# **COVID-19** Critical Indicators



June 24, 2021

## Introduction

As Tennessee (TN) monitors reopening across the state, the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) will maintain vigilance of critical COVID-19 indicators at the state and county levels to identify 'problem areas' across the state and provide early indication of sustained increases in community transmission.

These metrics were developed in line with the <u>White House proposed State Gating Criteria</u> and help officials monitor trends in four key areas:

- Trends in COVID-19 Cases (see on page 2)
- Trends in COVID-19 Symptoms (see on page 7)
- Trends in COVID-19 Testing Capabilities (see on page 8)
- Trends in Healthcare System Capacity (see on page 9)

Beginning June 12th, 2020, case trends (beginning on page 2) include both confirmed and probable cases.

## COVID-9 in TN at a Glance



## **Key Definitions**

Below are definitions important to understanding this report. In addition to these definitions, each visuaization in this report will be explained in further detail in the technical notes (see <u>page 11</u>):

- In TN, a COVID-19 case is counted in the daily case count, demographics, and outcomes, if it classified as a confirmed or probable case. Please see the COVID-19 case definition <u>here</u>.
- A confirmed case is someone who tested positive (via PCR test) for the virus that casues COVID-19 (SARS-Cov-2).
- A **probable case** is someone who may have tested negative by PCR, tested positive by another type of test or may not have been tested at all, but has an illness consistent with COVID-19, and may have other risk factors. For example:
  - If a person is a close contact of a COVID-19 case and has a clinically-compatible illness, this person meets the criteria to be a probable case
- The **specimen collection date** is the date someone's COVID-19 lab sample was collected. Due to lab turnaround time there may be delays between when a specimen is collected and a confirmed case is reported to the public. Unless otherwise stated, visualizations in this report use specimen collection date as it more accurately indicates when a patient was sick (and not when their case was reported to the public).



### Trends in COVID-19 Cases in TN

The following section will visualize the COVID-19 case trends (both confirmed and probable) in TN, including newly reported cases, the active number of cases, and the number of COVID-19 confirmed deaths.



## Epidemic Curve of COVID-19 Cases by Specimen Collection Date

The curve below visualizes the number of new cases each day since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. Since mid-April 2020, the moving 7-day average for new cases has increased over time with higher averages seen in June and July compared to April. On December 20th, 2020, the moving 7-day average was the highest of the pandemic averaging 6,946 new cases/day.



The epidemic curve is based on the day the specimen was collected. Therefore, the most recent day's data may not be complete as test results take an average of 2-5 days to be reflected in the visualization. To learn more about this visualization, please reference the technical notes.



## Statewide Number and Rate of Active Cases<sup>2</sup>

The chart below visualizes the number and rate of active COVID-19 cases in TN. On September 3rd, 2020 (orange line) TDH updated its definition of an active case significantly lowering the number of active cases on that day and moving forward. Since TDH updated its definition of an active case, the number and rate of active cases hit a peak on December 21st, 2020 with 85,406 cases.



## Daily Percent of Positive COVID-19 Tests<sub>3</sub>

The chart below visualizes the daily percent of positive COVID-19 tests. While the daily percent of positive COVID-19 tests fluctuates, in September the daily positivity rate was more consistently between 5 and 10%, a downward trend from the higher daily positivity rates seen through much of July. In October, the daily positivity rate has started to rise again. For today, June 24, 2021, the daily positivity rate was 2.5 % and the positivity rate for the last 7 days was 2.2%.



On 5/3/2021, TDH shifted to a more reliable system-generated date, the date the COVID-19 case was added to the surveillance system. Because of this change, this visualization has had a minor shift in the number of new cases reported for each day and therefore, the daily percent of positive COVID-19 tests.



### Positive Tests per 100,000 Person by Public Health Region (over last 7 days)<sub>4</sub>

The map below shows the number of new positive tests in the last 7 days per 100,000 persons. The arrow indicators represent the trend (up or down) as compared to the week prior. For the week of June 24, 2021, the highest rate of positive tests was seen in the Memphis-Shelby Metro. Additionally, all of the 13 public health regions saw a decrease in the number of positive cases compared to the week prior.



