the heavier weeks of Spring Break visitors.

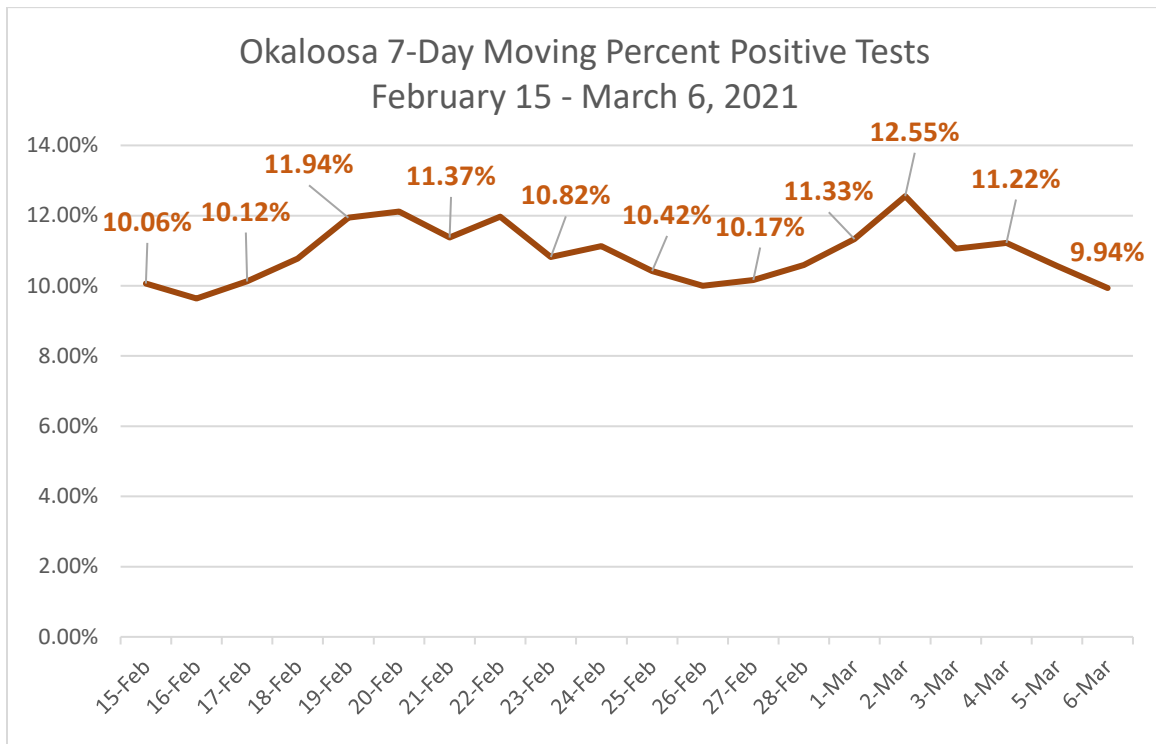
Percent Positive COVID-19 Tests:

Reports daily and 7-day moving average percentage of all positive COVID-19 diagnostic and screening tests (regardless of provider) for Okaloosa County residents.

RATIONALE: Test positivity is another important indicator of the burden of disease in the area (county). The percent of positive tests can be interpreted only with comprehensive surveillance and testing of suspect cases in the order of 1.5 /1,000 population/day, which Okaloosa County achieves (see first metric in report).

TARGET: 5% or less of tests for COVID-19 are positive for at least 2 weeks.

*WHO. Public Health criteria to adjust public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19. May 2020.



Percent positive tests hovered between 10-11%, with no clear decline in trend, for most of the last three weeks.

