

Georgia Board of Public Health

March 8, 2022

Agenda

- Call to order
- Roll Call
- Approval/Adoption of Minutes
- New Business
 - Legislative Update
 - Epidemiology Update
 - Commissioner's Closing Remarks
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

2022 Legislative Session

Board of Public Health / Megan Andrews, J.D., Office of Government Relations / March 8, 2022

Legislative Schedule

- Today is Legislative Session Day 25 (of 40)
- Crossover Day is scheduled for March 15th
- Sine Die is scheduled for April 4th

Bill Tracking

2022 Legislative Session

- 203 Bills (and counting)
- 77 of these bills are considered direct impact bills

2020 Legislative Session

- 186 Bills
- 43 of these bills were considered direct impact bills

Agency Bills

- **Childhood Lead Poisoning** (HB1355)- passed House, assigned to Senate Health and Human Services
- **EMS Rapback** (SB404)- passed Senate, assigned to House Public Safety & Homeland Security
- **Smokefree Air Act and Vaping** (HB1348)- passed House, assigned to Senate Judiciary
- **Filming Patients in Health Departments** (SB539)- assigned to Senate Health and Human Services

Tracked Bills

- Georgia Raw Dairy Act (HB1175) Passed the House
- Medicaid Waiver for HIV (HB1192) Passed the House
- Dog Menus (HB1376) in House Agriculture Committee
- Food Trucks (HB1443) in House Agriculture Committee
- Vaccine Passports (SB345) Passed the Senate
- Maternal Autopsies (SB496) Passed the Senate

Questions

For more information, please contact:

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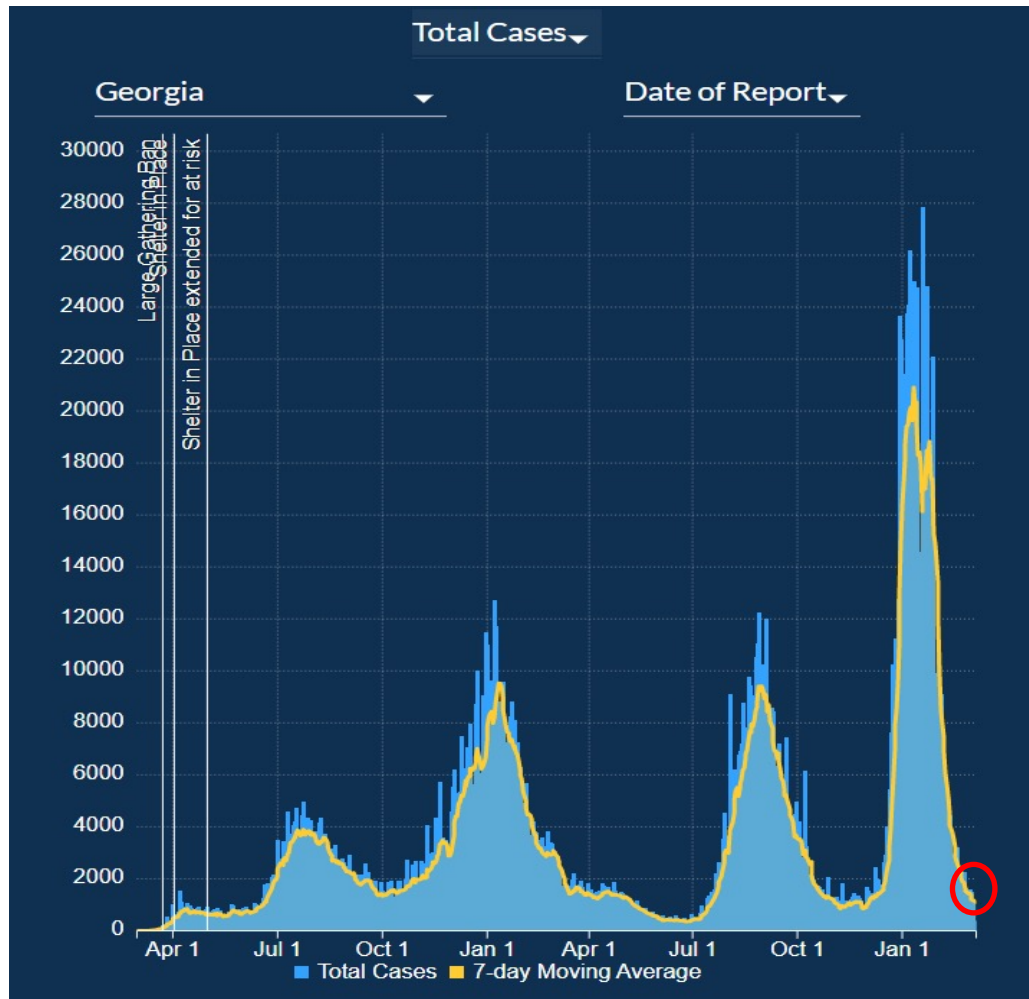
Epidemiology Update: COVID-19

