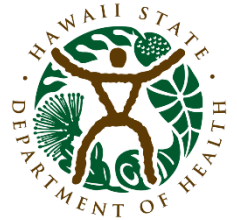


# State of Hawai'i

## Weekly COVID-19 Cluster Report

### September 16, 2021



Due to the surge of COVID-19 cases, the Hawai'i State Department of Health has prioritized investigations of cases associated with schools, healthcare facilities, congregate settings (e.g., correctional facilities), and vulnerable populations. Parents and the community have been concerned about the return to **in-person learning** and the risk of COVID-19 in **schools**. The [COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#) provides a layered approach of **four core essential strategies** to protect students and staff. The core essential strategies are (1) **vaccination of eligible students and staff**; (2) **stay home or go home if sick**; (3) **correct and consistent mask use indoors**; and (4) **hand hygiene**. The core essential strategies recommended by the Department of Health are aligned with the current [CDC Guidance for COVID-19 in K-12 Schools](#). With high community transmission, cases among students and staff are expected. However, implementation of the core essential strategies will substantially reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread in schools.

In August 2021, the Kauai District Health Office investigated a **cluster of 45 COVID-19 cases associated with an independent school on Kauai**. A total of 27 cases were identified among students and staff; 18 secondary cases were also identified. There were no hospitalizations or deaths. The **core essential strategies** were **inconsistently implemented** at the school. The school administration reported complacency with mask wearing due to Kauai's low case rates. The additional mitigation strategies, including cohorting, improving ventilation, physical distancing, and screening testing, had not been implemented. With numerous cases across several grade levels, the school administration elected to pause in-person learning during the quarantine period. The school used the break to implement the **core essential strategies** and **additional mitigation measures** as recommended in the [COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#). There has been no evidence of COVID-19 transmission in the school after the mitigation strategies were put in place.

In August 2021, the Maui District Health Office investigated **26 COVID-19 cases in a public elementary school on Maui**. Working with the school administration, investigators established epidemiological links between the school cases. A total of 23 (88%) cases had **exposure outside of the school setting**. Most of the student cases were infected by household members with COVID-19. The household members with COVID-19 were primarily exposed during summer camps, at the workplace, or during activities at places of worship. The school reported 60% of staff were vaccinated; the student population is younger than 12 years old and therefore, ineligible for vaccination. Two cases reported attending school despite having COVID-19 symptoms. Schools should encourage students and staff to **stay home when they feel sick and get tested for COVID-19**. Many people do not have the classic COVID-19 symptoms of fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, or loss of taste or smell. COVID-19 symptoms can be mild such as fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion, or runny nose. Everyone should **wear a mask consistently and correctly** to prevent COVID-19 spread because people can be infectious even without symptoms. Fourteen (54%) of 26 cases were on campus during their infectious periods. The school identified approximately 56 school close contacts to the 14 cases; three (5%) of the close contacts, all students, tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. These close contacts (later COVID-19 cases) were quickly identified, notified, sent home, and given quarantine instructions by the school, which prevented further spread. There were no hospitalizations or deaths among cases. The findings from this school cluster investigation demonstrate that when **mitigation measures are implemented and enforced** COVID-19 spread can be reduced or prevented to safely facilitate in-person learning.

**Student and staff safety** are a state **priority**. If schools implement and enforce the four **core essential strategies** and **additional mitigation measures** as recommended in the [COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#), schools can safely remain open for in-person learning in a low-risk environment. **Reducing community transmission** is the most effective strategy to protect our keiki, keep schools open, and deliver critical in-person learning and services to over 200,000 students. **Vaccination of all eligible people** will reduce community transmission. Vaccination helps stop the spread of COVID-19 because it prevents symptoms and disease. Help **keep our community safe** by getting vaccinated, staying home and getting tested when feeling ill, wearing a mask in indoor public spaces, staying at least 6 feet away from others, moving activities outdoors, and avoiding crowded places and large gatherings. [#HIGotVaccinated](#)

## Introduction to the State of Hawai'i Weekly COVID-19 Cluster Report

A disease cluster refers to multiple cases of a disease occurring at one time, in one geographic location, or among people with the same or similar shared exposures. Public health officials investigate and study disease clusters because they can provide important information about how diseases are transmitted between individuals and among groups of people; information which can then be used to identify risk factors, inform official recommendations, design interventions, and implement policies to prevent, mitigate, and stop the spread of that disease in communities.

In Hawai'i, COVID-19 clusters associated with community events, social gatherings, workplaces, and other settings have helped public health officials understand the specific settings where disease transmission is most likely to occur. As our state looks to modify current restrictions on businesses and activities implemented in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Hawai'i State Department of Health is prioritizing not only investigating and analyzing local COVID-19 clusters, but also sharing current cluster information and disseminating key lessons learned to date.

It is important to note that most COVID-19 cases cannot be linked to a specific setting or cluster. Therefore, the total number of cases identified as associated with COVID-19 clusters in Hawai'i will be significantly lower than the overall total number of cases of COVID-19 identified within the State of Hawai'i. The tables below summarize COVID-19 clusters that have been identified through statewide case investigation and contact tracing efforts and are actively under investigation within the State of Hawai'i during the specified reporting week. The same cluster may be included in multiple reports from week to week if a new case has been identified within 14 days of the date the report was finalized.

## Definitions for Terms Used in this Report

Because this weekly report focuses on clusters associated with non-household exposures, the definition of a **COVID-19 cluster** employed within this report is as follows:

**Three (3)** or more confirmed or probable cases of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) linked to a particular site or event within one incubation period (14 days) *as long as those cases do not have outside exposure to each other* (i.e. they are not household members or close contacts outside the selected location).

