



## Washtenaw County Health Department

### For Immediate Release

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### COVID-19 Mortality Report: 2020-2023

*Washtenaw County death rate less than half the rate for Michigan residents overall*

YPSILANTI, Mich., July 19, 2023 – Washtenaw County Health Department is releasing a [COVID-19 Mortality Report](#) on the first three years of the pandemic (March 1, 2020 - Feb 25, 2023). While the loss of local lives was significant at 642 during this time, death rates across Michigan were much higher. Together, we saved lives.

In Washtenaw County, Health Department staff, health care workers, community partners, and volunteers worked countless hours to respond to the pandemic– and community members listened to guidance to protect themselves and others. There were ongoing challenges and significant resource limitations, but our collective actions mattered and reduced deaths and disease in our community.

“We continue to mourn the hundreds of lives lost in our community due to COVID,” says Jimena Loveluck, MSW, health officer with Washtenaw County Health Department. “But we are also incredibly grateful. Our work to respond together saved lives.”

“The thousands of hours, nights, and weekends staff spent providing information and guidance, coordinating testing, contact tracing, and offering vaccination *mattered*. And – for all of us – adhering to public health guidance *mattered*. It made a difference,” continues Loveluck.

The Mortality Report reviews deaths due to COVID-19 by age and other demographics, including race. Information on deaths occurring among residents in long-term care settings and the projected number of deaths (631 additional deaths) if Washtenaw County had the same death rate as Michigan did on average are also presented. The impact of the multiple waves of illness and the availability of vaccination over these three years is evident.

“The life-saving impact of vaccination is clear, for example, when you look at the deaths that were occurring in long-term care settings in late 2020 to early 2021,” says Laura Bauman, MPH, epidemiology program manager. “When vaccination became available, these deaths dropped dramatically, and the impact of subsequent waves of illness was less severe.”

At the same time, COVID-19 hit communities of color harder, especially earlier in the pandemic. “As a community, we worked to get resources where they were most needed as quickly as possible. Working alongside our community partners and leaders has been critical and has

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helped us bring reliable information, testing, vaccines, and masks or other resources to homes, neighborhoods, and trusted community locations,” says Loveluck.

The COVID-19 mortality rate among Black/African Americans living in Washtenaw dropped from 9.5 per 10,000 in 2020 to 6.3 in 2022. The 2022 COVID death rate is 6.3 for both Black/African Americans and whites in Washtenaw County.

As a community, we lost a lot to COVID-19. Hundreds of lives were lost, and many more were impacted by serious illness, isolation, and other hardships. Still, we are grateful for the lives saved and the hundreds that we were able to protect – together.

Thank you to our entire community for your commitment to protecting public health and to working together. We are grateful.

#### **Additional COVID-19 information**

- Local [COVID-19 data](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination](#) or [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)
- [What to do](#) if you're sick or exposed to COVID-19
- [Statewide data](#)
- [National data](#)

#### **Washtenaw County Health Department**

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

Local public health information and updates are always available at [www.washtenaw.org/health](http://www.washtenaw.org/health). The Health Department also provides frequent social media updates (@wcpublichealth) and sends regular email updates, sign up at <http://bit.ly/WCHD555>.