Board of Public Health / Cherie L. Drenzek, DVM, MS, State Epidemiologist / March 8, 2022

Snapshot of COVID-19 in Georgia (3/8/22)

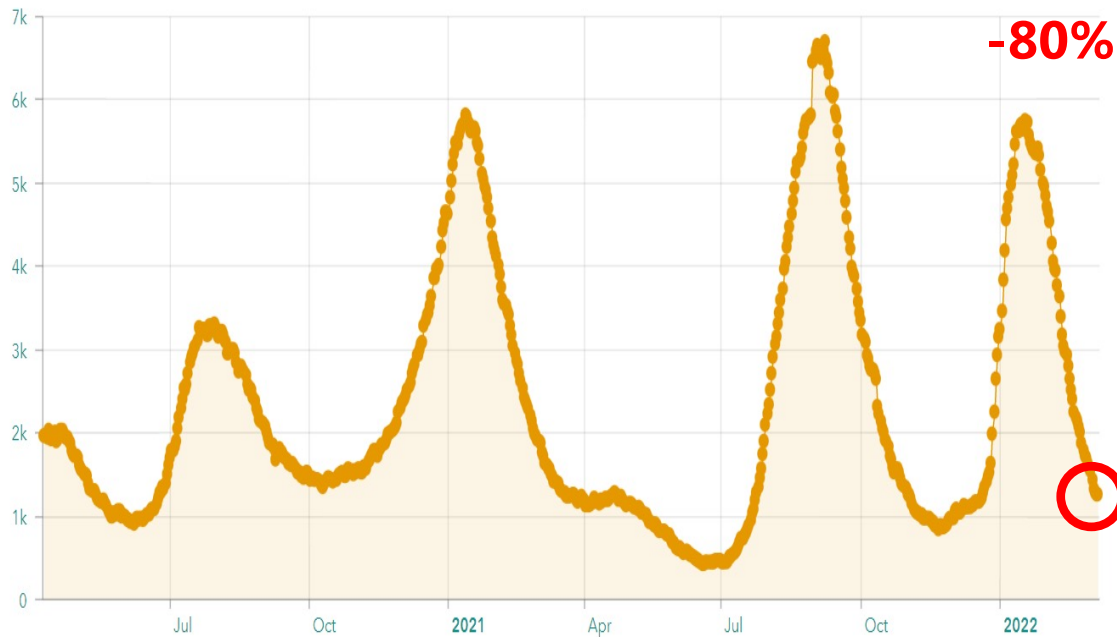
- The Omicron variant surge that began in early Dec. and peaked at record high levels in mid-January has now retreated. We don't know when the next variant will emerge and surge.
- Cases, hospitalizations, and outbreaks have **plummeted** by 50-60% in the past two weeks. Deaths (lagging) dropped by about 25%.
- Omicron sub-lineage BA.2 caused large surges in several countries but is not gaining a lot of ground in the U.S. (8% of all virus, 4% here in GA)
- 55% of the Georgia population is fully vaccinated and 22% boosted (vaccine numbers also decreasing in GA)
- **Despite increases in breakthrough infections due to Omicron, most all COVID deaths and hospitalizations have occurred among unvaccinated.**