**\*\*** This definition has been updated from two (2) or more confirmed or probable cases of SARS-CoV-2 to **three (3)** or more confirmed or probable cases of SARS-CoV-2 effective January 1, 2021. This change was made to reduce “noise” related to sporadic cases that may occur in the same setting, especially when community case rates are high, and is reflected in the county-specific tables beginning with the January 21, 2021 report. **\*\***

**Note:** Identifying cases as part of a cluster does not necessarily imply that transmission has occurred in the site or at the event associated with the cluster.

Additional definitions for terms used within this report are outlined below.

<b>Case</b>	Both confirmed and probable cases of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), including deaths.
<b>Confirmed case</b>	A case with confirmatory laboratory evidence.
<b>Probable case</b>	Refers to a case: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting clinical criteria AND epidemiologic linkage with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for SARS-CoV-2</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></li> <li>• Meeting presumptive laboratory evidence</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></li> <li>• Meeting vital records criteria with no confirmatory laboratory evidence for SARS-CoV-2.</li> </ul>
<b>Cases associated with the primary setting</b>	Refers to cases linked to a COVID-19 cluster that were directly exposed to the primary site or event.
<b>Linked cases outside the primary setting</b>	Refers to cases linked to a COVID-19 cluster that were NOT directly exposed to the primary site or event (for example, cases among household contacts of any cases associated with the primary setting).

## Exposure Setting Categories

Exposure Setting Category <sup>a</sup>	Specific Settings Included in Category <sup>b</sup>
<i>Congregate Settings</i>	
<b>Correctional Facilities</b>	Jails, prisons, detention centers, correctional treatment centers / “sober living” centers, transitional correctional facilities or homes / “halfway houses” for adults and adolescents
<b>Educational Settings</b>	Preschools, K-12, and institutes of higher education, school-based athletics, after school programs
<b>Shelters</b>	Facilities providing short or long-term sheltering and other social services for individuals and families and groups without access to permanent housing due to homelessness, disaster, emergency, violence, or other circumstances
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>	
<b>Bars &amp; Nightclubs</b>	Establishments that are principally engaged in the business of selling alcoholic beverages for onsite consumption
<b>Food Suppliers</b>	Grocery stores, other food distributors, manufacturers, warehouses, processors, farms, food pantries
<b>Restaurants</b>	Food service establishments offering either dine-in or take-out services, cafeterias, banquet facilities / private event facilities / private reception venues where food is served
<i>Occupational Settings</i>	
<b>Construction &amp; Industrial</b>	Construction and industrial settings, including residential and non-residential construction sites, landscaping companies, shipyards, non-food manufacturers, industrial warehouses, and related sales and distribution centers
<b>Other Occupational Settings</b>	Offices, retail establishments, first responders
<b>Travel, Lodging &amp; Tourism</b>	Domestic / international / interisland travel, lodging, cruise ships, other tourism
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>	
<b>Social Gatherings</b>	Parties, group gatherings, weddings, funerals, other social functions
<b>Places of Worship</b>	Religious services and other events / activities at places of worship
<p><sup>a</sup> COVID-19 clusters in long term care and other healthcare settings are summarized in the <b>State of Hawai'i Weekly COVID-19 Clusters in Healthcare Settings Report</b>. Additionally, a long-term care table is included in the Disease Outbreak Control Division COVID-19 Operations Report weekly on Wednesdays.</p>	
<p><sup>b</sup> Specific settings included in the reference table may not be exhaustive for the category.</p>	

## COVID-19 Cluster Tables

### City & County of Honolulu

#### COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting

September 16, 2021

Exposure Category	Clusters (#)	Total Cases (#)	Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)	Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
<b>Correctional Facilities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Educational Settings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Shelters</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
<i>Bars &amp; Nightclubs</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<b>Food Suppliers</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Restaurants</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<b>Construction &amp; Industrial</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Other Occupational Settings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Travel, Lodging &amp; Tourism</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
<i>Social Gatherings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Places of Worship</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Gyms</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Other</i>				
<i>Other</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

**Maui County****COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting***September 16, 2021*

<b>Exposure Category</b>	<b>Clusters (#)</b>	<b>Total Cases (#)</b>	<b>Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)</b>	<b>Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)</b>
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
<i>Correctional Facilities</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Educational Settings</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Shelters</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
<i>Bars &amp; Nightclubs</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Food Suppliers</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Restaurants</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<b>Construction &amp; Industrial</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Other Occupational Settings</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Travel, Lodging &amp; Tourism</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>24</b>
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
<i>Social Gatherings</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Places of Worship</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Gyms</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Other</i>				
<b>Other</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>0</b>

**Hawai'i County****COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting**

September 16, 2021

Exposure Category	Clusters (#)	Total Cases (#)	Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)	Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
<b>Correctional Facilities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Educational Settings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Shelters</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
<i>Bars &amp; Nightclubs</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Food Suppliers</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Restaurants</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<i>Construction &amp; Industrial</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Other Occupational Settings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Travel, Lodging &amp; Tourism</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
<i>Social Gatherings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Places of Worship</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Gyms</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Other</i>				
<i>Other</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

**Kauai County****COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting**

September 16, 2021

Exposure Category	Clusters (#)	Total Cases (#)	Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)	Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
<b>Correctional Facilities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>95</b>	94	1
<i>Educational Settings</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Shelters</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
<i>Bars &amp; Nightclubs</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Food Suppliers</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Restaurants</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<i>Construction &amp; Industrial</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Other Occupational Settings</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	11	1
<i>Travel, Lodging &amp; Tourism</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
<i>Social Gatherings</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Places of Worship</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	19	6
<i>Gyms</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Other</i>				
<i>Other</i>	0	0	0	0