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**Date** February 22, 2022 **Report No.** 2022-151  
**To** Mayor and Members of City Council  
**From** Brian Hutchings  
Chief Administrative Officer

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### 1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item   
Item For Consideration

**2.0 Topic** **CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 02.22.22 [Financial Impact: NONE]**

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### 3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT report 2022-151, titled CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 02.22.22 BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the staff BE DIRECTED to administer a capacity limit of Council Chambers that reflects the Provincial regulations or Fire Code regulations, whichever is the presiding legislation impacting the attendance regulations of the space.

### 4.0 Executive Summary

The City remains in a state of emergency since originally being declared on March 19, 2020. The Emergency Operations Centre has been in place since that time to respond to the ongoing state of Emergency and Provincial policy changes that may impact the City of Brantford.

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The Omicron variant resulted in a substantial spike in case counts locally, provincially, nationally, and globally; however, the provincial case count has been declining since the beginning of January.

Although Omicron is considered to produce less severe symptoms, the extreme volume of cases has resulted in an increase in hospitalizations. The volume of patients in the ICU has decreased over the last month; however, our healthcare system is still experiencing significant strain and it is anticipated to be a long recovery period.

Vaccination rates throughout the country have continued to increase as 90% (12+) of the Ontario population is now double vaccinated. Only 54% of children aged 5-11 have received their first dose of the vaccine. Additionally, only 46% of Canadians have received the booster. Vaccination rates continue to be an important metric as vaccinations are proven to reduce the severity of COVID symptoms.

The City's Emergency Operations Centre has been preparing for the reopening of the Province and has increased service delivery to reflect provincial regulations. On February 14, the Province announced changes to take effect on February 17. City Staff have taken steps increase capacity requirements at City facilities to align with social gathering limits imposed by the Province. The EOC is also actively preparing for further changes anticipated to take effect on March 01. The key changes to take effect on February 17 include:

- Removing capacity limits at Wayne Gretzky Sports Complex restaurant, fitness facilities and gyms, aquatics and recreation programs, and meeting rooms at City facilities
- Adjusting capacity limits at Farmer's Market
- Removing restrictions on non-staff individuals attending meetings in city facilities

Major headlines during the last month include:

- Ontario Moving to Next Phase of Reopening on February 17, 2022
- Ontario Expands Booster Dose Eligibility to Youth Aged 12-17
- Ontario Expanding Access to Free Rapid Tests for General Public
- Ontario to Eliminate Proof of Vaccination System on March 10, 2022

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- Canada Easing Pre-Arrival COVID-19 PCR Test Requirement for Fully Vaccinated Travelers

The current Covid-19 Provincial modeling is available in *Appendix A: Update on COVID-19 Projections*

## 5.0 Purpose and Overview

Report 2022-151 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 02.22.22 responds to recommendations outlined in Report 2020-219 COVID-19 EOC Actions and Operational Impacts to bring back ongoing updates to Council detailing the COVID-19 emergency. This report outlines:

- Emergency Operations Centre decisions and actions to date in response to the ongoing State of Emergency;
- Decisions that have been made by the Emergency Group as outlined in the COVID-19 Delegation of Authority By-law;
- Decisions that are being recommended to Council by the EOC; and
- Provincial policy changes that may impact the City of Brantford

## 6.0 Background

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic. To prevent the future spread of COVID-19, all levels of government have taken immediate emergency action. The Emergency Management Planning Committee (EMPC) first met on March 12, 2020 to coordinate the Emergency Management Program. On March 15, 2020, community partners were pulled together to launch the Unified Emergency Operations Centre. On March 17, 2020, the Ontario Government declared a state of emergency under s 7.0.1 (1) the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. The City of Brantford followed with a municipal declaration of a state of emergency on March 19, 2020. On March 20, 2020, the City activated its Emergency Operation Centre (EOC).Corporate Policy Context.

Due to the ongoing need for emergency coordination and management, Council passed a resolution on April 16, 2020 that approved an extension of the emergency declaration until the Mayor, in consultation with the EOC, determined that the emergency was over. On January 12, 2021, the Province of Ontario issued a second State of Emergency under s 7.0.1 (1) the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. On January 14, 2021 at 12:01 a.m., the Province of Ontario issued a stay-at home order requiring everyone to remain at

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home with exceptions for permitted purposes or activities, such as going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services, for exercise or for work where the work cannot be done remotely. Several emergency actions have been passed by the EOC and by Council since the declaration of the COVID-19 Emergency. Those actions and decisions are detailed in the following reports:

- Report 2020-216 COVID-19 EOC Actions and Operational Impacts
- Report 2020-234 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 04.28.20
- Report 2020-237 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 05.12.20
- Report 2020-247 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 05.26.20
- Report 2020-273 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 06.09.20
- Report 2020-282 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 06.23.20
- Report 2020-307 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 07.14.20
- Report 2020-337 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 08.04.20
- Report 2020-370 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 08.25.20
- Report 2020-403 CAO COVID-19 Emergency update 09.08.20
- Report 2020-419 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 09.22.20
- Report 2020-447 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 10.13.20
- Report 2020-483 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 10.27.20
- Report 2020-520 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 11.10.20
- Report 2020-546 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 11.24.20
- Report 2020-585 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 12.15.20
- Report 2020-585 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 12.15.20
- Report 2021-40 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 01.12.21
- Report 2021-111 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 01.26.21

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- Report 2021-135 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 02.09.21
  - Report 2021-166 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 02.23.21
  - Report 2021-254 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 03.23.21
  - Report 2021-312 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 04.27.21
  - Report 2021-407 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 05.25.21
  - Report 2021-443 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 06.22.21
  - Report 2021-535 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 08.24.21
  - Report 2021-611 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 09.28.21
  - Report 2021-679 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 10.26.21
  - Report 2021-721 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 11.23.21
  - Report 2021-780 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 12.21.21
  - Report 2022-35 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 01.25.22

## **7.0 Corporate Policy Context**

Emergency Management

Bylaw 181-2021 – a by-law to adopt the Emergency Management Program and to adopt the Emergency Response Plan

## **8.0 Input From Other Sources**

Emergency Operations Committee

## **9.0 Analysis**

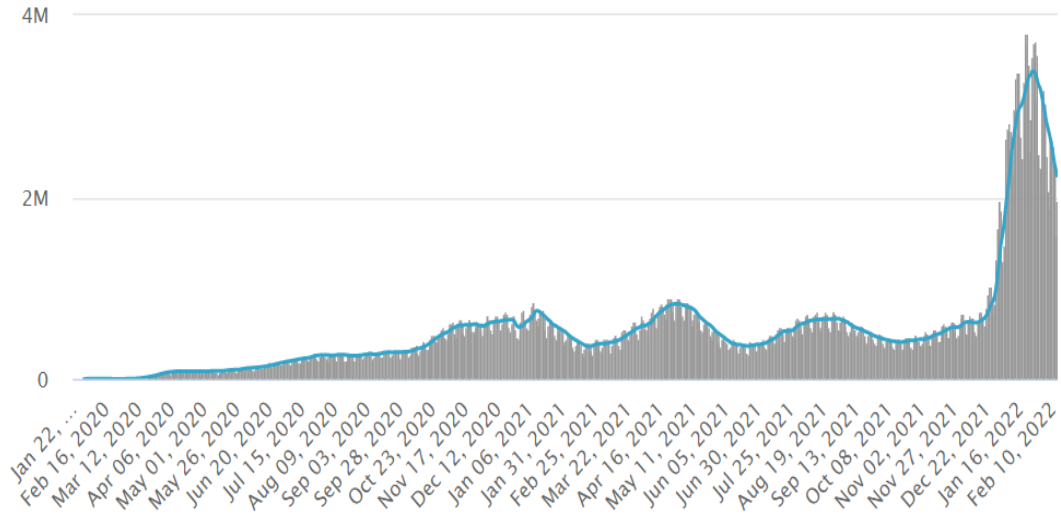
### **9.1 Covid-19 Case Counts (as of 02/14/22)**

The Omicron variant resulted in a substantial spike in case counts locally, provincially, nationally, and globally. The provincial case count has been steadily declining since the beginning of January.

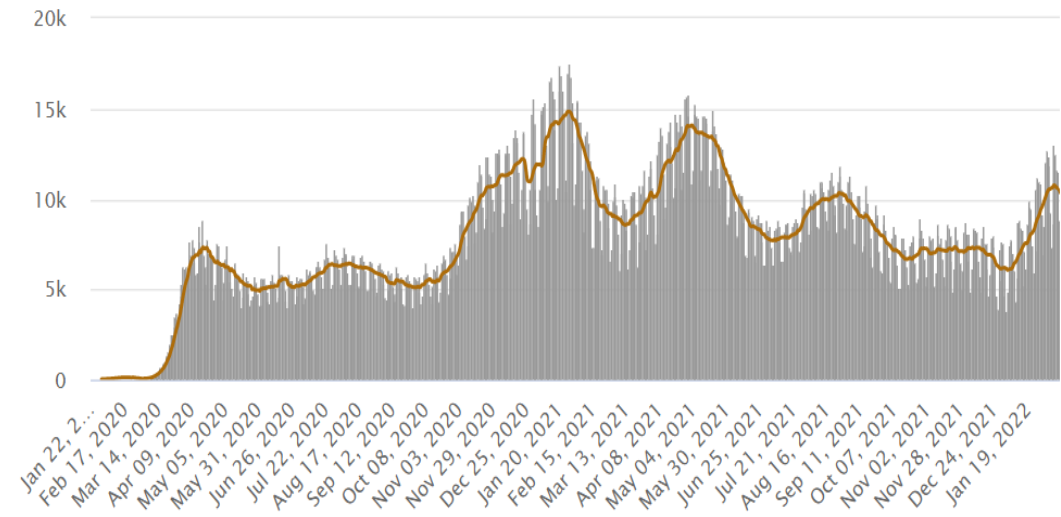
**Global Case Count**

Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered
413,708,314	5,843,333	335,483,773

