



Date: April 23, 2020

Time: 10:00am

To: All Local Media

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 23, 2020 Erie County, Ohio Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) update

Please see the following charts for a current status report on the number of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases in Erie County, Ohio as of Thursday, April 23, 2020.

Total number of cases of COVID-19 in Erie County, Ohio	46
Total number of laboratory-confirmed cases	41
Total number of probable cases	5
Total number of COVID-19 deaths in Erie County, Ohio	3
Total number of laboratory-confirmed deaths	3
Total number of probable deaths	0

The following numbers reported by Firelands Regional Health System represent a snapshot in time as of the time of this press release.

Total number of hospitalized patients at Firelands for various reasons	102
Total number of COVID-19 positive patients being treated at Firelands	5
Total number of COVID-19 positive patients discharged from Firelands	7
Total number of COVID-19 positive patient deaths at Firelands	1
Total number of employees within all Firelands Regional Health System facilities who are currently positive for COVID-19	16
Total number of employees at Firelands Regional Medical Center (hospital-based) who are currently positive for COVID-19	4
Total number of employees within all Firelands Regional Health System facilities who have recovered from COVID-19	2

The Erie County Health Department has provided guidance to all businesses and healthcare providers, including mental health and behavioral health service providers, in Erie County to keep their employees, customers, patients, and clients safe. Some companies have asked about purchasing serological tests that detect antibodies, or proteins, found in the blood

when the body responds to the virus that causes COVID-19. They plan to use the tests on staff and, in some cases, customers. These tests detect the immune response to the virus, not the virus itself, and can help healthcare professionals identify individuals who have overcome an infection in the past and developed an immune response. In the future, this may potentially be used to help determine that patients are no longer susceptible to infection and can return to work.

The Erie County Health Department strongly recommends that employers in Ohio review the following information before purchasing or using COVID-19 antibody test kits:

- In the early days of an infection when the body's immune response is still building, antibodies may not be detected. As such, antibody testing is one piece to the puzzle to determine whether employees can return to work. Antibody test results are not the sole answer.
- Some firms developing the tests are falsely claiming that their serological tests are approved by the FDA or falsely claiming that they can diagnose COVID-19.
- All employers looking to use the tests should ensure that they are buying only antibody tests approved by the FDA for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). Without the FDA's EUA approval, there is no way to know if the test kits are valid.
- Testing companies that are EUA-approved are listed on the FDA website, which is updated daily. Testing companies should obtain an FDA letter of authorization on their antibody test kit. These letters are proof that tests have been approved. They are posted on the FDA website.
- Many testing companies are in the queue at FDA for approval. Once approved, this will help expand availability

For up-to-date local information, visit the Erie County COVID-19 Dashboard at [CovidErieOhio.com](https://coviderieohio.com). For questions about COVID-19, call the Erie County COVID-19 Information Center at 567-867-3243.

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