Total COVID-19 Cases

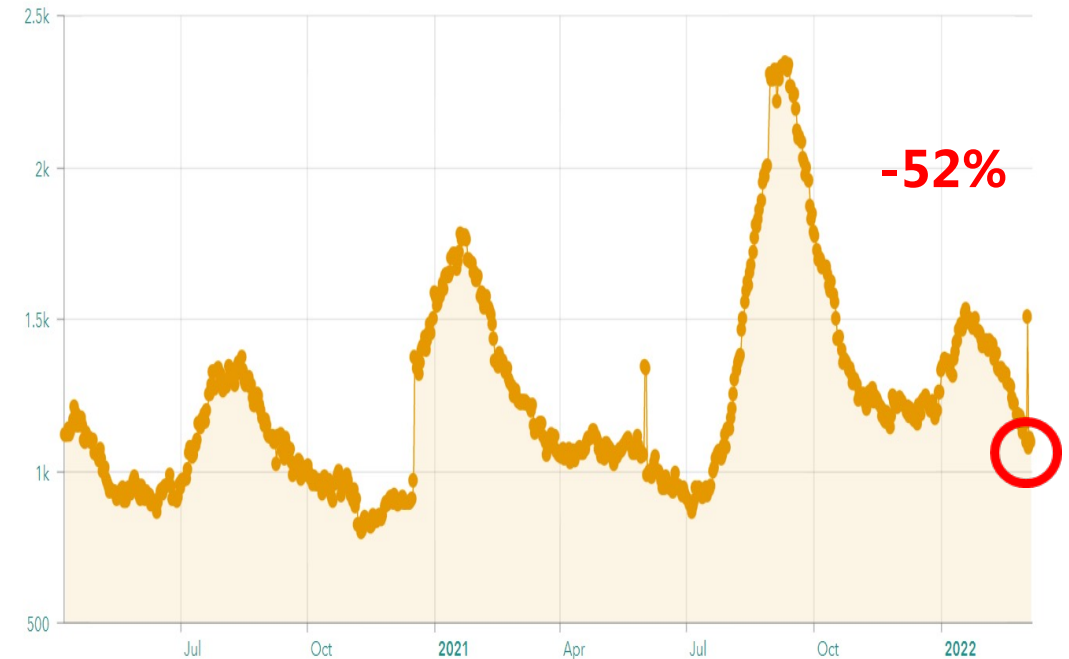


COVID-19 Hospitalizations and Ventilator Usage

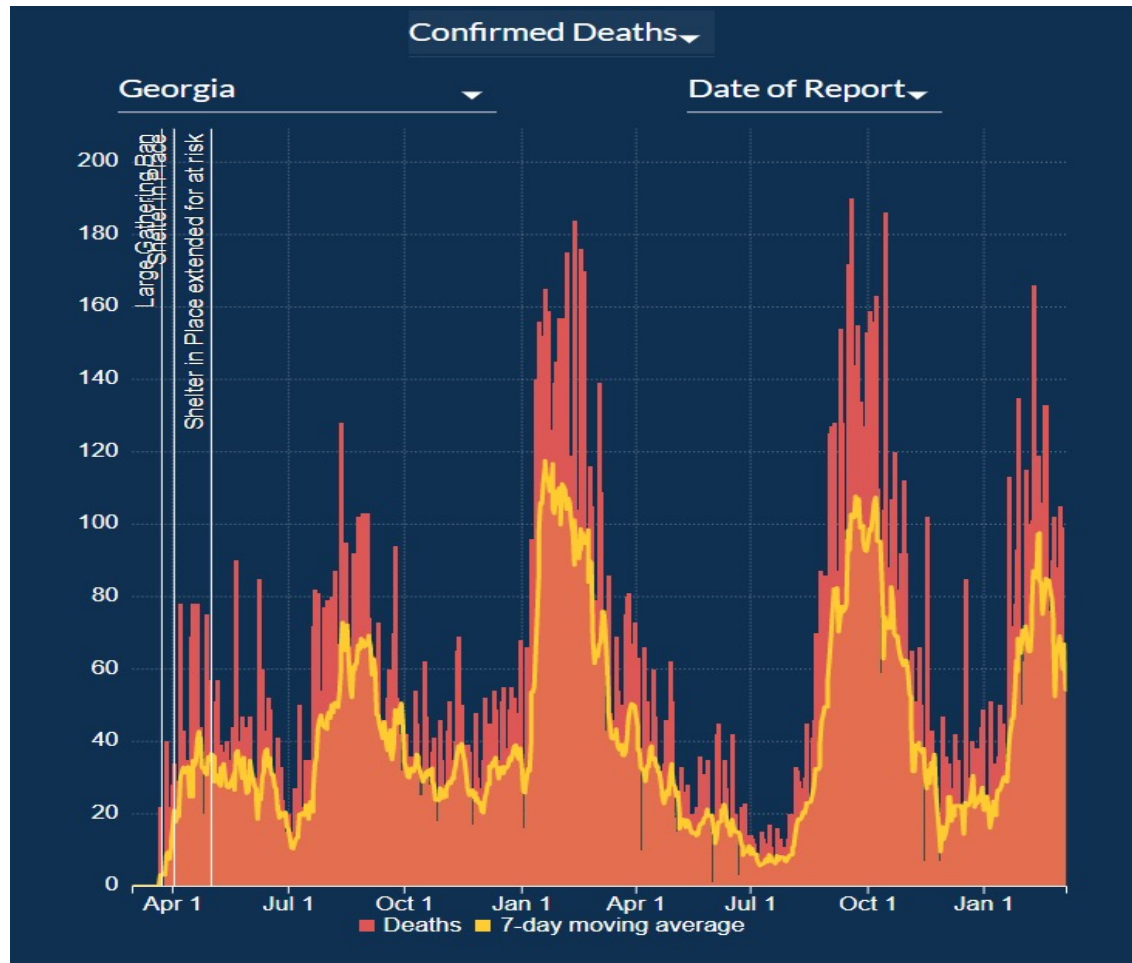