Global Daily New Cases



Global Daily New Deaths



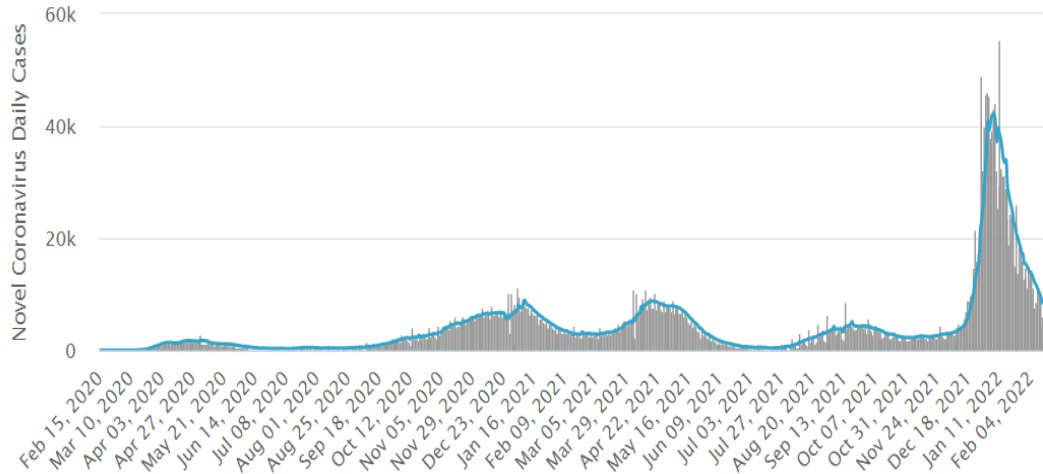
National Case Count

Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Resolved

3,199,168	35,528	3,025,452
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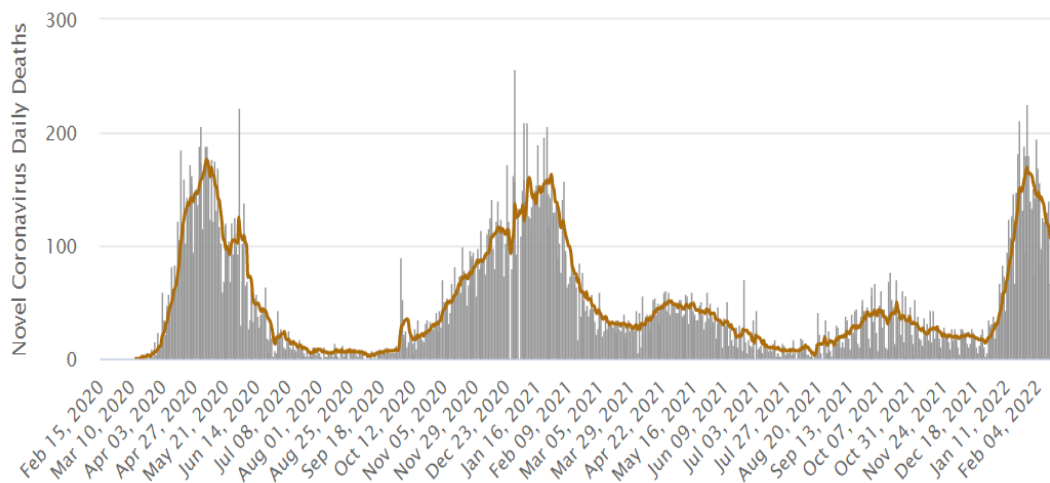
Canada ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in the world in COVID-19 case count. The national case count has been on a downward decline since early January.

### National Daily Case Count



The daily death count has been declining since the end of January. The death rate is anticipated to continue to decline in line with case counts and hospitalization rates.

