

Yakima County COVID-19 Trends Report

October 2023 - December 2023 (Quarter 4)

Overview

The Yakima Health District is publishing this report quarterly to provide more information on current trends in COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in Yakima County. This report also includes data on COVID-19 breakthrough cases. The data referenced in this report comes from the Yakima Health District's internal database, the Washington Disease Reporting System (WDRS), and the Washington Immunization Information Systems (WAIS). Note that the data on this report is preliminary and may change based on additional reporting.

Considerations for COVID-19 Data by Vaccination Status

While fully vaccinated individuals may still become infected with COVID-19, multiple factors determine the proportion of COVID-19 cases among fully vaccinated persons:

- **Breakthrough infections are expected to occur as more individuals become vaccinated**
 - When a larger proportion of the population is fully vaccinated, the expected proportion of cases among fully vaccinated individuals is also larger.
- **New COVID-19 variants may affect the proportion of breakthrough infections**
 - Omicron is currently the dominant COVID-19 variant in Washington state and has been found to spread more easily than earlier variants, including the Delta variant.
- **COVID-19 vaccines, including booster doses, continue to prevent severe illness, hospitalization and death.**
 - Compared to people who are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations, unvaccinated people are more likely to get COVID-19, much more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19, and much more likely to die from COVID-19.
- **Waning immunity may occur over time**
 - Waning immunity from the vaccine may occur due to the combination of decreasing protection as time passes since getting vaccinated, as well as the greater infectiousness of COVID-19 variants.



For additional COVID-19 data, visit:

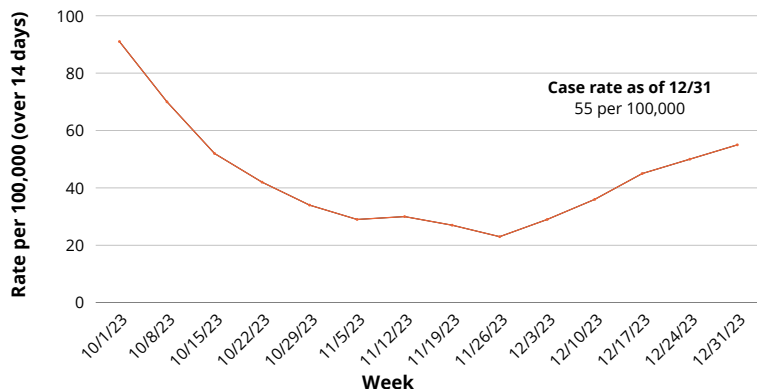
www.yakimacounty.us/2404/Data-Summary

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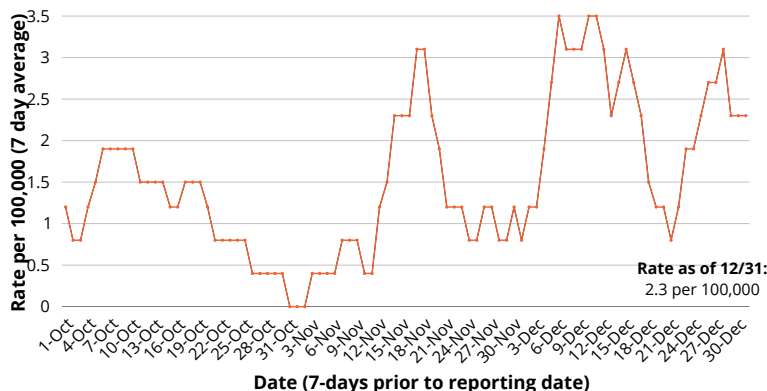
COVID-19 Cases

COVID-19 case rate by week,
October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023



COVID-19 Hospitalizations

COVID-19 Hospitalization rate, 7-day average for past month,
October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023