Daily Counts of COVID-19 Patients



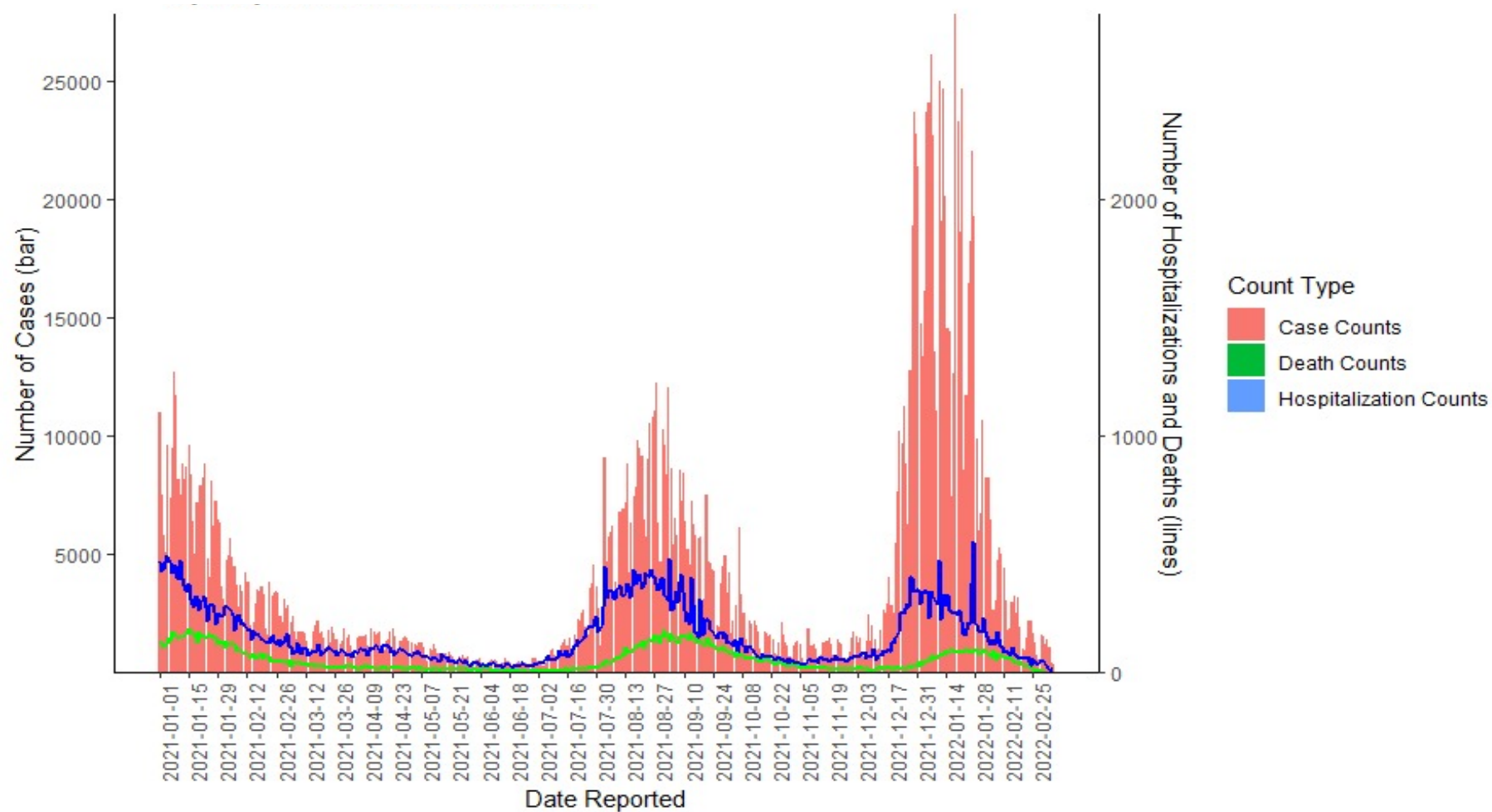
Ventilator Usage



COVID-19 Deaths

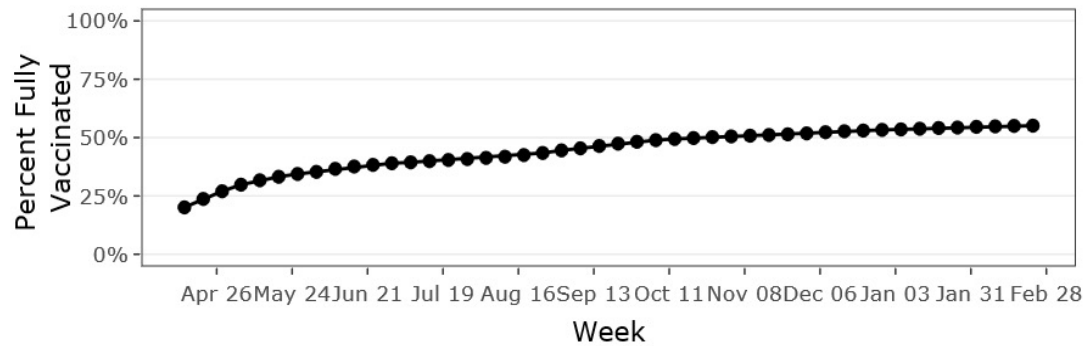


COVID Cases, Hospitalizations, Deaths 1/1/21-3/7/22

