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The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) and CT River Area Health District (CRAHD) announce the State's COVID-19 recovery and demobilization plans as the end of the Public Health Emergency nears.

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Old Saybrook, Conn.--As the end of the national Public Health Emergency draws closer, the Connecticut DPH and CRAHD have announced the State's COVID-19 recovery plans and next steps.

Earlier this year, President Biden announced that the national Public Health Emergency, which was declared in 2020, would expire on **May 11, 2023**. Under U.S. law, the President can declare a national emergency in response to a disaster or crisis. When the nationally declared emergency ends, those powers are lifted, and policies that the President enacted using emergency powers expire. Governor Ned Lamont's declaration of a Public Health Emergency under Connecticut law will end at the same time as the nationally declared Public Health Emergency.

"The May 11 ending of the Public Health Emergency does not mean the end of the COVID-19 virus," said Director Scott Martinson. "We still have the best tools available to stay healthy and that is why as a state, we have made so much progress from where we were three years ago. Although the public health emergency is ending, residents of **Old Saybrook, Clinton, Deep River, Haddam, Chester and Killingworth** should still get vaccinated, get the updated booster, use at-home tests, stay home when they're sick, and wear a high-quality mask when respiratory viruses are circulating at high levels in our community."

"We have the necessary tools to continue to protect ourselves and live with this virus," added DPH Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD. "We hope that COVID-19 will follow the trajectory of other seasonal illnesses and certainly expect to once again ramp up our efforts during respiratory disease season which typically runs from October through April."

Commissioner Juthani added that ongoing communications will be posted at ct.gov/dph and that residents should visit the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website](https://www.cdc.gov) for the most up-to-date COVID-19 guidance. She also announced the details of the State's next steps in response to the end of the Public Health Emergency which include:

COVID-19 Testing

- State supported COVID-19 testing at four Community Health Centers will end on June 30, 2023.
- Self-test kits are still available from the federal government at www.covid.gov or can be purchased at pharmacies and other retail outlets.

COVID-19 Vaccines

- The DPH mobile clinics officially end on June 30, 2023. Organizations interested in making an appointment for updated COVID-19 vaccines through the mobile clinics can do so before June 19, 2023, via ct.gov/coronavirus.
- For Connecticut residents who are homebound, the homebound COVID-19 vaccination program is available until June 30, 2023, after which time individuals should contact their health care provider to receive the COVID-19 vaccine or updated booster, just as they do for seasonal influenza vaccine and other preventative health care services.
- The federal government will continue to distribute vaccine to vaccine providers such as retail pharmacies and health care providers. After the public health emergency ends, the federal government will continue to distribute all available vaccines in their inventory, free to U.S. residents, until that inventory is depleted or expires.
- Once the federal government exhausts its inventory of COVID-19 vaccines, they will be made available commercially like other vaccines, such as flu vaccines, through an individual's private insurance plan; through publicly funded programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and the Vaccines for Children program; or directly by consumers.

COVID-19 Therapeutics

- Access to treatments such as Paxlovid and Lagevrio will still be available from providers and retail pharmacies.

Long-Term Care

- DPH will continue to support long-term care facilities in helping to identify and limit any COVID-19 outbreaks. DPH is committed to offering education and training for outbreak control which can affect the state's most vulnerable citizens.

Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)

- WIC program waivers will end 90 days after the Public Health Emergency ends (Aug. 9, 2023). More updates will follow.

Disease Surveillance and Reporting

- DPH will issue its last COVID-19 report for the 2022-23 respiratory viral disease season on the Open Data Portal on June 1, 2023.
- COVID-19 public data reporting will resume on Oct. 5, 2023, and continue through the winter months, as part of DPH's respiratory surveillance reporting program. This new COVID-19 report will include data that is relevant to current COVID-19 disease activity and trends and integrate COVID-19 with viral respiratory surveillance reporting, including influenza.

Community Levels

The spread of COVID-19 in Connecticut has slowed down in 2023. According to the latest community levels from the CDC, all eight counties in Connecticut are at the Green/Low Level as of May 3.

- There are three levels: Green/Low, Yellow/Medium, and Orange/High.
- COVID-19 Community Levels have helped individuals and communities decide which prevention actions to take based on the latest information. Each level has helped convey how much COVID-19 is impacting your community using data on hospitalizations and cases.
- These levels have been regularly updated and posted on the DPH and CRAHD websites. CDC will no longer publish CDC COVID Community Levels as of **May 11, 2023**. A new metric to monitor all respiratory viral diseases is being developed by CDC and will be released later.

COVID-19 Impact in Connecticut

- 12,270 people have died from COVID-19.
- Connecticut has ranked high throughout the pandemic in vaccination rates. We rank sixth in the nation for fully vaccinated residents and boosters.
 - 82% of our population completed the initial vaccination series and 814,634 residents have received the updated vaccine.
 - 55% of people aged 75 or older -- our most vulnerable residents -- have received the updated vaccine.
- Over 16 million COVID-19 test results reported.
- Distribution of 400 million pieces of PPE throughout the state to hospitals, nursing homes, EMS providers, schools, and local communities.
- Almost nine million self-test kits distributed to schools, day care centers, and vulnerable populations.

CRAHD is planning on continuing to offer COVID vaccinations for all residents in the Fall 2022/Winter 2023 season. Please check the website www.crahd.info for updates.