



## NEWS RELEASE

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## DPH COVID-19 Daily Status Report

### *Issues with ELR Identified and Resolved*

**Atlanta** – The Georgia Department of Public Health’s (DPH) Daily Status Report updated as scheduled today and accurately reflects case and test data. Issues with electronic laboratory reporting (ELR) that were identified last week have been thoroughly investigated and the problem fixed. It is important to note that data for case counts, hospitalizations and deaths come from sources other than ELR, and as such were not impacted by the problem.

### Background

Everyday tens of thousands of records are reported to DPH through ELR. Laboratory reports are assigned an ELR classification - they are categorized as positive or negative or inconclusive. If a laboratory report has incorrect or incomplete information, the system does not assign an ELR classification. Reports that do not receive a classification are further reviewed and manually classified.

Over the course of the pandemic response, ~2.6M reports have required manual classification.

### The Problem

Due to ongoing high transmission rates of COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, and the associated increase in testing, the system processing ELR became overwhelmed by the unprecedented number of reports coming in over New Year’s weekend. The system came to a near standstill. Processes that would normally take 3 minutes were taking 5 hours to complete.

To speed up those processes, a change was made to the coding application. As a result of that change, all reports were recounted from the beginning of the pandemic response. The recount included the 2.6M reports that required manual classification, as if they had never been manually categorized, and date stamped them January 4, 2022. Those 2.6M reports were incorrectly reflected in the “PCR/Molecular Reported Today” column on the Daily Status Report; and upon further investigation they also appeared in charts and graphs where information was sorted by collection date, in this case January 4, 2022.

Out of an abundance of caution, updates to the Daily Status Report were suspended.

### The Resolution

Once the coding issue was identified as the root cause of the problem, it was fixed, and extensive testing and verification of the system was completed over the past four days. The dashboard updated today at 3 p.m. on its normal schedule. Today's dashboard reflects all data since the last update on January 5, 2022, resulting in very high numbers.

DPH's goal is to present accurate and transparent data about COVID-19 in Georgia. Thank you for your continued patience as DPH actively works to upgrade systems that are processing extraordinary volumes of data each day.

For updates on COVID-19, follow @GaDPH and @GovKemp on Twitter and @GaDPH and @GovKemp on Facebook.

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