

April 8, 2022



To All Staff

PLEASE READ THE **ENTIRE** NEWSLETTER FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON COVID. THIS IS THE PRIMARY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION ON THIS TOPIC.

Changes in the information below are highlighted in green.



### GSVE IL RESIDENT COVID SURGE

This week, GSVE experienced a sudden surge in COVID cases in Independent Living. As of today, we have 19 COVID positive IL residents. While all are symptomatic, at this point in time, we have no reports of serious illness or hospitalization. All are self-isolating for 5 days as recommended by the CDC and will refrain from entering the Village Center public areas for 10 days as an enhanced precaution. The residents have alerted any close contacts of their status.

Our investigation indicated there were some common activities and meals shared amongst those testing positive. Therefore, we believe transmission within GSVE is a possibility and in an abundance of caution, we will be adopting protocols at GSVE in IL to contain any further spread:

#### Dining

Marketplace Breakfast and Lunch: Take out only, and please remember to mask and socially distance when waiting for your order

Dinner- Delivery and take-out only. Orders must be placed by noon each day from the menu including daily specials. Please call the podium at 6089 to place an order. For the time being, we will be suspending the Choose to Re-use program and using paper and plastic.

#### Congregate Activities

Suspended until further notice.

#### Outpatient Rehab

Ongoing but screening protocols will apply.

#### Grocery Shopping Outings

Suspended.

#### Medical Transport

Ongoing

## Resident Testing

We are asking all residents who are not currently self-isolating to be tested on site this Friday in the Village Center between 1pm-3pm. The timing of this is in accordance with CDC guidance which recommends testing take place at least 5 days post-exposure or earlier if symptoms develop.

## Staff Testing

Staff testing will be offered Mon-Fri from 2:30p-3:30p in the Village Center, with the exception of today when to hours will be limited to 3p-3:30pm.

## Visits to Health Care

While Health Care remains open for visitation, we highly discourage our IL residents from visiting until we have an opportunity to further assess the risk this might pose to our more vulnerable HC population.

## Masks

Please remember that while being vaccinated and boosted has been shown to decrease the severity of illness, and chances of hospitalization or death, it does not completely prevent transmission. Given the age and possible underlying health issues of our residents, we will continue to require masks in all public areas.

## Duration

We will re-assess our protocols on a regular basis. We appreciate your cooperation.

## **CDC RECOMMENDS ADDITIONAL BOOSTERS FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS**

Source- CDC Website: “Data continue to show the importance of vaccination and booster doses to protect individuals both from infection and severe outcomes of COVID-19. For adults and adolescents eligible for a first booster dose, these shots are safe and provide substantial benefit. During the recent Omicron surge, those who were boosted were 21-times less likely to die from COVID-19 compared to those who were unvaccinated, and 7-times less likely to be hospitalized. CDC continues to recommend that all eligible adults, adolescents, and children 5 and older be up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines, which includes getting an initial booster when eligible.

Following FDA’s regulatory action, the CDC is updating its recommendations to allow certain immunocompromised individuals and people over the age of 50 who received an initial booster dose at least 4 months ago to be eligible for another mRNA booster to increase their protection against severe disease from COVID-19. Separately and in addition, based on newly published data, adults who received a primary vaccine and booster dose of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 vaccine at least 4 months ago may now receive a second booster dose using an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

These updated recommendations acknowledge the increased risk of severe disease in certain populations including those who are elderly or over the age of 50 with multiple underlying conditions, along with the currently available data on vaccine and booster effectiveness.

***Good Shepherd is reviewing options to provide on-site clinics for interested staff and residents who meet the eligibility criteria listed above. More information will follow soon.***

## INITIAL VACCINES\ 1<sup>st</sup> BOOSTER CLINICS

GSC still strongly urges all staff to receive the **FIRST** booster when they are eligible to protect themselves, our residents, our staff and the greater community.

We are currently working with the Medicine Shoppe to schedule clinics. More info will be announced soon:

GS Village Endwell: TBD

GS Fairview Home: TBD

GS Chase: TBD

Vaccinations are also available at many local pharmacies; CVS, Walgreens, etc., by appointment. **And The Medicine Shoppe offers vaccines on most Fridays at its retail location at 1179 Vestal Ave Suite 1, Binghamton, NY 13903.** If you are interested in this option, please contact your HR Wellness RN to coordinate your visit.

Once you have received your booster, please provide your HR RN Wellness Nurse (DON @ Chase) with your updated COVID vaccination ID card.

Any questions please contact the HR RN Wellness Nurse, DON at Chase, Human Resources or your Supervisor.

## GSC STATISTICS

as of 4/7/2022	GSFH	GSVE	Chase
<b>Year To Date + residents</b>			
SNF	1	2	17
ACF	2	5	n\
IL	0	19	n\
<b>Year To Date + Staff</b>			
SNF	23	8	23
ACF	12	15	n\
IL	n\	6	n\
<b>Year To Date Deaths</b>			
SNF	0	0	0
ACF	0	0	n\
IL	0	0	n\
<b>Active Residents Cases (in-</b>			
SNF	0	2	0
ACF	0	0	n\
IL	0	19	n\
<b>Staff Furloughed</b>			
SNF	1	0	0
ACF	0	1	n\
IL	n\	0	n\

## COMMUNITY LEVELS FOR BROOME AND CHENANGO COUNTIES



### COVID-19 County Check

Find community levels and prevention steps by county.

Select a Location (all fields required)

New York



Broome County

< Start Over

● Medium

In Broome County, New York, community level is Medium.



