



## Mayor Brindle's COVID-19 Update October 30, 2020



Today, there are 236,523 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey to date, with another 522 still under investigation. Union County has reported 20,413 cases in total, with Westfield reporting three new cases since my last update on Tuesday (one on Wednesday, two on Thursday, and none today).

As previously announced, I will be using Friday updates strictly for the purposes of reporting weekly data from the Department of Health, with my more expansive updates to continue every Tuesday going forward.

From October 23-30, there were 14 cases of COVID-19 reported in Westfield in our official case count. However, the total number of cases received by the Health Department for investigation over the same time period was 27.

As I've mentioned previously, there continues to be a disparity between the official case count for the Town (which we receive through the State) and the cases being investigated by the Health Department. This gap is primarily due to the fact that rapid tests results are not able to be reported through the State system, so are not reflected in the numbers reported to our Police Chief, which is what I receive. Our Regional Health Department receives rapid test results from local health providers, which is why their numbers are higher. However, these reports from health providers can sometimes lag in their reporting time, which is why you might hear about cases from your neighbors before we know about them.

Going forward, I will be providing both the state provided and local Health Department case numbers each Friday, and believe that the Health Department's reporting is a more accurate reflection of community spread.

This week, the Health Department reports that the ages of the 27 cases they received are as follows: 12, 14, 15, 16 (six cases), 17 (three cases), 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 29, 31, 48, 49 (three cases), 50, 58, 71, and 79.

Of these cases:

- Eight were associated with household contacts
- Eight were associated with high school level sports
- Five remain under investigation
- Three were unable to be reached
- Two had no known exposure
- One was associated with workplace exposure

Regional Health Officer Megan Avallone reports that we are seeing rates of transmission rise in the entire central east region of New Jersey. Union County had the highest number of cases in New Jersey earlier this week, and remains one of the few counties in the state with more than 100 new cases per day. At our current rate of infection, this second wave will bring more new cases than what we experienced in April but hopefully we are better prepared to deal with them. It's incredibly concerning nonetheless as we head into the colder months with limited outdoor activities and flu season upon us.

I'm once again receiving numerous daily emails from residents who are concerned about the number of people who are not adhering to COVID protocols. Defying quarantine. Not wearing masks. Hosting parties.

We can and should do better.

I recognize that we are all COVID fatigued. I am too. But we each know what we need to do for the sake of the physical and mental health of our community, as well as for the economic fortunes of businesses that are struggling to stay open.

I am imploring you to wear a face covering when in public. Reinforce to your kids, especially teens, the importance of doing so. We should all be modeling the right behavior.

I am very concerned about the potential for Halloween to increase community spread. Please use good judgment to ensure the well being of us all.

I'll be on Quimby Street tomorrow from 9:30-11AM, along with Town Administrator Jim Gildea to meet with residents and answer any questions you may have. We'll be masked up and socially distant. Please stop by!

Happy Halloween everyone!

Be safe. Be healthy. Be responsible.