



# HO-CHUNK NATION

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



### MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### RE: **Holiday Season Community Call to Action**

In the past week Wisconsin has averaged more than 3,000 new coronavirus cases per day, according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), statistics not seen in nearly 11 months. As of Saturday, November 20, 2021, according to Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Health, over the past 7 days, we have averaged about 5 new coronavirus cases per day which is a significant increase compared to the case average we experienced in the beginning of November (10/31 to 11/6). In contrast, about 42.7% of Wisconsin Ho-Chunk Tribal members have received at least one dose of the vaccine, compared to 59% of Wisconsin residents who have received one dose.

Because of the continued rising levels of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, health systems are nearing staffed-bed capacity to care for inpatient and COVID-19 patients. Hospitals must be available for those with COVID, **AND** those suffering from serious medical situations such as heart attacks, stroke, trauma and providing cancer care treatments. Because of the continued stress on the hospital systems across the State there is a danger of not having the capacity to care for those needing treatment. This is why it is vitally important that we take precautions to prevent illness this holiday season.

While the holidays are a great time for celebrating special moments with friends and family, it's important for everyone to consider ways to keep their loved ones safe. The best way to protect yourself and loved ones over the holiday season is to limit your family gatherings to those who are fully vaccinated. A person is considered fully vaccinated if they have received one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine or two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently recommended booster shots for all adults ages 18 years and older who received a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine at least six months after their second dose.

To help prevent the spread of COVID during holiday gatherings:

- Get vaccinated when eligible (The Pfizer vaccine is available for everyone ages 5 and older).
- Get a booster dose when eligible.

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- Wear well-fitting masks over your nose and mouth if you are in public indoor settings if you are not fully vaccinated.
- Even those who are fully vaccinated should wear a mask in public indoor settings if the vaccination status of all attending is unknown.
- Gathering outdoors is safer than indoors.
- Avoid crowded, poorly ventilated spaces.
- If you are sick or have symptoms, don't host or attend a gathering.
- Get tested if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

The Department of Health has a **call to action for our community, please get your COVID-19 vaccine and if eligible your COVID-19 booster and your Influenza vaccine.** Along with vaccine, we still need community members to take masking, social distancing, and hand washing very seriously. Now is not the time to let our guard down. Please, anytime you go out of your home wear a mask, stay 6 feet away from others outside of your home, and wash your hands frequently. #Woxeteki