## TN SARS-CoV-2 Variant Case Summary<sub>5</sub>

Below is a table summarizing the COVID-19 variant cases identified in TN. To learn more about COVID-19 variants, please see the SARS-CoV-2 Variant Classifications and Definitions published by the CDC: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html</a>

### Variants of Concern

#### **Variants of Interest**

Covid-19 Variant	WHO Label	Cases in TN	Covid-19 Variant	WHO Label	Cases in TN
B.1.1.7	Alpha	4,025	B.1.525	Eta	5
B.1.351	Beta	19	B.1.526	lota	1
B.1.427	Epsilon	53	B.1.526.1		22
B.1.429	Epsilon	46	B.1.617		1
B.1.617.2	Delta	27	B.1.617.1	Карра	3
P.1	Gamma	110	P.2	Zeta	15

# COVID-19 Critical Indicators



## Vaccine Breakthrough Cases in TN<sub>6</sub>

Below is a table summarizing the COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases identified in TN. The CDC defines COVID-19 Breakthrough Cases as a U.S. resident with SARS-CoV-2 RNA or antigen detected on a respiratory specimen collected ≥14 days after completing the primary series of an FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine. All cases meeting this definition through April 30th are reported. As of May 1st, CDC asked that only cases with severe outcomes (hospitalization or death) be reported. Data are currently reported as such:

- Prior to May 1st: All people that meet case definition

- May 1st and after: People that meet case definition and had an outcome of hospitalized or deceased from COVID-19

To learn more about breakthrough cases across the US and how they are being reported to the CDC: <u>https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/health-departments/breakthrough-cases.html</u>

Total Number of Vaccine Breakthrough Infections Reported to CDC	Total Cases in TN = 968				
Deaths	20 (2%)				
Hospitalizations	140 (14%)				



### 7 Day Running Average of New Cases in Metropolitan Public Health Regions7



The plot above illustrates the 7 day running average of new COVID-19 cases (based on the date of public report) for the six metropolitan public health regions. The Nashville/Davidson and Memphis/Shelby metropolitan areas have consistently reported higher counts of COVID-19 cases compared to the other four metropolitan areas since the outbreak began.

### 7 Day Running Average of New Cases in Rural Public Health Regions7



The plot above illustrates the 7 day running average of new COVID-19 cases (based on the date of public report) for the seven rural public health regions.



## Number of Deaths per Day (by date of death)<sub>8</sub>

On June 24, 2021, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 deaths was 12,550 (10,109 confirmed and 2,441 probable). Below are the number of COVID-19 deaths by the date of death. The red line represents the 4 day running average number of deaths.



PAGE 7

# COVID-19 Critical Indicators



## **COVID-19 Active Cluster Monitoring Table**<sub>9</sub>

The table below shows the number active COVID-19 clusters that are currently being monitored by region and cluster type. To learn more cluster and cluster types, please reference the endnotes on page 14.

Facility Type	CHR	ETR	KKR	MCR	MSR	NDR	NER	SER	SUL	UCR	WTR	Total
Assisted Care Living Facility				1								1
Community	1	4		7	4	12			2	1		31
Correctional		1	1	2		5					1	10
Homeless Shelter						1						1
Industrial	1			1	1	1				5	2	11
Nursing Home	1		2	6	2		1	1	1			14
Other facility	1			3	1	1						6
Other Healthcare					1							1
Restaurant	1			3							1	5
Total	5	5	3	23	9	20	1	1	3	6	4	80

For more information on the metro and regional health departments, please click here or see page 15.

## COVID-19 Confirmed Clusters by Week<sub>10</sub>



The visualization below shows the number of new clusters identified in Tennessee each week.



## Trends in COVID-19 Symptoms in TN

The following section will visualize the trends in COVID-19 symptoms based on data collected through TN's syndromic surveillance system, ESSENCE. ESSENCE tracks patient chief complaints and discharge diagnoses from 95 emergency departments across the state. The data are typically received from participating EDs within 24 hours of a patient encounter. These data are used to get pre-diagnostic estimates of health conditions (like COVID-19) being reported from emergency departments.



## Syndromic Surveillance (Emergency Room) Data11



#### Week Starting Date

**Cornavirus like illness (CLI)** is defined as symptom terms, free text, or discharge diagnoses specified by CDC that are likely to be related to illness caused by the 2019 novel Coronavirus. The visits counted within these criteria will contain a percentage illnesses caused by conditions other than novel coronavirus infection. The visits counted within these criteria will contain a percentage illnesses caused by conditions other than novel coronavirus infection. The visits should be considered preliminary in nature and are not all confirmed diagnoses of disease.

**Influenza like illness (ILI)** is defined by terms, free text, or discharge diagnoses that are likely to be related to illness caused by seasonal influenza. The visits counted within these criteria will contain a percentage illnesses caused by conditions other than influenza infection. These results should be considered preliminary in nature and are not all confirmed diagnoses of disease.



## **Trends in COVID-19 Testing Capabilities**

The following section will visualize the COVID-19 testing trends in TN, including laboratory testing turnaround time and the rates of testing across the state.