Key Observations

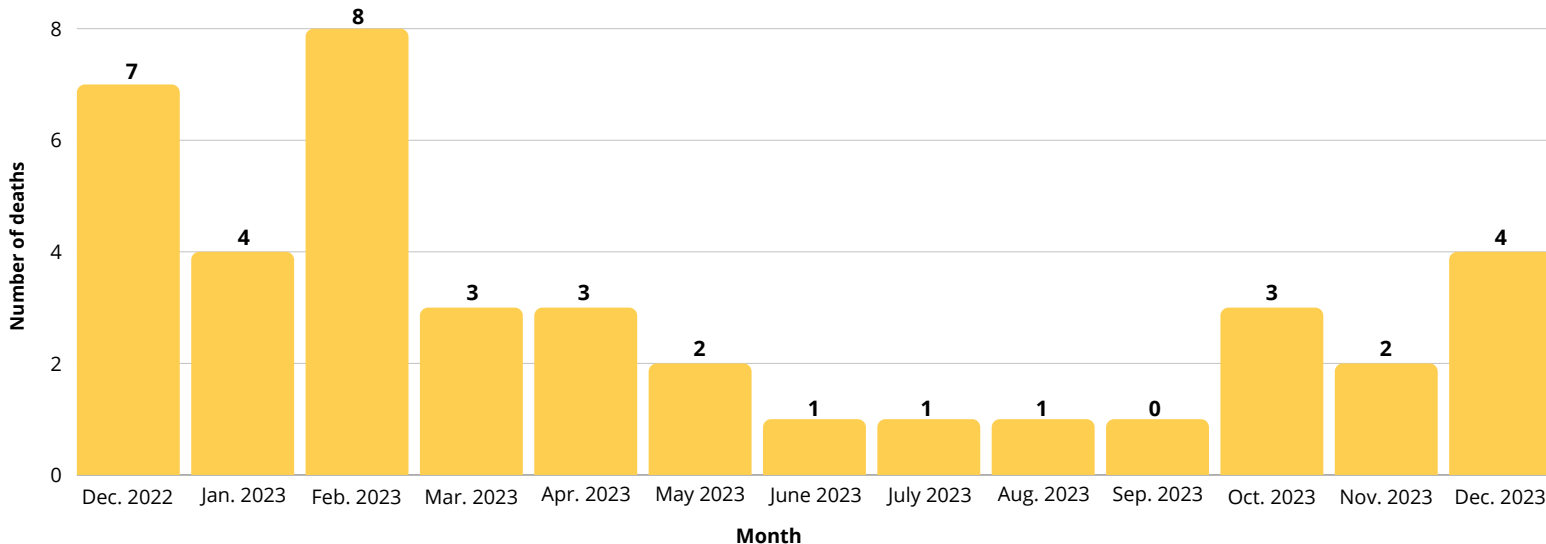
In Quarter 4 of 2023, a high daily case rate was seen on 10/1, with 236 cases reported over the span of 14 days, resulting in a case rate of 91 per 100,000 residents. Since that high count on 10/1, COVID-19 daily case counts in Yakima County decrease through 11/5. The 14-day case rate for September 31st was 92 cases per 100,000. Cases may be undercounted due to unreported results from at-home test kits. In Quarter 4, the CDC rates Yakima County at a low COVID19 community level. The prominent strain was JN.1.

Key Observations

Yakima County experienced an increase of COVID-19 hospitalizations in the month of November. The hospitalization rate began to decrease after 11/19 and there was an increase again on 12/1. As of December 31st, the 7-day hospitalization rate for Yakima County was 2.3 hospitalizations per 100,000 residents, the same as the previous hospitalization rate reported on September 30th. In 2023, there have been a total of 300 hospitalizations reported, with 186 of these occurring in individuals ages 65 and older.

COVID-19 Deaths

Figure 3. Total COVID-19 deaths by month, December 2022 - December 2023



Key Observations

The number of COVID-19 deaths increased in Quarter 4 compared to the COVID-19 deaths in Quarter 3. There were 9 COVID-19 deaths in Quarter 4 of 2023. There have been a total of 32 deaths in 2023. The overall number of COVID-19 deaths in Yakima County is 788.