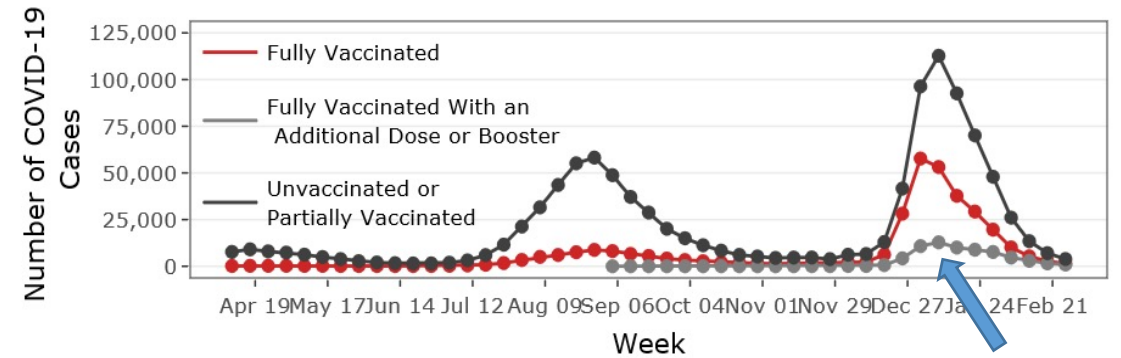


Cases, Hospitalizations, Deaths by Vaccine Status

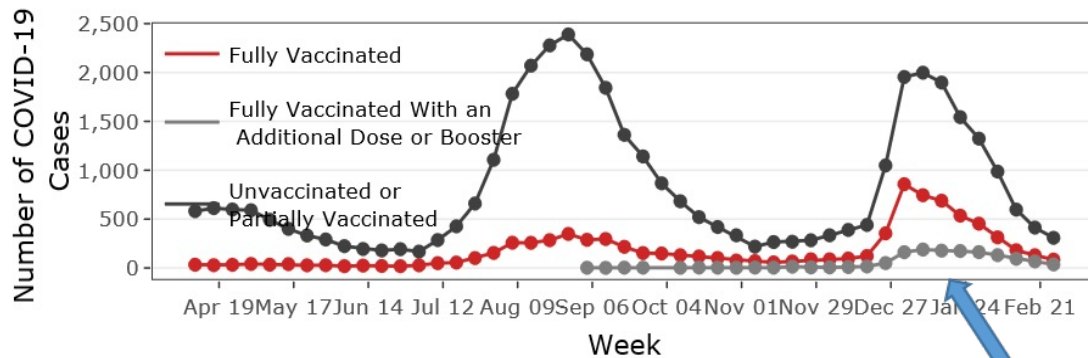