#### White House State Gating Criteria: Testing Capabilities

Ability to quickly set up safe and efficient screening and testing sites

for symptomatic individuals and trace contacts of COVID+ results

Ensure sentinel surveillance sites are screening for asymptomatic

cases and contacts for COVID+ results are traced

## Laboratory Testing & Turnaround Time<sub>12</sub>

Below is the number of COVID-19 laboratory tests conducted in TN from March to July with the average turnaround time (from specimen collection to time of result). The number of tests conducted each month has increased in TN from ~42,000 tests in March to >894,000 tests in July. Lab turnaround time improved from March (3.57 Days) to June (1.85), but increased again in July (3.43 days). Overall, lab TAT has improved since mid-2020.





**PAGE 11** 

## Trends in COVID-19 Hospital Capacity

The following section will visualize trends in hospital capacity, including the number of COVID-19 positive patients currently admitted, hospital bed utilization, and bed/ventilator availability. All of the visualizations below were created using data from the TN Healthcare Resource Tracking System (HRTS), a tool developed by TDH that manages healthcare facility bed, service and asset availability. These data are reported by hospitals across TN daily.



## Number/Rate of COVID-19 Hospitalized Patients<sub>13</sub>

Below is the number of COVID-19 patients currently hospitalized (dark blue), and of those hospitalized who are in the ICU (green) and are using ventilators (light blue). The grey bar represents the number of patients per reporting hospital, a rate that can help us better interpret changes in COVID-19 hospitalizations (as not all hospitals report each day).

The trends in both the number of COVID-19 inpatients and the number of patients per reporting hospital have increased since May. The total number of COVID-19 positive patients hospitalized across TN on June 24, 2021 was **267**. There are 92 COVID-19 patients currently in the ICU and 48 utilizing ventilators. The number of admitted patients per hospital reporting was 2.12 (with 114 hospitals reporting).





### Hospital Utilization and Confirmed COVID Hospitalizations in TN13



This visual illustrates the total number of hospital beds (adult floor beds) occupied by non-COVID-19 (light blue) and confirmed COVID-19 patients (darker blue) since July 15th, 2020.

Additionally, please note the following: • On December 18, 2020 this visualization was changed to compare the number of hospital beds (adult floor beds) occupied by non-COVID-19 patients and confirmed COVID-19 patients (excluding COVID-19 patients using ICU beds) across TN.

• Hospital utilization dipped significantly in TN from mid-March, through April. Through the month of May hospital utilization increased statewide, but primarily due to the resumption of elective procedures, not an increase in COVID positive hospitalizations. The number of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Tennessee was roughly the same on June 1st (296) as it was on May 1st (295). Recently, an increase in admitted COVID-19 positive patients has been seen across the state.

• On June 24, 2021, 1.8% (175/9,608) of all hospitalizaed patients in Tennessee are COVID-19 patients.

## Quick Glance at Hospital Bed & Ventilator Availability<sub>13</sub>

Below is a brief snapshot of the currently available floor beds, ICU beds and ventilators across TN.





## **Technical Notes**

#### 1. Epidemic Curve for COVID-19 Cases by Specimen Collection Date (page 2)

The visualization on page 2 shows the daily new COVID-19 cases (blue bars) and 4-day moving average of new cases (red line). A four day moving average is the average of one data point and the three preceding data points. Looking at the moving average helps to understand trends and account for fluctuations in the data.

#### Are probable cases included in the Epidemic Curve?

Probable cases are included in the epidemic curve in this report. For the probable cases where specimen collection date is not available, the date the patient's illness or symptoms began is used.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Not exactly. The public downloadable datasets (**Daily Case Information**) present COVID-19 case counts based on the day they were publicly reported, not specimen collection date. However, using the column New\_Cases one can create a similar visualization. The primary difference between the visualization using the public dataset method and the one in this report would be that the trends seen in this report should align with trends seen roughly 2-5 days later in the public dataset visualization. Again, this would be because of the 2-5 day lag between specimen collection date and public report date.

#### 2. Statewide Number and Rate of Active Cases (page 3)

The visualization on page 3 shows the number (light blue bars) and rate (dark blue line) of active cases each day in TN.

#### How does TDH count recovered COVID-19 Cases?

The number of active COVID-19 cases are determined by: total number of cases - inactive/recovered cases. TDH considers a case "inactive/recovered" when: 1) they are at least 14 days beyond their symptom onset date, or are at least 14 days beyond the first test confirming illness if asymptomatic, and 2) are not deceased.

