



Town of New Castle, NH
Settled 1623
Incorporated 1693

COVID Update January 3, 2022

1) VACCINES:

The next state-sponsored "Booster Blitz" is scheduled for this coming Saturday, January 8th. Registration begins today, January 3, through vaccines.nh.gov with some 13,000 appointments at sites in Ashland, Berlin, Claremont, Concord, Exeter, Keene, Laconia, Manchester, Milford, Rochester, Salem and Tamworth. For this you need an appointment.

The state has opened **4 fixed vaccination walk-in sites in Berlin, Plymouth, Claremont and Rochester** (with a **5th site in Laconia** starting on Jan. 10) open generally Monday - Friday 10 am - 7 pm and Saturday 9 am - 2 pm. More information about the sites, including holiday hours, can be found on the [On-Site Medical Services website](#). An additional six walk-in fixed sites in Concord, Exeter, Keene, Manchester, Nashua and Salem are anticipated to be opened in mid-January. You do not need an appointment for any of these.

Additionally:

Initial vaccines and boosters can be scheduled at:

www.vaccines.gov

or

www.Vaccines.nh.gov

2) TESTING:

FREE at-home rapid antigen tests are again available to 180,000 more families through the **NH "Say Yes to the Test" program**. (<https://sayyescovidhometest.org/>). Rapid antigen tests are best for testing when you are symptomatic.

The state also contracted with Vault Health to supply FREE PCR at-home saliva tests that can be requested at <https://learn.vaulthealth.com/nh/>. This is the gold standard test and is to be used if you have been exposed and are asymptomatic, and in follow up of a rapid antigen test

These two tests complement each other and it would be good to have both on hand.

There is still some question of how accurately the rapid antigen tests pick up the Omicron variant, but the Abbott BinaxNOW and Quindel QuickVus antigen tests are currently reportedly able to detect the Omicron variant "with similar performance as with other variants."

As an example of sensitivity rates and false negatives, one important study from late 2020 (yes 2020) found Binax NOW sensitivity rates of 35.8% for asymptomatic people and 64.2% from symptomatic people. That means it missed 64.2% of people who had asymptomatic COVID and 35.6% of people who had symptomatic COVID.

Website for citation: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7003e3.htm>

FDA approved COVID tests:

PO Box 362
New Castle, NH 03854

www.NewCastleNH.org
603-431-6710

Here is a list of FDA approved COVID tests if you need to purchase one (Cut and paste web address into your browser.) These are the only ones you should buy currently:

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/in-vitro-diagnostics-euas-antigen-diagnostic-tests-sars-cov-2>

3) MASK MANDATES

The NH towns of [Nashua](#), [Exeter](#), [Keene](#), [Lebanon](#), [Berlin](#), [Gorham](#) and [Hanover](#) have re-instituted mask mandates in response to the COVID-19 surge. [Portsmouth](#) and [Manchester](#) will require masks in all city facilities.

4) What if I feel sick?

Get tested. It's the only way you're going to know if what you're feeling is a cold or Covid. It's also important to know so that you can inform other people whom you might have exposed, should you test positive.

Now more than ever, it's a good idea to keep a few rapid tests at home so you can test yourself. If you do test positive with an antigen test, it's a good idea to follow up with a more sensitive PCR test. Try not to expose others: Use a drive-through testing site or walk to a mobile outdoor testing site. If neither of these are options, call your doctor's office and ask them for guidance.

5) Current CDC quarantine and isolation guidelines (per Dr. Fauci these may change again soon as they are confusing). It also has not been clear that NH has adopted these guidelines, so this is more of any FYI:

If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

- Stay home for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.

If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)

If you:

Have been boosted

OR

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months

OR

Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
- Test on day 5, if possible.
If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.



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If you:

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted

OR

Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted

OR

Are unvaccinated

- Stay home for 5 days-meaning quarantine for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days.
- Test on day 5 if possible.

If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home

THESE GUIDELINES DO NOT APPLY TO THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM. THE PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT HAS NOT ADOPTED THIS, NOR HAS MHT.

6) Influenza is also a nasty beast and kills many people annually. Please, please get your flu shot if you have not done so already. This can be done through your physician's office or pharmacies.

Yours in Health,

Kathy Hollister, MD

Deputy Health Officer

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