

# Niagara County to give away COVID-19 at-home tests kits at 3 sites this Saturday

Niagara County Legislature Chairwoman Becky Wydysh announced Niagara County received a shipment of COVID-19 at-home test kits from New York state. The county will hold three simultaneous drive-thru events to distribute the kits to the public this Saturday, Jan. 8. Each at-home test kit contains two COVID-19 tests.

The three sites will be in Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda

and Lockport. Each site will have roughly 2,000 at-home kits to hand out. Distribution will be limited to one per car. Some ID showing the person is a Niagara County resident (driver's license, utility bill, etc.) is required. Kits will be handed out on a first come, first-served basis.

"We know there is tremendous demand for at-home test kits so, when we received our shipment

from the state on Tuesday, our team immediately began planning the logistics on how to distribute them," Wydysh said. "The state has said we can expect regular shipments of these kits, so, if that is indeed the case, we will be holding future events as well."

The three distribution sites, which will begin handing out test kits at 11 a.m., are as follows:

•Niagara Falls

Niagara County Human Resources Building, 300 10th St.

•North Tonawanda

Niagara County DMV, 500 Wheatfield St.

•Lockport

Transit Drive-In Theatre, 6655 S. Transit Road

"Based on our experience, we believe the turnout for this event will be significant, and all at-home kits will be distributed within the first hour to 90 min-

utes or so," said Jonathan Schultz, director of Niagara County Emergency Services. "We want to stress that not everyone who wants an at-home test kit may get one based on the limited supply."

Those who attend are asked to pay close attention to the signage to know where to enter the drive-thru.

## Spring semester guidance issued for SUNY & CUNY campuses 'to safely reopen'

Mandates COVID-19 vaccine booster & mandatory pre-testing for all students planning to regularly access campus

√ Ongoing testing plans required for all campuses

√ Vaccinations for all faculty

Gov. Kathy Hochul, last Friday, announced issuance of spring semester reopening guidance for SUNY and CUNY campuses, which includes the continuation of the student vaccine mandate as well as requiring all students regularly accessing campus to receive the COVID-19 booster for the spring semester. Additional requirements for students also include mandatory pre-testing ahead of their semester return, which will apply to all students who plan to regularly access campus.

Each campus will develop and communicate an ongoing testing plan to monitor for positive cases throughout the semester. Cam-

pus will continue to enforce universal indoor masking regardless of vaccination status and social distancing for anyone who is unvaccinated on campus.

"We need to ensure students in New York are able to stay in school and learn in-person throughout the spring semester," Hochul said. "Students deserve to have a safe, and high-quality in-person college experience; and with these new measures, students will be able to stay on campus and in their classes. SUNY and CUNY have already done an extraordinary job at fighting the pandemic, with COVID-19 rates much lower than the general population, and it's time to take the next step to keep everyone safe."

Students who are regularly on campus who are eligible to re-



ceive a COVID-19 vaccine booster are now required to receive one for the spring 2022 semester. Campuses must develop a plan and time frame requirement for students to provide proof of booster vaccination.

SUNY and CUNY campuses

must also implement, or continue if they had previously implemented, an ongoing testing program throughout the semester. Campuses will develop a random sampling methodology, which will be communicated to students. Campuses may also implement

an exemption process for those who have received a booster. All faculty will be required to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

SUNY will continue to report real-time results at the COVID-19 case tracker. Hochul's team said, "Since the beginning of the fall 2020 semester, when students began returning for in-person classes, SUNY has administered nearly 3 million tests on campus, with an average positivity rate of about 0.45% - far lower than statewide and surrounding community rates."

"CUNY will continue to report weekly results on its COVID-19 safety tracker. Since Aug. 25, CUNY has administered almost 95,000 tests to unvaccinated individuals, with an average cumulative positivity rate of 0.50%."

## Hochul: 'We can get through this surge'

Continued from Page 8

death by supporting the hospital system. The "Winter Surge Plan 2.0" will:

√ Distribute antiviral treatments: New York is working with the Biden administration to secure doses of the antiviral drug Paxlovid and make this treatment more widely available.

√ Boost hospital capacity: Hochul will continue enforcing the Nov. 26 executive order to boost hospital capacity. Since it took effect, the number of hospitals with limited capacity needing to pause nonessential surgeries has declined from 32 to 21.