#### How is the rate of active cases calculated?

The active rate is the total number of individuals who actively have COVID-19 in TN divided by the state population, see example calculation and interpretation below. The population of the state is from the 2018 projected population estimate for Tennessee.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes. Using the public downloadable datasets (Daily Case Information) you can use the column Total\_Active to get the daily number of active cases and the instructions above to calculate the rate. If you want to understand how TDH calculates "Total Active" you can calculate it yourself by subtracting the number of recovered cases (Total\_Recovered) and the number of cases who have died (Total\_Deaths) from the total number of cases (Total\_Cases).

#### 3. Daily Percent of Positive COVID-19 tests (page 3)

The visualization on page 3 shows the daily positivity rate (blue line) as well as two thresholds that indicate if the positivity rate was above either 5% or 10%.

#### How is the daily percent of positive tests calculated?

The daily percent of positive tests is calculated by taking the number of new positive tests for that day divided by the total number of new tests for that day. These numbers are publicly available in the downloadable data- Daily Case Info. While the number of new tests conducted that day can be found in the column New\_Tests, the new positive number of tests can be calculated by subtracting yesterdays total Pos\_Tests from today's total Pos\_Test.



#### Daily Percent of Positive COVID-19 tests (page 3) continued

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes. Using the public downloadable datasets (Daily Case Information) and the instructions above one is able to recreate the visualization.

#### 4.TN SARS-CoV-2 Variant Case Summary (page 4)

The table on page 4 summarizes the COVID-19 variant cases identified in TN (learn more about variants here).

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

No. The count of variant cases is not currently available in the TDH provided public data sets.

#### 5. Positive Tests per 100,000 Persons by Public Health Region (Over the last 7 Days) (page 4)

The regional level map shows the number of new positive tests per 100,000 persons by public health region in the last 7 days. The arrows indicate trends (up or down) of the new positive tests rate compared to the week prior.

#### How is the number of positive tests per 100,000 persons calculated in the map?

These rates are calculated by the taking the number of new positive tests for the region divided by the region's population. This is then multiplied by 100,000 to have the number per 100,000 persons.

#### Are the number of cases the same as the number of positive tests?

No, not necessarily. The number of positive tests is the total number of PCR-positive laboratory results that have been reported to TDH, while the number of cases are individual people who are either confirmed or probable COVID-19 cases. Individuals are only counted once in this number, no matter how many positive tests they might have had. Therefore, if an individual tested positive multiple times in a given week in the same area they would be counted multiple times in this map (but would only be counted once in the case counts)

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes. The numbers required to create the calculation explained above are publicly available in the County New dataset but only at the county level. In order to recreate this visualization one will need to group the counties (and county populations) by their public health region (can be found <u>here</u>).

#### 6. Vaccine Breakthrough Cases in TN (page 5)

The table on page 5 shows some demographic, hospitalization, and death metrics for the COVID-19 vaccine brekthrough cases identified in TN. To learn more about breakthrough cases and how they are reported see <u>here</u>.

#### What is a breakthrough case?

CDC defines COVID-19 Breakthrough Cases as a U.S. resident with SARS-CoV-2 RNA or antigen detected on a respiratory specimen collected  $\geq$ 14 days after completing the primary series of an FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine. All cases meeting this definition through April 30th are reported. As of May 1st, CDC asked that only cases with severe outcomes (hospitalization or death) be reported.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

No, vaccine breakthrough information is not publicly available.

#### 7.7 Day Running Average of New Cases in Metropolitan and Rural Public Health Regions (see page 6)

The visualizations on page 6 show the 7 day running average of new COVID-19 cases for all of the metropolitan and rural public health regions. These new case counts are based on their public report date and not specimen collection date. A 7 day moving average is the average of one data point and the six preceding data points. Looking at the moving average helps to understand trends and account for fluctuations in the data.



#### 7 Day Running Average of New Cases (page 6 & 7) continued

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes, using the downloadable dataset- County New and the column New\_Case, one is able to see the daily counts at the county level. These counts can added together to create the daily new case counts for each public health region. The 7 day average of new cases can be then calculated by totaling the daily new case counts (by region) for today and the previous 6 days and then dividing by 7.

#### 8. Number of Deaths per Day (by date of death) (page 7)

The visualizations on page 7 show the number of COVID-19 deaths by date of death (blue bars) and the 4-day moving average of the number of deaths. A four day moving average is the average of one data point and the three preceding data points. Looking at the moving average helps to understand trends and account for fluctuations in the data.

#### What is a probable death?

A probable COVID-19 death is if a person dies and the health care provider that signed their death certificate determined that COVID-19 disease was their cause of death or a significant condition contributing to death, then the person meets the probable case criteria and would be considered a probable death.

