



**Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 27, 2020**

**Current COVID-19 case count**

**Scott County** – Total of 2,094

Total deaths in Scott County: 19

**Rock Island County** – 17 new cases since Wednesday; total of 2,123

Currently in hospital: 13

Total deaths in Rock Island County: 57

**Today's call**

A video recording of today's media briefing can be found at

<https://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/covid19/news>

**Masks mandatory in Illinois**

Remarks from Nita Ludwig, administrator, Rock Island County Health Department

Masks are required in all Illinois establishments. In addition, the governor's office updated its policy Wednesday for restaurants and bars because of rapidly rising cases all across Illinois. It's not a suggestion or just an encouragement to wear a mask – it is mandatory in Illinois.

- Patrons must wear a mask during any interaction with wait staff, food service workers and other employees at both indoor and outdoor dining at bars and restaurants.
- Face coverings must be worn over the nose and mouth when patrons are approached and served by staff, including but not limited to when employees take patrons orders, deliver food and beverages, and service tables.
- Patrons are currently required to wear a mask whenever on premises, except while eating and drinking at the table or bar. The new guidelines ensure that while seated, interactions between business staff and patrons can happen safely to prevent possible spread of the virus.
- Service staff already are required to wear masks.

**Mitigation efforts**

The governor's Restore Illinois Plan allows for the state's 11 regions to move backward in tiers. Two already have, including near St. Louis and Will and Kankakee counties in the Chicago south suburban area.

Some of these include:

- All bars and restaurants close at 11 p.m.
- No indoor dining or bar service

- All patrons should be seated at tables outside
- No ordering, seating, or congregating at bar (bar stools should be removed)
- Tables should be 6 feet apart
- No standing or congregating indoors or outdoors while waiting for a table or exiting
- No dancing or standing indoors
- Reservations required for each party
- No seating of multiple parties at one table

We are Region 2. Besides the Illinois Quad Cities, other areas include Peoria, Bloomington-Normal and LaSalle-Peru. All of these counties are seeing rapidly rising case counts. These mitigation efforts could come to us.

Rock Island County also has been dangerously close to a warning status for 3 weeks. Our positivity rate dropped to 6.6 percent last week, but the preceding 2 weeks were 7.5 percent. We are bracing to be in warning status. Statistics are updated each Friday.

However, Rock Island County alone going into warning status will not put the region into the mitigation measures – but if enough counties in the region go into warning status, the region could slip into the restrictions that Regions 4 and 7 are facing now.

### **Scott County case count**

Remarks from Edward Rivers, director, Scott County Health Department

In a recent conversation with our medical director Dr. Louis Katz about current COVID-19 cases, his initial statement was “good news, bad news.” The good news is that Scott County is not at the level of daily COVID-19 cases we were at during the peak of our surge in July. The bad news is that after our initial, steady decline, we have stalled.

We continue to see an average of 20 positive COVID-19 cases daily. From these cases, there are a number of close contacts that must also quarantine. These types of numbers continue to impact so many sectors of our community, from hospitals to retail establishments to schools. These establishments have been forced to pivot constantly, as they are at the mercy of our ability or inability to contain the spread of this virus. At this point, the planning efforts of our school districts have been forced to put priority on safety instead of the usual academics. Children are walking into schools with masks, fewer numbers of classmates on various days, using their arms to help measure 6 feet of distance ... if they’re walking into their school right now at all. As adults, it has been difficult to maneuver the continuously changing landscape over the last 6 months. For children, we can assume that difficulty has been significantly compounded.

Today we are joined by mental health expert Chris McCormick Pries from Vera French Community Mental Health Center. As an advocate for supporting the social and emotional

wellbeing of children, we welcome her advice on how best to help our kids as they navigate COVID-19, school, and all the challenges they bring.

### **Navigating uncertain times**

Remarks from Chris McCormick Pries, mental health expert

This year has been a difficult time for many people due to the unprecedented events we are experiencing with COVID-19. Just a year ago, we were taking pictures of our children on the front porch or at the school entrance, and they were excitedly anticipating a new school year. It all happened very quickly, too, and such massive changes can really wreak havoc on our mental and emotional wellbeing. Not being able to plan for the unknown can be stressful and cause a lot of anxiety, especially for children.

The most important take away today is to remember that our children take their cue from caring adults. Anxiety and fear are very contagious!

#### **1. Will talking about COVID-19 make my child more anxious?**

Try to feel grounded yourself and clear about how to manage your own anxiety before you look at the facts together with your children. Take the time to educate yourself on what is and what isn't dangerous, and to understand how to handle uncertainty yourself first. This will allow you to have a sensible discussion with your child. You are trying to educate your child about the difference between anxiety and danger. If you need assistance in how to talk with your child the CDC has information. I suggest these resources:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/for-parents.html>

#### **2. How can I help reduce anxiety and worry in my children about the current situation?**

An essential step for parents and educators to take in reducing anxiety is to hold yourself back from providing reassurance. Research shows that children who rely on reassurance from adults have anxiety difficulties. Improvement with treatment is seen when parents learn how to stop accommodating anxiety. This means that parents need to understand and manage their own "what if?" fears. The key to supporting your child in a healthy way is to understand what anxiety looks like, what it thrives on and to remove the environment in which it thrives – by giving children the skills to recognize and manage it themselves. It is important to use language that children can relate to. Keep it simple, specific and age appropriate.

#### **3. What age should I talk to my child about COVID-19 and other issues?**

Always answer questions that your child asks. Given all the masks and news, there is no need to be afraid to talk to children about their experience. Ask your child what they already know and clarify any misunderstandings.

Keep the discussion fact based and avoid judging other people within your discussion. Don't feel the need to talk about the topic for long, as that may actually be you wanting to talk about something that makes you anxious rather than being of use to your child emotionally.

#### **4. Is there anything I should avoid talking to my children about?**

Be honest and straightforward. Do not dwell on death rates or negative stories from the media and if you are sharing limited news media together (which I encourage), ensure you point out sensationalizing stories. Help children to question what they hear.

#### **5. How can we manage disappointment around changes to schedule and events?**

When you listen, don't try to fix the disappointment or suggest a solution. Let them know their feelings are understandable and use words that have less emotional intensity than their own.

Don't tell them you feel sorry for them or that it's not fair for them. If you give them space and quietly listen, they may start to talk themselves out of it, with those types of comments. We don't want to talk about it being unfair as we don't want to encourage children to feel like victims. Ask them whether there is something different that they can prioritize now that their initial plans have been thwarted — it might be another skill or interest that they used to have. Use uncertainty to your advantage and plan some surprises around the house and on the weekend. Play cards or hide-and-seek and talk about how nice it is to not always know what is going to happen next — surprise is part of the reason why these games are so much fun!

Here are other resources I suggest:

- [Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19 | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily>
- [Parenting in a Pandemic: Tips to Keep the Calm at Home](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health)  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health>

#### **More information**

- [www.TogetherQC.com](http://www.TogetherQC.com)
- [coronavirus.iowa.gov](http://coronavirus.iowa.gov)
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=2>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics?county=Rock%20Island>
- <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/facilities/Pages/Covid19Response.aspx>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/long-term-care-facility-outbreaks-covid-19>

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