



Yavapai County

Our Mission: "Yavapai County will serve and protect its citizens through efficient management of all its resources to enhance the lives of those we serve."



**For Immediate Release
Friday, December 17, 2021**

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COVID-19 Update: Friday, December 17, 2021

At the Regular Board of Supervisors meeting on December 15, 2021, Yavapai County Community Health Services (YCCHS) Director Leslie Horton requested approval from the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to purchase a new refrigerated mobile morgue/cadaver trailer for the Medical Examiner's (ME) Office. While Yavapai County has seen an increase in Covid-19 related deaths over the past 30 days (149 compared to 45 the previous 30 days) the ME's Office has had a need for increased cadaver storage for some time. This permanent addition to the ME's facility will increase capacity by nearly 50% and better prepare the office for future emergency needs. While the ME's office has been near capacity due to Covid related deaths, the request was to approve an "emergency purchase" because YCCHS had been informed that there were only two of these items remaining, available for purchase.

YCCHS Director Leslie Horton said, "Our hospitals are at or near capacity due to Covid-19 and this means that Yavapai County residents can expect longer wait times at the ER, postponed non-emergency surgeries and some patients discharged to nursing facilities outside of the County. Approximately 88 percent of those who require in-patient COVID-19 care are unvaccinated individuals. I urge everyone that can to get the Covid-19 vaccine as soon as possible, and if you are eligible for the booster, get that as well." Director Horton went on to state, "I would like to encourage everyone to be vigilant about their personal health protocols, including wearing masks when they cannot maintain suitable distances and staying home if you feel sick."

Over this holiday season, you can avoid many of the incidents that have been shown to result in ER visits by adhering to your medications and dietary routine and if you drink alcohol, to drink in moderation. It is important to remember that as we enter the winter season, falls are the leading cause of ER visits. To prevent falls please visit: www.cdc.gov/falls/facts.html

We can all help preserve hospital capacity by:

- Getting a flu shot: azhealth.gov/Flu
- Masking up, maintaining physical distance, keeping hands washed, staying home if sick, and following other prevention steps: azhealth.gov/COVID-19
- Getting tested if you have symptoms or five to seven days after being exposed to someone who has or who you believe may have COVID-19: azhealth.gov/Testing
- If you or a loved one contracts COVID-19, looking into monoclonal antibody treatments that can reduce the severity of illness and reduce the chances of hospitalization: azhealth.gov/mAbs

Yavapai County reports 542 COVID-19 Cases and 28 Deaths since Monday, December 13, 2021. The county has tested 109,503 residents for COVID-19 in the past 6 months, and there have been 35,239 positive cases and **906** deaths since the beginning of the pandemic. Yavapai Regional Medical Center reports **84** COVID-patients, VVMC reports **28** patients, and the VA reports **4** patients. The County is still experiencing high transmission of COVID-19 with a **20.6%** positivity rate and 371 cases per 100,000 residents for the week ending December 5, 2021. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or what seems to be a bad cold, please get tested for COVID-19 and/or Flu. **ADHS COVID-19 Hotline – (844) 542-8201** (select Option number Eight) – help in English and Spanish from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week, except for major holiday.