√ Launch National Guard EMT training: To ramp up long-term health care workforce capacity needs, the Department of Health

and the Division of Military and Naval Affairs will be launching two pilot EMT training classes on Jan. 5. This will cover two classes of 40 service members (80 service members in total) who will be able to be deployed by February.

√ Secure additional help from federal partners: Hochul's team said, "In the coming days, we will receive federal Department of Defense medical response and disaster medical assistance teams. This will include a 35-member DMAT to SUNY Upstate in Syracuse, 23-member DoD Medical Response Team to Erie County Medical Center in Buffalo, and 50 new ambulance teams deployed to NYC."

√ Protect nursing home residents and workers: The Hochul administration is in contact with all 606 nursing homes in New York, and will provide them with additional PPE to ensure the safety of patients and staff. Additionally, the administration is coordinating with hospitals and will be deploying durable medical equipment in continued support of the care for all New Yorkers.

4. Expand access to vaccines and boosters: Hochul's team said, "Vaccines continue to be the best defense against COVID hospitalization and death. While 95% of adult New Yorkers have received at least one shot, there's more to do to increase vaccination and booster rates,

especially among children." Her point calls for:

√ Provide boosters to nursing homes: New York will begin requiring each nursing home to demonstrate their plan to increase vaccination and booster rates among their residents.

√ Increase pediatric vaccination: The most unvaccinated eligible cohort is New Yorkers aged 5-11. New York will increase our focus on pediatric vaccination.

√ Get booster shots to teenagers: Hochul's team said, "We anticipate approval of Pfizer's booster shot for children aged 12-15 and will immediately begin outreach to that population once ready."

5. Work with local partners: Hochul has emphasized the fight

against the coronavirus "must take a collaborative approach. Fighting the winter surge requires close collaboration with local partners." So, she intends to:

√ Let local leaders lead: Her team said, "From New York City to Erie County, local leaders are making smart choices. We will continue this surgical, targeted approach."

√ Provide resources to local partners: Hochul will continue to lead a whole-of-government approach to fight COVID-19, "making sure county emergency managers and local school boards have the tests and masks they need."

**WXRL**  
1300 AM & 95.5 FM  
**CLASSIC COUNTRY**  
**WXRL RAMBLIN' LOU TOURS**  
Join your hosts: Joanie & Linda Lou  
2022 Tours

- March 23 - Sprague's Maple Farm /Casino
- April 13 - Ron & Nancy Onesong - Cuba
- April 27-29 - Amish - Lancaster, PA - "DAVID" Amish
- May 5 - Lucy Tour - Museums/Nat. Comedy Ctr/Lunch - Jamestown
- May 10-16 - Memphis/Graceland/Nashville/Grand Ole Opry
- May 23-27 - Cape Cod/Martha's Vineyard/Foxwoods Casino
- June 2-11 - Black Hills, SD/Mt. Rushmore
- June 19-25 - Myrtle Beach/Charleston, SC
- July 5-8 - Frankenmuth/Mackinac Island, MI
- Aug. 31 & Sept. 1 - Finger Lakes/Skaneateles Boat Cruise/ Belhurst

Visit [WXRL.com](http://WXRL.com) for more details.  
Listen to WXRL 24/7 on 1300AM/95.5FM & Streaming LIVE @ WXRL.com  
For a FREE brochure, call 716-681-1313 Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

**THE SOUND OF THE CITY**  
**WEBR AM 1440**  
The Songs You Know,  
The Music You Love

Featuring:  
• Andy Williams • Kenny G  
• Mannheim Steamroller  
• Johnny Mathis • Bing Crosby

**STREAMING LIVE AT  
WEBRADIO.COM**

Download our app and take us with you

**"VIEWPOINT"**  
Telephone Call-In Talk  
716-297-1059  
Monday - Friday 9-11 am

**Tom Darro**

**WEBR AM 1440**

Listen to NFP's editors each Wednesday at 10:15 am

**"VIEWPOINT" IS THE NATION'S FIRST TWO-WAY TELEPHONE TALK SHOW**

**LISTEN ONLINE AT WEBRADIO.COM**

Guess who's reading newspapers?

A whopping **76% of adults 55+ are!**

**Baby Boomers** considered to be marketing's most valuable generation:

- Baby Boomers purchase **80%** of luxury travel
- Baby Boomers spend the most on pharmaceuticals
- 70%** of Baby Boomers show up and vote

Let us help you reach them!  
Call us at 773-7676

**NIAGARA FRONTIER PUBLICATIONS**  
www.wnypapers.com