### National Daily Death Count

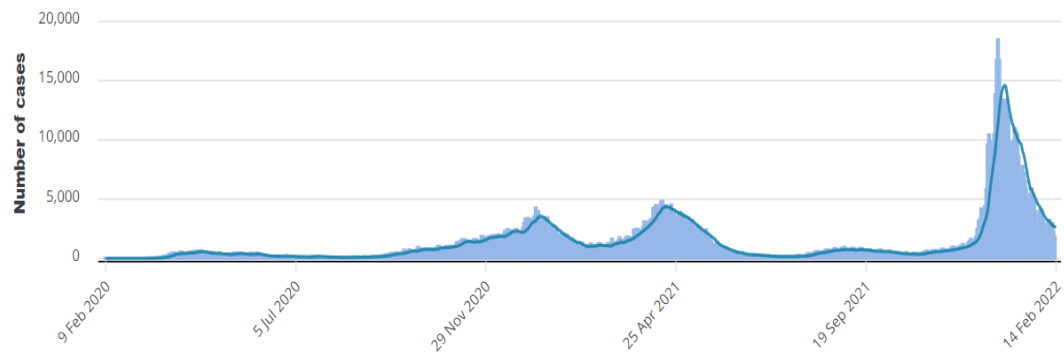


### Provincial Case Count

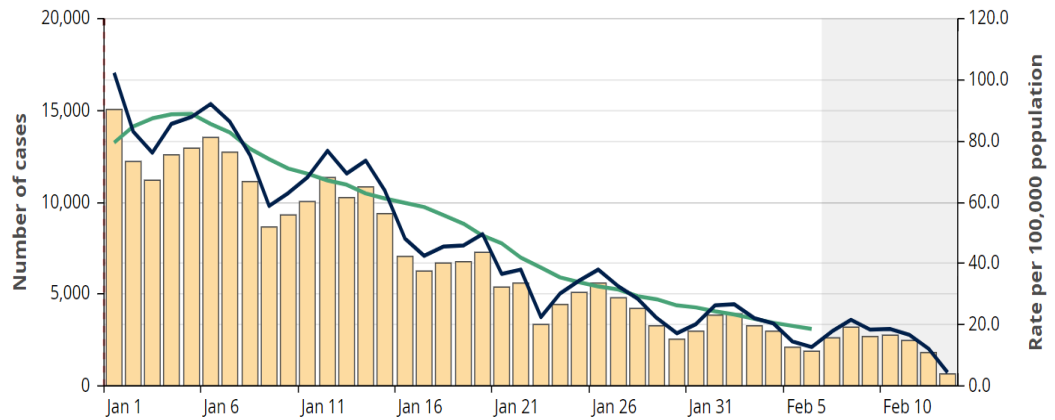
Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Resolved
1,074,485	12,101	1,036,214

The provincial case count has been declining since the beginning on January.

### Provincial Daily Case Count



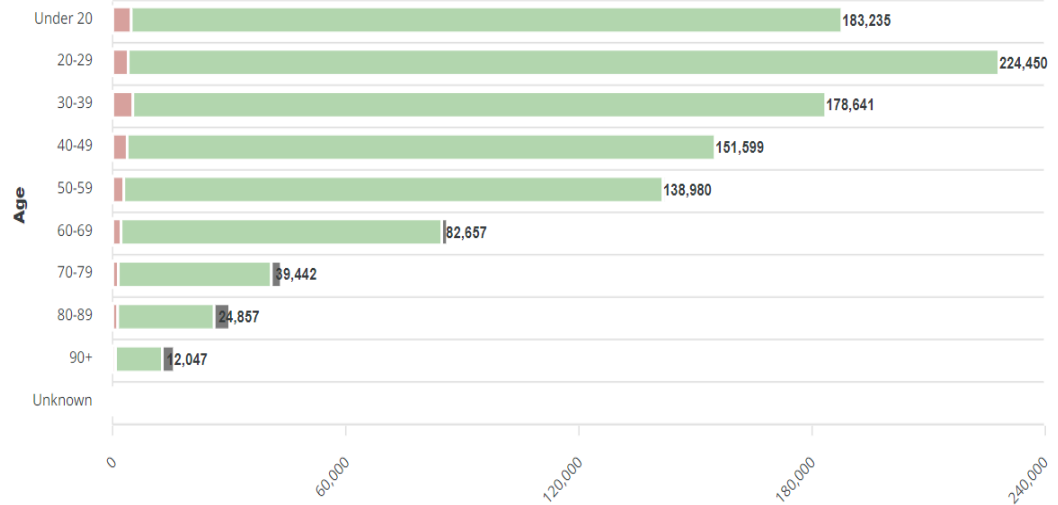
### Provincial Daily Case Count since January 01, 2022