#### Is date of the death the same day it is publicly reported?

No, similarly to specimen collection date, the date of death frequently occurs 2-5 days before the death is reported to the public due to lag time in reporting. Therefore, the most recent day's data may not be complete.

#### How can I calculate the Case Fatality Rate? What about the 30-Day Case Fatality Rate?

A case fatality rate is calculated by taking the total number of COVID-19 deaths divided by the total number of COVID-19 cases. A 30-day case fatality rate would only look at the total number of deaths and number of cases for the last 30 days. Both of these rates can be produced using the publicly downloadable datasets (Daily Case Information).

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Not exactly. The public downloadable datasets-Daily Case Information presents COVID-19 deaths based on the day they were publicly reported, not the date of death. However, using the New\_Deaths column one can create a similar visualization. The primary difference between the visualization using the public dataset method and the one in this report would be the trends seen in this report should align with trends seen roughly 2-5 days later with the public dataset visualization. Again, this would be because of the 2-5 day lag between date of death and public report date.

#### 9. COVID-19 Active Cluster Monitoring Table (page 8)

The table on page 8 displays the number of active COVID-19 clusters that are currently being monitored by region and cluster type.

#### What the definition of a COVID-19 Cluster?

A COVID-19 cluster is two (2) or more confirmed cases (with positive lab results) of COVID-19 that are linked by the same location of exposure (for example a hospital, nursing home, grocery store, corrections facility, etc.) or exposure event (for example a work party, vacation, etc.) that is not a household exposure. In TN, the most commonly reported clusters have been in corrections facilities and nursing homes.

#### **Cluster Types Quick Definitions-**

Community clusters include those associated with: First Responders Religious/spiritual organizations Daycares, educational settings Apartment complexes



#### COVID-19 Active Cluster Monitoring Table (page 8) continued

Businesses Shopping facilities Sports/fitness facilities Other facilities clusters include facilities such as camps. Other Healthcare clusters include provider types such as: Mental health institutions Pharmacies Home health agencies Dentist offices

#### Metro/Regional Health Department Abbreviations:

CHR	Chattanooga Hamilton County Health Department
ETR	East Tennessee Regional Health Department
JMR	Jackson Madison County Health Department
KKR	Knoxville Knox County Health Department
MCR	Mid Cumberland Regional Health Department
MSR	Memphis Shelby County Health Department
NDR	Nashville Davidson County Health Department
NER	Northeast Regional Health Department
SCR	South Central Regional Health Department
SER	Southeast Regional Health Department
SUL	Sullivan County Health Department
UCR	Upper Cumberland Regional Health Department
WTR	West Tennessee Regional Health Department

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

No, cluster information is not publicly available.

#### 10. COVID-19 Confirmed Clusters by Week (page 8)

The visualization on page 8 shows the new clusters identified in Tennessee each week.

#### What the definition of a COVID-19 Cluster?

A COVID-19 cluster is two (2) or more confirmed cases (with positive lab results) of COVID-19 that are linked by the same location of exposure (for example a hospital, nursing home, grocery store, corrections facility, etc.) or exposure event (for example a work party, vacation, etc.) that is not a household exposure. In TN, the most commonly reported clusters have been in corrections facilities and nursing homes.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

No, cluster information is not publicly available.



#### 11. Syndromic Surveillance (Emergency Room) Data (page 9)

The visualizations on page 9 shows the percent of all emergency room visits in that are reporting both Cornavirus like Illness (CLI) and Influenza like Illness (ILI) in TN. This dashboard can also be found online here.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes and no. While ESSENCE data is not included in the publicly available datasets, the dashboard above does provide the weekly percent of ILI and CLI symptoms in the tool tips. Therefore, one could recreate the visualization if desired.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes and no, while lab turnaround time is not publicly reported, the lab testing volume can determined using the New\_Tests column of the <u>Daily Case Information</u> public dataset.

#### 12. Lab Testing & Turnaround Time (page 10)

The visualization on page 10 shows the volume of COVID-19 lab testing and average turnaround time for the months of March through October (so far) in 2020.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

Yes and no, while lab turnaround time is not publicly reported, the lab testing volume can be determined using the New\_Tests column of the <u>Daily Case Information</u> public dataset.

#### 13. HRTS-Reported Hospitalizations & Bed Capacity (page 11 and 12)

The visualizations see on pages 11 and 12 shows TN's hospital capacity through active hospitalizations, current bed utilization, and bed availability.

#### Can I recreate this with TDH publicly available data?

No, HRTS data is not publically available.

To access all the downloadable datasets mentioned in the technical notes, please see: <u>https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov/data/downloadable-datasets.html</u>