Vaccination Coverage 2021-04-10 to 2022-03-01



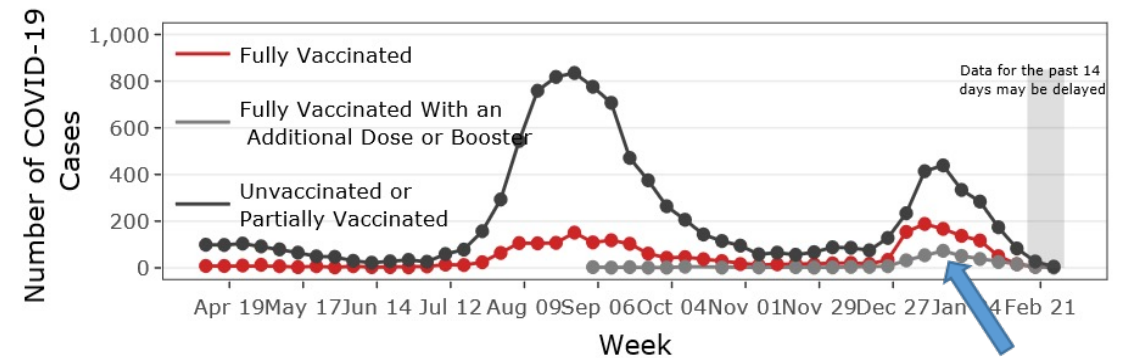
COVID-19 Cases by Date of Positive Test and Vaccination Status 2021-04-10 to 2022-03-01