### Provincial Case Count by Age

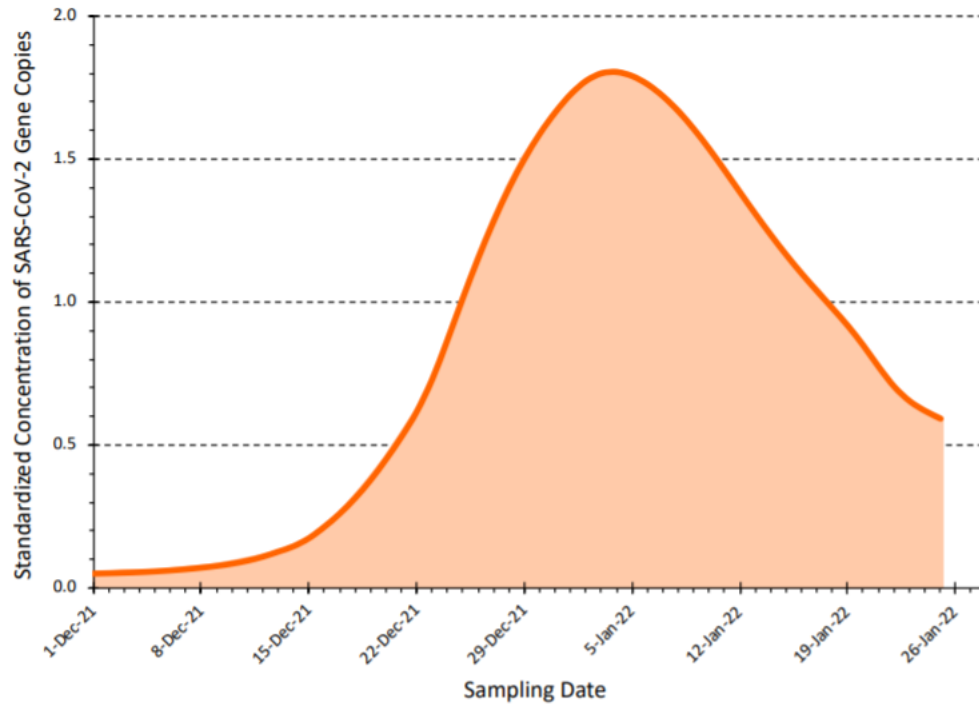
- Active
- Resolved
- Deaths



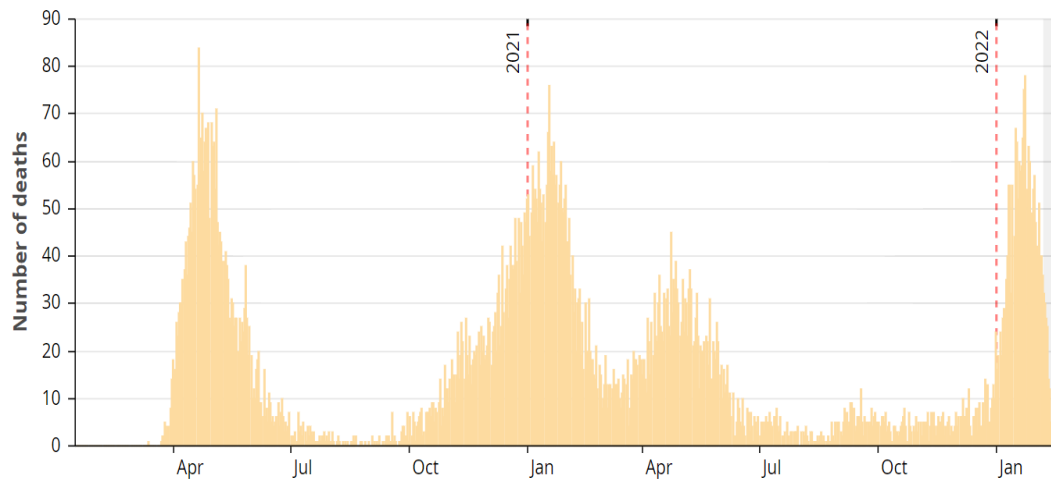


Provincial case count actual data is likely much higher than reported due to Public Health guidance to isolate with symptoms that has resulted in less testing. However, case counts are in line with Ontario’s COVID-19 wastewater signal. As part of the Canadian Water Network, City of Brantford staff have participated on the COVID-19 Wastewater Coalition to coordinate the testing of wastewater in the City of Brantford. Public Health Units across Ontario are able to use data collected from Brantford’s water treatment facility to inform public health strategies and decision making.