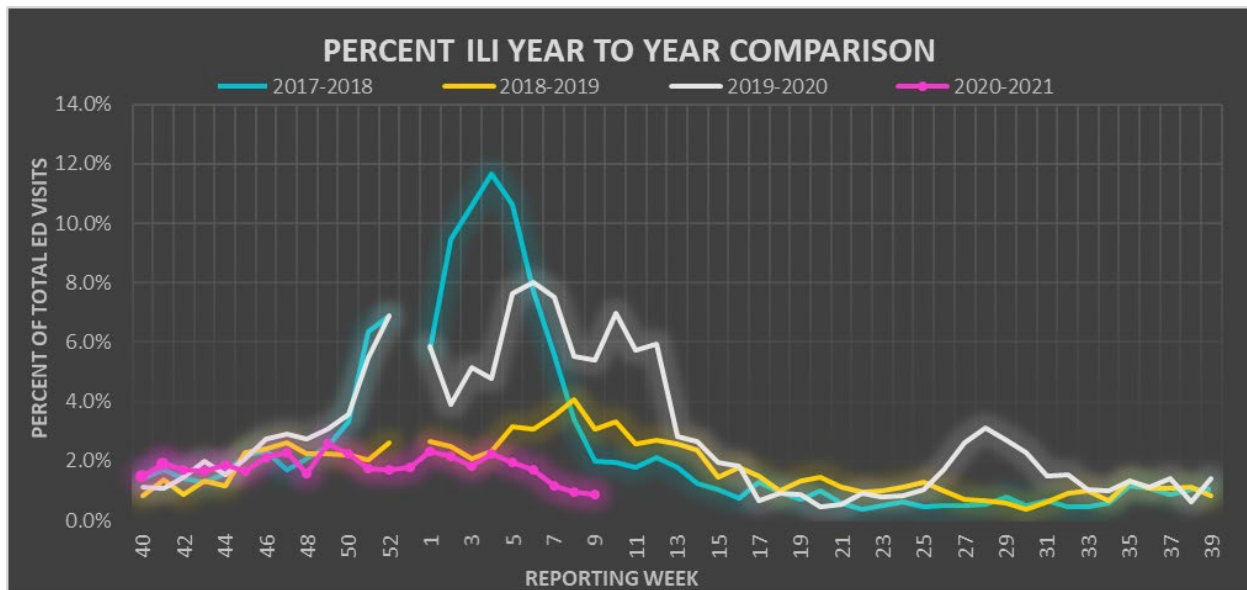
Influenza-Like Illness

Activity levels are based on the percent of emergency department visits due to influenza-like illness (ILI) compared with past year activity at the same time of the year. Influenza monitoring is based on the season of peak influenza which in the northern hemisphere is monitored October 1 – September 30.

RATIONALE: This type of syndromic surveillance* is used to monitor trends in emergency department visits and can be used to potentially detect a rise in COVID-19 cases before a rise in confirmed cases occurs. ILI is defined as fever (temperature of 100° F or greater with cough and/or sore throat without a known cause other than influenza).

TARGET: At or below baseline for the time of year based on past year trends for percent of ILI visits to emergency departments.

*White House Coronavirus Task Force. Guidelines for Opening Up American Again. Gating Criteria. May 2020. Resolve to Save Lives. Tracking COVID-19 in the United States. Essential Indicators. July 21, 2020.



The percent of ILI visits to local emergency departments continues to decline. To date, the 2020-2021 influenza season has been mild.

WEEK	VISITS ILI/Total	% ILI of Total ED Visits	WEEK	VISITS ILI/Total	% ILI of Total ED visits
Week *53*	37/2089	1.77%	Week 05	39/1990	1.96%
Week 01	46/1982	2.32%	Week 06	35/2061	1.70%
Week 02	44/2035	2.16%	Week 07	22/1918	1.15%
Week 03	37/2042	1.81%	Week 08	20/2054	0.97%
Week 04	45/2010	2.24%	Week 09	18/2045	0.88%

It is not too late to get an influenza vaccination for 2020-2021. Discuss with your medical provider when to get an influenza vaccination if you are currently eligible for and seeking or have already been vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine.

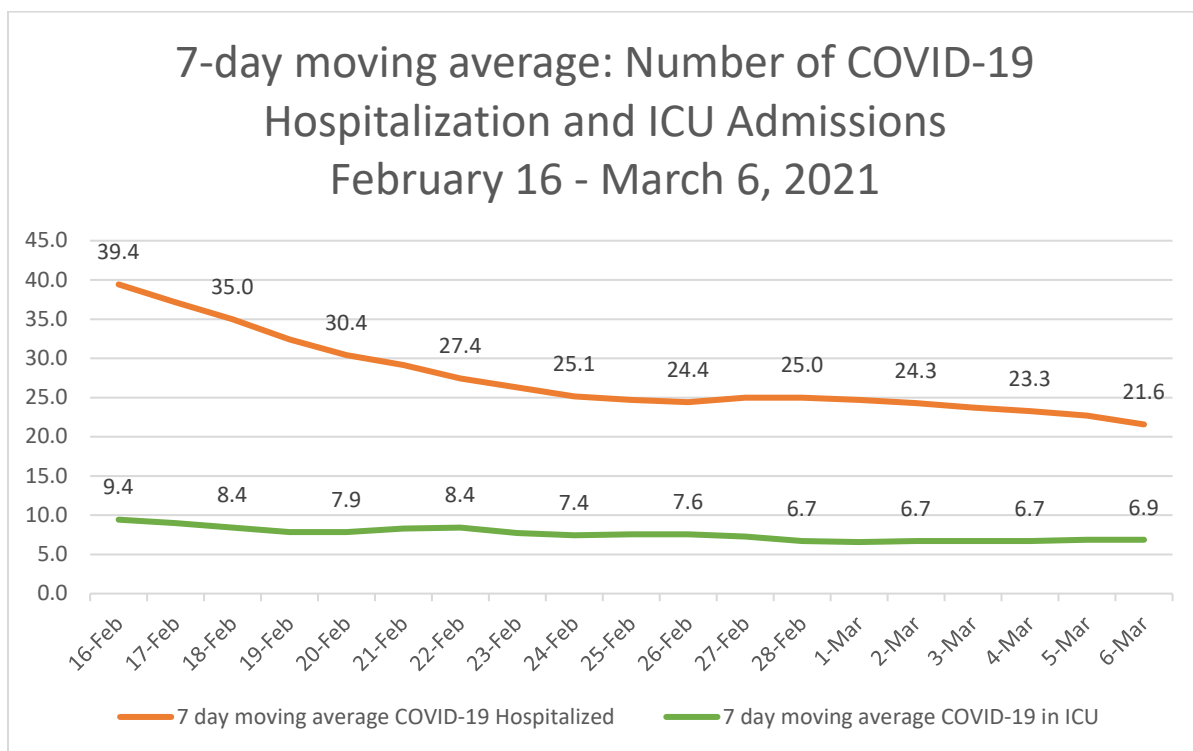
COVID-19 Hospital Admits

Number of COVID+ Hospitalized; Number of COVID+ in ICU.