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COVID-19 Breakthrough Cases

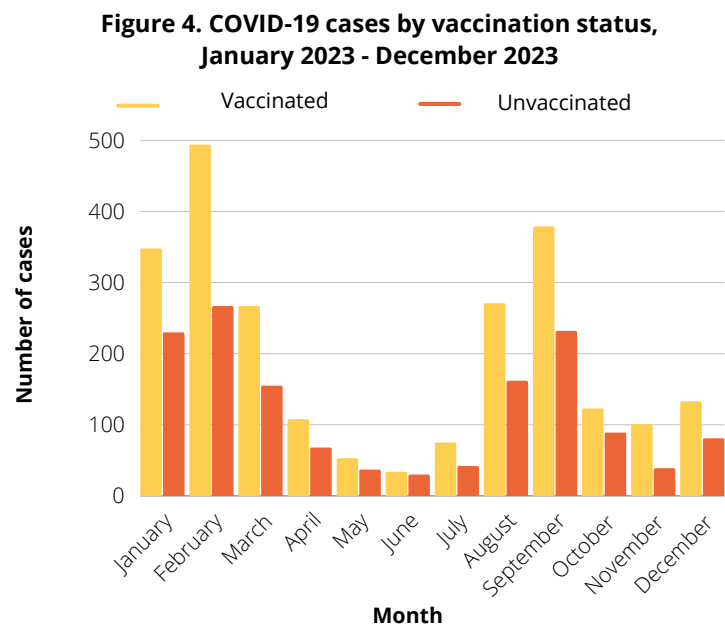


Table 1. COVID-19 cases by vaccination status, January 2023 - December 2023

Month	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated	Total
January	348 (60%)	230 (40%)	578 (100%)
February	494 (65%)	267 (35%)	761 (100%)
March	267 (63%)	155 (37%)	422(100%)
April	108 (61%)	68 (39%)	176 (100%)
May	53 (59%)	37 (41%)	90 (100%)
June	34 (53%)	30 (47%)	64 (100%)
July	75 (64%)	42 (36%)	117 (100%)
August	271 (63%)	162 (37%)	433 (100%)
September	379 (62%)	232 (38%)	611 (100%)
October	123 (58%)	89 (42%)	212 (100%)
November	101 (72%)	39 (28%)	140 (100%)
December	133 (62%)	81 (38%)	214 (100%)

Key Observations

There has been an increase in the total number of cases in Quarter 4 of 2023, with a 53% increase in cases from November to December. Of the 214 cases in December, 133 (62%) were vaccinated and 81 (38%) were unvaccinated. With the continuation of COVID-19 cases, everyone is recommended to receive the new updated COVID-19 vaccine and get tested for COVID-19 if symptomatic. Additionally, it is recommended to utilize additional prevention measures such as hand-washing, wearing a mask in crowded or poorly ventilated areas, and staying home when sick to stay protected against COVID-19 infection.

COVID-19 Hospitalizations by Vaccination Status

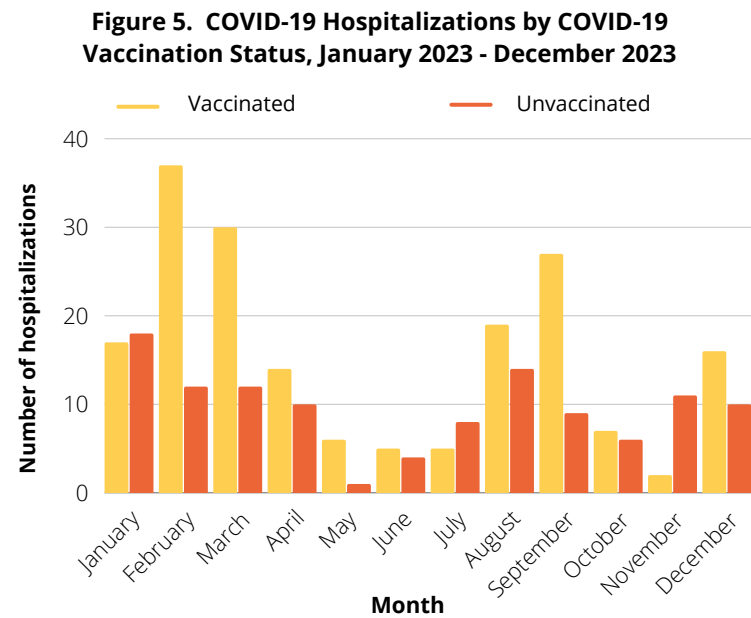


Table 2. COVID-19 Hospitalizations by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - December 2023