**Ontario’s COVID-19 Wastewater Signal:**



**Provincial Daily Death Count**



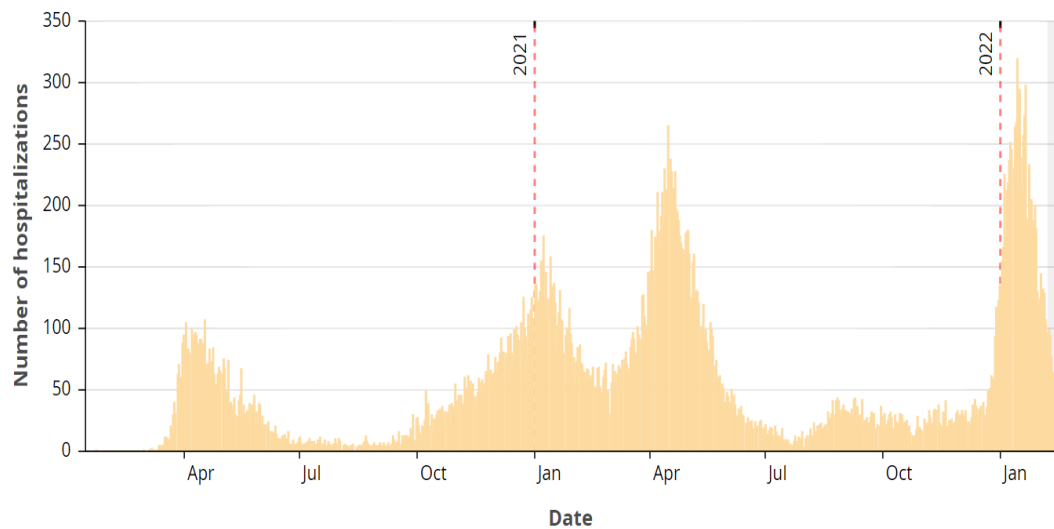
**Local Cases (as of 02/14/22)**

Total Cases	New Cases in Last 72 Hours	Total Deaths	Total Resolved
8,153 (135 active)	50	60 (22 new in the last month)	6,604

## 9.2 Hospitalization Rates (as of 02/14/22)

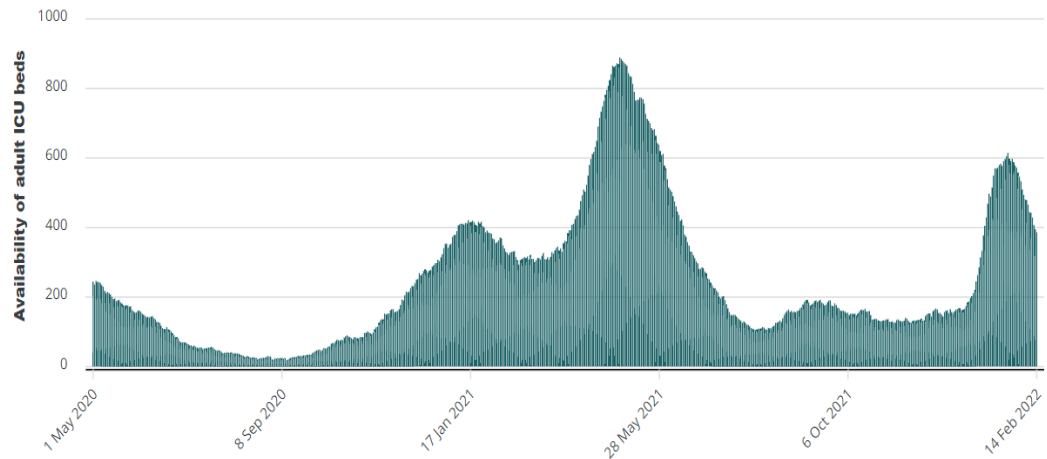
Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the healthcare system. Hospitalization rates and ICU rates are important indicators to measure to ensure that our system does not become overwhelmed. The Province of Ontario has 2,343 ICU beds. COVID-19 cases account for approximately 16% of all ICU beds. As of February 14, there are almost 600 ICU beds available across the province.

Hospitalized Cases due to COVID-19:

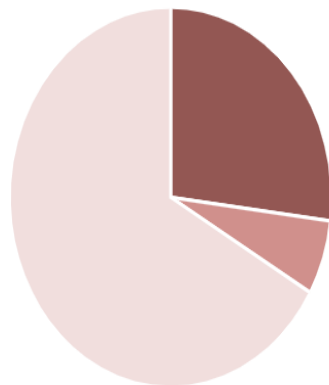


Data shows that vaccination rates are reducing the severity of Omicron symptoms. Omicron hospitalization rates have peaked; yet, ICU cases did not approach Delta Variant levels.

Ontario Adults in ICU due to COVID-19

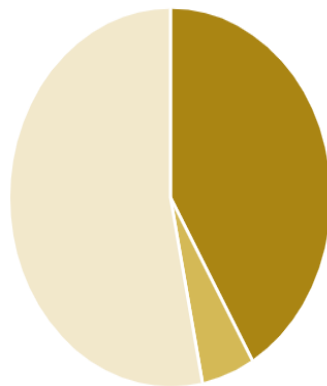


### In hospital but not the ICU



Unvaccinated cases <sup>?</sup>	356
Partially vaccinated cases <sup>?</sup>	84
Fully vaccinated cases <sup>?</sup>	879

### In ICU



Unvaccinated cases <sup>?</sup>	117
Partially vaccinated cases <sup>?</sup>	15
Fully vaccinated cases <sup>?</sup>	150