Any Hospitalization by Date of Positive Test and Vaccination Status 2021-04-10 to 2022-03-01

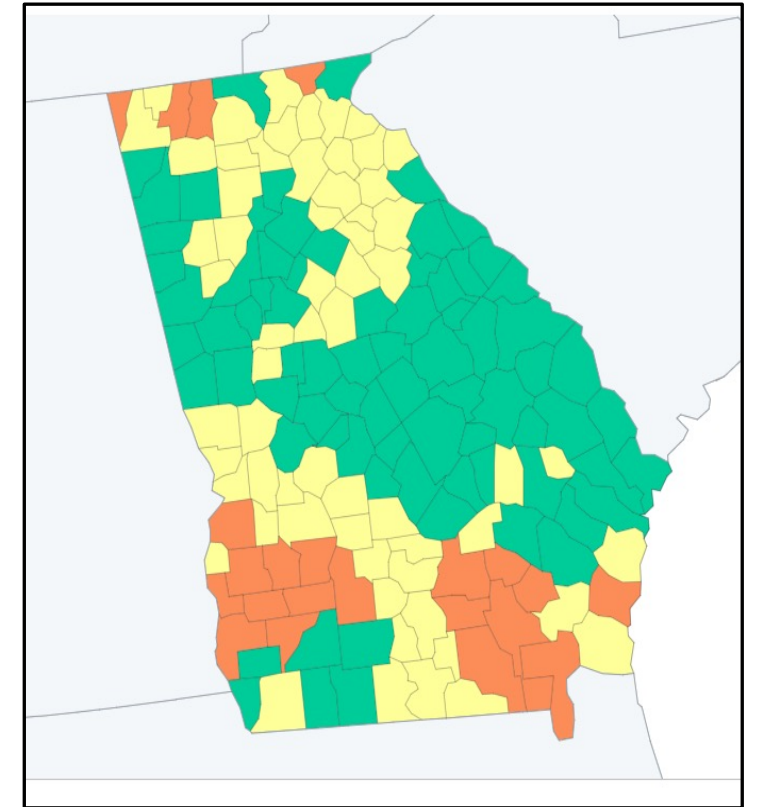


COVID-19-Related Deaths by Date of Positive Test and Vaccination Status 2021-04-10 to 2022-03-01



Other Risk Indicators?

- Last week, CDC released new guidance about COVID transmission risk (and the need for mask-wearing and other mitigation) based on three county metrics:
 1. New COVID cases/100K population in the last 7 days
 2. New COVID hospitalizations (regional) in the last 7 days
 3. Percent of inpatient beds occupied by COVID patients (7-day average)
- According to these metrics, 22/159 Georgia counties (14%) are at high (orange) COVID transmission levels, down from 68 (43%) last week.
- Previous CDC metrics used 7-day case rates and PCR % positivity, but PCR % is now considered a less accurate indicator of risk (home testing).



Summary

- The Omicron surge is retreating quickly. Cases hospitalizations, and deaths are plummeting (cases >90% from the January peak).
- This is a “quiescent” phase of the virus, BUT the pandemic is by no means over.
- SARS-CoV-2 is still with us, has proven very adept at changing, and has myriad opportunities with so many unvaccinated and immune-compromised people.
- The footprint of a pandemic is long lasting. “Long COVID” will play a role. COVID prevention remains a priority.
- Vaccination, **Boosters**, surveillance, testing, and traditional mitigation are critical to continue these declines and WHEN we face other variants that emerge and result in surges over the next several years.

Questions

For more information, please contact:

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Commissioner's Closing Remarks

Board of Public Health / Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H. / March 8, 2022

Next Meeting

The next Board of Public Health meeting will be held April 12, 2022.