

NEWS RELEASE

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Illinois Department of Public Health Recognizes Two-Year Anniversary of First COVID-19 Case in Illinois

More than 30,000 COVID-19 deaths in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) continues to urge people to get vaccinated and boosted as it marks the two-year anniversary of the first COVID-19 case reported in Illinois. Two years later, IDPH is reporting more than 30,000 COVID-19 deaths in Illinois.

“On January 24, 2020 when we announced the first case of COVID-19 in Illinois, we were not imagining that two years later we would still be battling the virus with this ferocity,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “While we have seen the highest number of cases and hospitalizations throughout the entire pandemic this January, we are cautiously optimistic that those numbers will continue to decrease as quickly as they rose due to the Omicron variant.”

“We have learned a great deal in the two years since the first case was reported in Illinois and we continue to learn as this virus and its variants are constantly changing. We now have safe and effective vaccines; we have oral antiviral and monoclonal antibody treatments; and we know that proper masking, testing, and isolation and quarantine can help slow the spread of the virus.

“As COVID-19 evolves, so too will our recommendations and guidance. Our goal remains the same – to protect the health and safety of all Illinois residents as we explore how we will coexist with COVID-19.”

Illinois milestones:

- January 24, 2020 – First confirmed Illinois case of COVID-19 reported in a Chicago resident, a woman in her 60s who returned from Wuhan, China on January 13, 2020.
- January 30, 2020 – second confirmed case of COVID-19 in Illinois reported in a man in his 60s and the spouse of the first confirmed case in Illinois. This was the first person-to-person spread of the virus in the United States.
- February 11, 2020 – IDPH announces it is able to conduct testing for SARS-CoV-2 making Illinois the first state to be able to perform in-state testing.
- March 17, 2020 – IDPH announces the first COVID-19 death in Illinois.
- December 15, 2020 – First COVID-19 vaccines administered in Illinois.

Vaccination is the key to ending this pandemic. To find a COVID-19 vaccination location near you, go to www.vaccines.gov.

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