### 9.3 Vaccine Distribution (as of 02/14/22)

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84% of eligible (5+ years of age) Canadians have received two vaccination doses. Ontario is tracking on average the rest of the country with 85% of eligible residents receiving two doses. In Brant/Brantford, 84% of residents (12+ years old) have received two doses, which is below the Provincial average of 90%. In total, 371,082 vaccinations have been administered by the Brant County Health Unit (BCHU)

**People 5+ that are Double Vaccinated:**

Age	Number of people	Percentage of age group
80+	658,843	100.0%
70-79	1,122,550	98.9%
60-69	1,690,035	95.7%
50-59	1,818,745	89.1%
40-49	1,638,109	88.4%
30-39	1,772,790	87.1%
18-29	2,093,661	84.2%
12-17	858,489	89.3%
5-11	253,440	23.5%

Only 54% of children aged 5-11 have received at least one dose of the vaccine. The booster program has been performing below target, with approximately 46% of Canadians fully boosted.

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## 9.4 Local Outbreaks

There are currently 2 outbreaks in long-term care facilities. The outbreaks include:

Name of Facility	Date Outbreak Declared	Cases in Residents	Cases in Staff
Community Living Brant – Beaver Cres.	February 7, 2022	1	2
Briarwood Gardens Retirement Home	January 28, 2022	22	3

There is currently 1 outbreak at the hospital:

Name of Facility	Date Outbreak Declared	Cases in Residents	Cases in Staff
Unit B5, BGH	January 14, 2022	11	0

## 9.5 Operational Decisions of the Emergency Operations Centre

The EOC has continued to meet regularly to review the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, as well as conducting additional meetings to review and plan accordingly to the provincial response framework. Areas of focus include operations, health and safety of staff and the public, and communications needs. Since the last reporting period, the EOC took the following action:

### February 02:

- EOC approves to resume issuance of permits at Civic Centre
- EOC approves the following events:
  - Skating parties – February 4, 11, 18, 25 with up to 25 participants booked in 30 minute increments
  - Romance in the Square – Valentine’s Day

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- Family Fun Day with Harmony Squirrel on February 19, 10-noon
  - Beckett Adult Leisure Centre events
  - Family Day Skating 10am-10pm
  - EOC approves the redeployment of a staff member to the Brantford General Hospital to assist with the pandemic

**February 16:**

- EOC approves to start planning for a full in-person Canada Day event (with adherence to public health guidelines)
- EOC approves to proceed with Annual Volunteer Recognition Event on April 27 at the Sanderson Centre
- EOC approves to resume in person interior building and licensing inspections for occupied dwellings
- EOC endorses to align attendance at Council and Committee meetings to reflect current Provincial regulations
- EOC approves to open marriage licenses to all eligible applicants
- EOC lifts capacity limits at City facilities, including: Wayne Gretzky Sports Complex restaurant, fitness facilities and gyms, aquatics and recreation programs, and meeting rooms
- EOC adjusts capacity limits at Farmer's Market to align with Provincial regulations
- EOC removes restrictions on non-staff individuals attending meetings in City facilities

All other decisions and actions taken by the EOC are recorded and outlined in *Appendix B: Emergency Management and Operation Centre COVID-19 Response and Actions*.

In future, Council will be informed of decisions made by the Emergency Group by way of resolution. Additionally, the CAO will continue to report on these decisions in regular, on-going reports to Council.

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## 9.6 Decisions Before Council

### 9.6.1 Council and its Committee Operations

On January 25, 2022, Council adopted the following:

**13.1 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 01.25.22 [Financial Impact: NONE] – I NEED TO CONFIRM The RIGHT INFO HERE. City Net is DOWN**

- A. THAT report 2022-35, titled CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 01.25.22 BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the Clerk BE DIRECTED to resume Council and its Committee Hybrid Operation Commencement – Phased Approach (Phase One) effective February 1 with a 50% attendance capacity, to be reviewed at the February 22 City Council Meeting

In relation to Clause B, Clerk's Services staff proposed and was endorsed at the February 16<sup>th</sup> EOC meeting to adjust the capacity limit of Council Chambers reflect the Provincial regulations or Fire Code regulations, whichever is the presiding legislation impacting the attendance regulations of the space.

## 9.7 Provincial Policy Impacts

### 9.7.1 Ontario Moving to Next Phase of Reopening on February 17, 2022

With key public health and health system indicators continuing to improve, the Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, is cautiously and gradually easing public health measures sooner, with the next phase of measures being eased on February 17, 2022 at 12:01 a.m.