### COVID-19 County Check

Find community levels and prevention steps by county.

Select a Location (all fields required)

New York

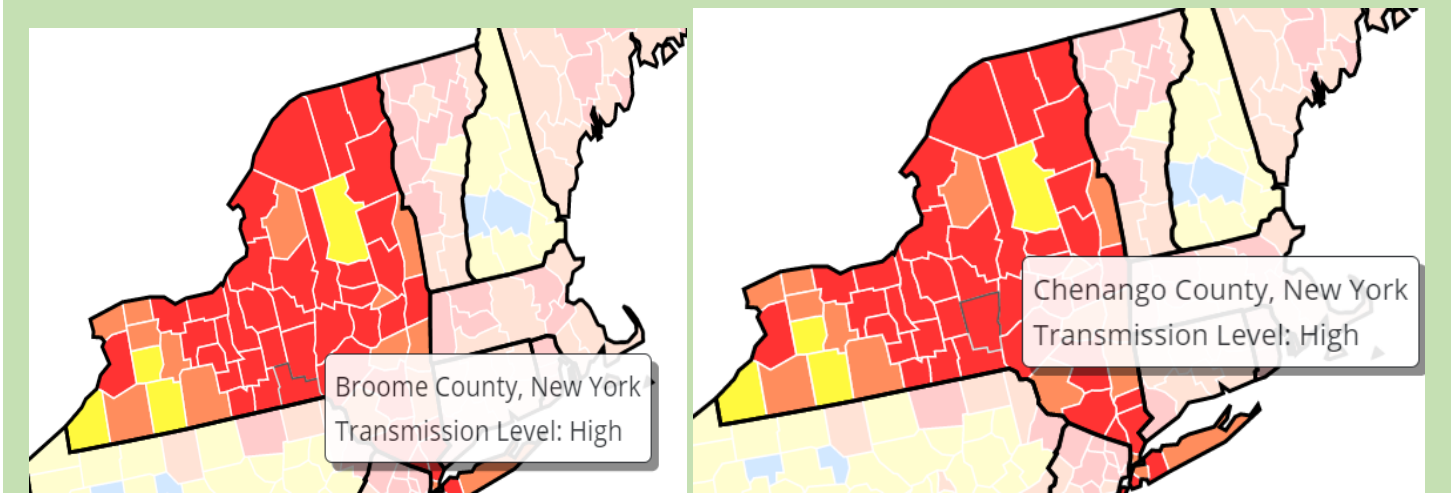


Chenango County

< Start Over

● Low

## TRANSMISSION RATES FOR BROOME AND CHENANGO COUNTIES



### CMS ISSUED GUIDANCE ON EMPLOYEE TESTING: STAFF NOT FULLY UP TO DATE INCLUDING UN-BOOSTED STAFF SUBJECT TO ROUTINE TESTING

In general, the testing guidance replaces the term “vaccinated” with “up-to-date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses” and deletes the term “unvaccinated.” In addition, it updates the recommendations for testing individuals within 90 days after recovering from COVID-19. “Up-to-Date” means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.

As a result of this updated guidance, staff who are fully vaccinated and eligible for a booster, *but are not boosted*, must be tested routinely based on the [community transmission rates in your facility's county](#), along with those who are not fully vaccinated and those who are unvaccinated (i.e., exempt). In most counties, this is still twice weekly. Staff who are fully vaccinated and boosted and staff who have recovered in the prior 90 days do not need to be routinely tested for COVID-19. In general, the guidance provides that “testing is not necessary for asymptomatic people who have recovered from SARS-CoV-2 infection in the prior 90 days; however, if testing is performed on these people, an antigen test instead of a nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) is recommended. This is because some people may remain NAAT positive but not be infectious during this period.”

**Table 2: Routine Testing Intervals by County COVID-19 Level of Community Transmission**

Level of COVID-19 Community Transmission	Minimum Testing Frequency of Staff <i>who are not up-to-date</i> <sup>+</sup>
Low (blue)	Not recommended
Moderate (yellow)	Once a week*
Substantial (orange)	Twice a week*
High (red)	Twice a week*

<sup>+</sup>Staff *who are up-to-date* do not need to be routinely tested.

\*This frequency presumes availability of Point of Care testing on-site at the nursing home or where off-site testing turnaround time is <48 hours.

Good Shepherd will be following this guidance, and will be testing employees are not up to date including those who have not received the booster with frequency based on the new guidance.

**Broome County shows a **high** level of transmission, necessitating **twice a week** testing for staff not up to date with all eligible COVID vaccines.**

**Chenango County show a **high** level of transmission, necessitating **twice a week** testing for staff not up to date with all eligible COVID vaccines.**

### NYS Mask Mandate

The Governor has lifted the mask mandate for businesses, but noted Counties, Cities and businesses can choose to continue to require masks. The mask requirement remains in effect for the following:

- **State regulated Health Care Settings**
- **State regulated Adult Care Facilities and Nursing Homes**
- Correctional Facilities
- Schools and Child Care Centers
- Homeless Shelters
- Domestic Violence Shelters
- Buses and bus stations, trains and train stations, subways and subway stations, and planes and airports

**Given the Broome County statistics reported above, we are still concerned that the Community Transmission Level is at **High**, and given our vulnerable population, we will continue to require masks for both staff and residents in Independent Living at both GSFH and GSVE when in public areas other than when seated for drinks or a meal. We will re-evaluate this policy on a regular basis.**

Patti Mackey  
GSC COO

Dave Fawns  
GSC VP of HR