Month	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated	Total
January	17 (49%)	18 (51%)	35 (100%)
February	37 (76%)	12 (24%)	49 (100%)
March	30 (71%)	12 (29%)	42 (100%)
April	14 (58%)	10 (42%)	24 (100%)
May	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	7 (100%)
June	5 (56%)	4 (44%)	9 (100%)
July	5 (38%)	8 (62%)	13 (100%)
August	19 (58%)	14 (42%)	33 (100%)
September	27 (75%)	9 (25%)	36 (100%)
October	7 (54%)	6 (46%)	13 (100%)
November	2 (15%)	11 (85%)	13 (100%)
December	16 (62%)	10 (38%)	26 (100%)

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COVID-19 Deaths by Vaccination Status

Figure 6. COVID-19 Deaths by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - December 2023

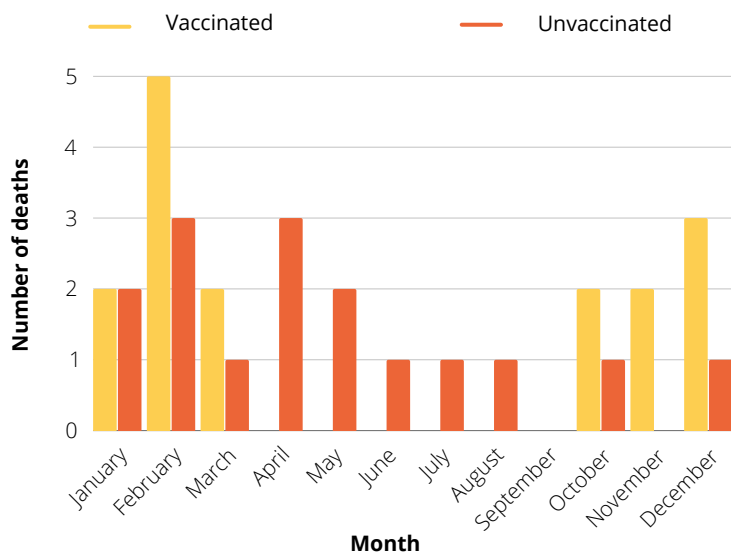


Table 3. COVID-19 Deaths by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - December 2023

Month	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated	Total
January	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
February	5 (63%)	3 (38%)	8 (100%)
March	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)
April	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	3 (100%)
May	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
June	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
July	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
August	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
September	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
October	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)
November	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
December	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	4 (100%)

Key Observations

There was a increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations in December. The total COVID-19 hospitalizations increased by 100% from October to December. There were a total of 9 deaths in Quarter 4 and 22% of the deaths that occurred in Quarter 4 were unvaccinated. Hospitalization and cases by vaccination status provides a glimpse based on the count of the proportion of cases and hospitalizations that are being hospitalized but should not be interpreted as an adequate comparison of efficacy of vaccinations. Multiple factors influence whether infection occurs, and severe disease develops, including general health status, waning immunity from vaccine and from natural infection, as well as current variant in circulation. The updated COVID-19 vaccine is available for individuals ages 6 months and up and can be received two months after the last COVID-19 vaccine dose. The updated COVID-19 vaccine closely targets the XBB lineage of the Omicron variant and could restore protection against severe COVID-19 that may have decreased over time. According to data from the Washington State Department of Health, only about 5% of eligible individuals in Yakima County have received an updated COVID-19 vaccine. Visit [YakimaVaccines.org](https://yakimavaccines.org) for information on where to find COVID-19 vaccines.

Definitions

- **COVID-19 case:** An individual who tested positive for COVID-19 with a positive molecular COVID-19 test, including a PCR and antigen test.
- **COVID-19 hospitalization:** An individual with confirmed COVID-19 who has been identified as being hospitalized through case investigation data in WDRS or linkage with with Rapid Health Information Network (RHINO) records.
- **COVID-19 death:** An individual who tested positive for COVID-19 and died due to complications from COVID-19. This data has been ascertained by internal YHD data.
- A **vaccinated individual** is someone who is ≥ 14 days post-completion of the COVID-19 vaccine primary series and a COVID-19 booster dose.
- An **unvaccinated individual** is someone who has not received an approved COVID-19 vaccine, or has not completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series or booster.
- A **breakthrough case** is defined as an instance when an individual who is fully vaccinated tests positive for COVID-19 at least 14 days after they have completed their primary COVID-19 vaccine series. Partially vaccinated individuals are not counted as breakthrough cases because they are not fully vaccinated.