#### **Effective February 17, 2022**

Ontario will further ease public health measures, including, but not limited to:

- Increasing social gathering limits to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors



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- Increasing organized public event limits to 50 people indoors, with no limit outdoors
  - Removing capacity limits in the following indoor public settings where proof of vaccination is required, including but not limited to:
    - Restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments without dance facilities
    - Non-spectator areas of sports and recreational fitness facilities, including gyms
    - Cinemas
    - Meeting and event spaces, including conference centres or convention centres
    - Casinos, bingo halls and other gaming establishments
    - Indoor areas of settings that choose to opt-in to proof of vaccination requirements.
  - Allowing 50 per cent of the usual seating capacity at sports arenas
  - Allowing 50 percent of the usual seating capacity for concert venues and theatres
  - Increasing indoor capacity limits to 25 per cent in the remaining higher-risk settings where proof of vaccination is required, including nightclubs, restaurants where there is dancing, as well as bathhouses and sex clubs
  - Increasing capacity limits for indoor weddings, funerals or religious services, rites, or ceremonies to the number of people who can maintain two metres physical distance. Capacity limits are removed if the location opts-in to use proof of vaccination or if the service, rite, or ceremony is occurring outdoors.

Capacity limits in other indoor public settings, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, retail and shopping malls, will be maintained at, or increased to, the number of people who can maintain two metres physical distance.

### **9.7.2 Ontario Expands booster Dose Eligibility to youth aged 12-17**

As of 8:00 a.m. on Friday, February 18, 2022, Ontario is expanding booster dose eligibility to youth aged 12 to 17. Appointments can be booked through the provincial booking system and the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre, as well as at select pharmacies administering the Pfizer vaccine. Appointments will be booked for approximately six months (168 days) after a second dose. Individuals must be at least 12 years old at the time of appointment.

### **9.7.3 Ontario Expanding Access to Free Rapid Tests for General Public**

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To further support the province's cautious easing of public health measures, the Ontario government is expanding access to free rapid testing kits to the general public for at-home use. As a result of the province's direct procurement, Ontario will be distributing 5 million rapid tests each week for eight weeks through pharmacy and grocery locations across the province, as well as 500,000 each week through community partners in vulnerable communities. In total, the province is making 44 million rapid tests available to the public for free over the coming weeks.

#### **9.7.4 Ontario to Eliminate Proof of Vaccination System on March 1, 2022**

Remaining capacity limits are scheduled to be removed in all indoor settings on March 01, 2022 and the Provincial government will no longer require people to show proof of vaccination to enter non-essential businesses. Businesses may still choose to require proof of vaccination.

Masking rules remain will remain in effect until future notice.

#### **9.7.5 Canada Easing Pre-Arrival COVID-19 PCR Test Requirement for Fully Vaccinated Travelers**

Canada will eliminate its pre-arrival COVID-19 PCR test requirements for fully vaccinated travelers at the end of the month, officials say.

As of Feb. 28, a negative rapid antigen or PCR test results will be accepted to meet entry requirements. These tests will need to be administered by a laboratory or health care entity, meaning doing a test at home is not acceptable.

Only those randomly selected for a PCR test at the border will have to take one but will not have to quarantine while waiting for results.

The government will also be lifting restrictions for children under 12 who are not fully vaccinated and travelling with fully vaccinated adults, meaning they will no longer need to wait before going to school or daycare.

Unvaccinated travelers will continue to be tested on arrival.

## **10.0 Financial Implications**

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Financial implications associated with COVID-19 continue to be monitored and tracked by staff.

## 11.0 Conclusion

The EOC continues to monitor the pandemic closely and respond accordingly, keeping the safety and wellbeing of residents at the forefront.

In response to a downward trend in COVID-19 cases, the Province is following a gradual multi-phased reopening plan that is currently tracking ahead of schedule.

The EOC is proactively preparing for the gradual reopening of City facilities to full capacity to align with Provincial regulations on March 01. City staff remain cautiously optimistic that we could experience a full delivery of services that hasn't been offered since March 2020. Part-time employees play an important role in the delivery of many of our City services and it is likely that short term delays will occur as we rebuild our staffing compliment to align with the Provincial reopening plan. The City has begun planning for in person Canada Day celebrations, which could be our first significant City event with lifted restrictions.

Although there is optimism as services resume, there is still a lingering reality that our healthcare system is overwhelmed and it will be many months before the system normalizes. The City will continue to take necessary precautions and safeguards to ensure the safety of our staff during this transition period.

Covid fatigue has had a significant impact on the mental health of the entire Brantford community and there is still a great amount of work to fully recover from the impact of the last two years.



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Brian Hutchings, CAO

Prepared By:

Steve Babcock - Manager, Corporate Initiatives

Attachments (if applicable)

*Appendix A: Update on COVID-19 Projections*

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*Appendix B: Emergency Management and Operations Centre COVID-19  
Response and Actions*

Copy to:

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required  yes  no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk  yes  no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council?  yes  no