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COVID-19 reinfection rate rising

HONOLULU – The Department of Health (DOH) is enhancing the [Hawai'i COVID-19 data dashboard](#) to include reinfections. The percentage of COVID-19 cases involving individuals who had a prior infection is growing over time and now accounts for about 10% of new confirmed cases.

“The data on reinfections underscores what we have been saying; that limited immunity from previous infection only lasts so long. Regardless of whether a person has had COVID-19 in the past, they should stay up to date on their vaccinations and boosters to get increased protection from severe illness and hospitalization,” said State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Kemble.

Until now the total COVID-19 case count displayed on the dashboard represented the number of unique individuals whose positive tests had been reported to DOH. A person who tested positive multiple times was counted once.

The updated total case count published on the data dashboard today includes every confirmed positive reported to DOH since the first reinfection was recorded in September 2020 as long as the second case happened at least 90-days after the first. Multiple positive tests within a 90-day period are counted only once.

“Reinfections were rare early in the pandemic. Reinfection statistics were relatively insignificant. However, the percentage of COVID-19 cases involving people who have had prior infection has increased over time. Reinfections now account for about 10% of all new COVID-19 cases in Hawai'i,” Kemble added.

There have been 10,995 reinfections dating back to September 2020 when the first reinfection was recorded. Adding the 10,995 reinfections to the 344,964 cases involving unique individuals brings the total case count to 355,959.

The 10,995 reinfections represent 3.09% of the total cases.

Going forward, reinfections will be counted in the 7-day average daily case count. This will result in higher average daily case counts than under the previous data reporting method.

For additional information on reinfections, see the [COVID-19 Reinfection Data Report](#) posted on the [COVID-19 Data Reports page](#).

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