August 7, 2020 Update

Surveillance

- Numerous counties have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases. Information by county is available online.
- Although COVID-19 hospitalizations have increased in many parts of the state, they represent ~11% of all hospitalized patients in TN, and hospital capacity remains stable across Tennessee.

Response

- Additional resources have been made available to assist schools with re-opening, including funding for school districts to purchase Wi-Fi and Mi-Fi devices for their students, a teacher PPE dashboard, the [Best for All Central](http://www.tn.gov) learning and teaching hub, a family remote learning site, and a foundational skills site to support early literacy.
- A special legislative session to be convened on August 10th was announced to address COVID-19 liability protections, as well as telehealth services.
- Governor Bill Lee has signed Executive Order 55, which:
  - Extends Executive Order 54 until August 29th, granting mayors in 89 counties the authority to issue local mask requirements in the event of a significant rise in COVID-19 cases. Sullivan, Knox, Hamilton, Davidson, Madison, and Shelby counties retain existing authority to issue mask requirements as needed.
  - Strongly encourages schools to adopt a policy requiring face coverings for staff and students and makes clear that students, teachers, school employees or contractors, and school visitors may voluntarily wear face coverings.
  - Extends Executive Order 53 for 30 days, providing limited COVID-19-related liability protection for health care providers and hospitals.
  - Allows contact sports, provided that participants follow safety guidelines from their governing bodies or Tennessee Pledge guidelines.
  - Reinstates or adds certain regulatory flexibility to cope with COVID-19.

Ongoing TDH Activities

- Supporting COVID-19 assessments at local health departments.
- Operating information lines for public inquiries and maintaining a clinician’s consultation line.
- Sharing information via social media networks and the TDH COVID-19 webpage and conducting telebriefings for healthcare providers, hospitals, and partner agencies.
- Investigating cases, tracing contacts, and monitoring cases and contacts.
- Utilizing the Healthcare Resource Tracking System to monitor COVID-19 hospitalization numbers, personal protective equipment inventories and strain on the healthcare system.
- Recruiting medical professionals through the [Medical Reserve Corps Program](http://www.tn.gov).
- Supporting state laboratory testing.

Important Reminders

- COVID-19 tests are free to all in local health departments.
- A hotline is available for frontline healthcare workers, implemented by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.
- The [Tennessee Pledge](http://www.tn.gov): a plan to help Tennesseans return to work in a safe environment, restore their livelihoods and reboot the state’s economy.
- CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing is difficult.
- Stay away from people who are sick and stay home when you are sick. Wash your hands often with soap and water (or alcohol-based hand rub) for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing.

Recent Guidance from CDC