RATIONALE*: Declining hospitalization and use of ICU beds indicates a decline in the number of cases in community, with an approximately ~1-week lag and providing that the criteria for hospitalization has not changed.

TARGET: Continuous decline in the number of hospitalized and ICU admissions of confirmed (PCR test) or probable (Antigen) COVID-19 cases for at least the past two weeks.

*WHO. Public Health criteria to adjust public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19. May 2020.



Okaloosa hospitalizations and ICU admissions continued to decline over the past three weeks. COVID-19 hospitalizations have been less than 5% of all acute care community hospital beds for the past week.

Deaths

Between February 15 – 28, 2021, Okaloosa had 22 newly reported deaths from COVID-19. Rate of death has declined from a high of nearly 2 deaths per day during December – January, to about one per day over the past 20 days.

AGE GROUP	DEATHS 3/6/2021	PERCENT	CHANGE FROM 2/14/2021
25-34 YEARS	4	1%	+0
35-44 YEARS	4	1%	+0
45-54 YEARS	13	4%	+0
55-64 YEARS	32	10%	+4
65-74 YEARS	65	20%	+4
75-84 YEARS	97	29%	+4
85+ YEARS	118	35%	+10
TOTAL	333		+22

Public Schools (K-12)

For the period September 6 – March 6, 2021, Crestview High School maintains its #1 ranking in the state with 220 COVID-19 cases in students, teachers, and staff. Niceville High School stays in 6th place with 158 cases. Fort Walton Beach High School drops out of the top 10 to #11 with 132 cases. The rest of the top 10 schools with COVID-19 cases are in St. Johns (3), Santa Rosa (3), Polk (1) and Indian River (1) School Districts.

For the week of February 28 – March 6, 2021, Okaloosa County School District school system reported 42 cases of COVID-19 in students, teachers, and staff. This is a substantial decline in cases from the week of February 7 – 13, 2021, when 80 cases were reported in students, teachers, and staff.

Long-term Care Facilities

As of March 7, 2021, two long-term care facilities have 3 new cases of COVID-19 in the past week and 5 facilities had 9 cases in the past 14-days. Eighteen facilities have had no new cases in the past 14-days. This is a downward trend of cases in our long-term care facilities

Since March 2020, there have been 1,277 cases of COVID-19 in long-term care facilities of which 725 occurred to nursing home or assisted living facility residents. There were 58 hospitalizations and 160 deaths to long-term care facility residents.

Vaccination Progress

On December 23, 2020, Governor's Executive Order 20-315 was released outlining the priority groups for vaccinations in Florida. These include:

- Long-term care facility residents and staff
- Persons 65 years and older, and
- Health care personnel with direct patient contact ([definition](#))
- Persons 50 years of age and older AND employed:
 - K-12 school employees
 - Sworn law enforcement officers
 - Firefighters
- Persons deemed extremely vulnerable to COVID-19
 - May be vaccinated at a hospital or in a physician's office
 - May be vaccinated by an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Pharmacist with a note, as defined by the Department of Health, signed by a physician
 - Limited to persons 16 years and older for Pfizer vaccine and 18 years or older for Moderna or Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccines

Teachers under 50 years can only be vaccinated at a pharmacy offering the vaccine or at any federal vaccination site.

As of March 6, 2021, 14% of Okaloosa's population has received one or both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and 8.6% are fully vaccinated.

Of persons 65 years and older, 64% have received one or both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, with 39.7% fully vaccinated. Greater than 98% of people receiving their first dose of vaccine through the DOH-Okaloosa vaccination clinics are returning for their second doses.

SUMMARY

Today the CDC released [initial guidance](#) about what you can do when you are fully vaccinated.

How do you know when you are fully vaccinated? People are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected.

So, what can you do if you are fully vaccinated and drop prevention measures:

- Gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask
- Gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together – such as grandparents visiting with their grandchildren at their daughter and son-in-law's home) without masks UNLESS any of the unvaccinated people are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

In addition, persons who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine or get tested for COVID-19 UNLESS they have symptoms. There are exceptions to this guidance, particularly for people who live in a group residential setting.

However, even if you are fully vaccinated, you should continue to protect yourself (well fitting mask, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces) whenever you are:

- In public
- Gathering with unvaccinated people from more than one household
- Visiting with an unvaccinated person who is at increased risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19 or an unvaccinated person who lives with a person at increased risk

In addition, continue to avoid medium or large-sized gatherings and delay unessential domestic and international travel. Get tested if you develop symptoms of COVID-19.

This is just initial guidance. As more people become fully vaccinated expect expanded guidance of what we can do safely without prevention measures.