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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wadesboro.

## 2,414 Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County

As of Monday, March 29 the Anson County Health Department posted that Anson County had 2,414 reported cases of COVID-19. 19 of those cases were active and 56 deaths.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) reported statewide as of Monday, March 29 there were 1,372 new cases of COVID-19, with 12,085 deaths and 873 hospitalized.

Statewide, as of Monday, March 1 there were 862,170 cases of COVID-19, 11,254 deaths, 10,291,482 tests and 1,219 hospitalized. February 1: 761,302 cases, 9,342 deaths, 8,908,258 tests, 2,781 hospitalized. January 4: 570,111 cases, 6,941 deaths, 7,119,201 tests, 3,192 hospitalized. December 7: 404,032 cases, 5,605 deaths, 5,678,794 tests, 2,373 hospitalized. November 2: 278,028 cases, 4,390 deaths, 4,116,019 tests, 1,146 hospitalized. October 5: 219,754 cases, 3,637 deaths, 3,188,371 tests, 971 hospitalized.

**Recent history in Anson County:** March 31, 2020: 1 case; April 28 - 23 cases (no deaths); May 26: 62 cases (1 death); June 22: 107 cases (2 deaths); July 27: 285 cases (2 deaths); August 31: 440 cases (4 deaths); September 28: 605 cases (4 deaths); October 26: 720 cases (9 deaths); November 30: 937 cases (14 deaths); December 31: 1,444 cases; (28 deaths); January 25: 1,957 cases (42 deaths); February 22: 2,258 (53 deaths); March 1: 2,298 cases (53 deaths); March 8: 2,342 cases (54 deaths); March 15: 2,388 cases (54 deaths); March 22: 2,404 (56 deaths).

Please note that for more information regarding county/state statistics, refer to [www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov).

## Robin Sage Exercise Has Begun

*This is a release from the US Army:* This month, Special Forces candidates will participate in the Robin Sage training exercise, held within multiple North Carolina counties, including Anson, as the final test of their Special Forces Qualification Course training.

Between March 27 through April 11, students will participate in this exercise before graduating the course and moving on to their first assignments in the Army's Special Forces community. Robin Sage is a two-week culmination exercise. The participants are students at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, based out of Fort Bragg.

The exercise's notional country of Pineland encompasses Alamance, Anson, Cabarrus, Chatham, Cumberland, Davidson, Davie, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rowan, Scotland, Stanly, Union and Wake counties. Throughout the exercise, military and civilian support personnel, as well as community volunteers who serve as auxiliary, will participate in and/or provide support during each of these exercises. Military service members from units across Fort Bragg will also support the exercise. These military members act as realistic opposing forces and guerilla freedom fighters, also known as Pineland's resistance movement. These troops play a critical role in the training exercise. To add realism of the exercise, civilian volunteers throughout the state act as role-players. Participation by these volunteers is crucial to the success of this training, and past trainees attest to the realism they add to the exercise.

All Robin Sage movements and events have been coordinated with public safety officials throughout and within the towns and counties hosting the training. Residents may hear blank gunfire and see occasional flares. Controls are in place to ensure there is no risk to persons or property. Residents with concerns should contact local law enforcement officials, who will immediately contact exercise control officials.

For the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, safety is always the command's top priority during all training events. The following measures have been implemented:

- Formal written notification to the chiefs of law enforcement agencies in the affected counties, with a follow-up visit from a unit representative.
- All civilian and non-student military participants are briefed on procedures to follow if there is contact with law enforcement officials.
- Students will only wear civilian clothes if the situation warrants, as determined by the instructors, and will wear a distinctive brown armband during these instances.
- Training areas and vehicles used during exercises are clearly labeled.

Robin Sage is the U.S. military's premiere unconventional warfare exercise and the final test of over a year's worth of training for aspiring Special Forces Soldiers. Candidates are placed in an environment of political instability characterized by armed conflict, forcing Soldiers to analyze and solve problems to meet the challenges of this "real-world" training.

We appreciate the support and consideration the citizens of North Carolina extend to the Soldiers participating in the exercise and thank them for their understanding of any inconveniences the training may cause. Questions concerning the exercise should be referred to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Public Affairs Office at (910) 396-9394, or by email at [pao\\_swcs@socom.mil](mailto:pao_swcs@socom.mil).

In the event of an emergency, please contact your local law enforcement agency.

## Annual Easter Egg Hunt at BRLC

Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center (BRLC) is hosting their annual Easter Egg Hunt on Good Friday, April 2, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. All children are invited to bring your Easter basket or pail and enjoy fun activities, food, great prizes for ages 2 to 15 years. Please wear your Easter bonnets if you want to.

BRLC volunteer Teskesha Hammond and other supportive volunteers will host event. Photos will be a part of the activities.

For more information on event or sponsors wanting to make contributions, please call the center at 704-826-8737 after 10:00 a.m. daily.

BRLC is located at 13349 Highway 742 North in Burnsville, across from the Fire Department. The telephone number is 704-826-8737.

For more information visit [www.burnsvilleelc.org](http://www.burnsvilleelc.org).



## Timothy Marshall, Jr. Awarded Army Commendation Medal

*This is a release from the Anson High School JROTC Program:* Recently, our former Bearcat Battalion Executive Officer Cadet Timothy Marshall Jr. was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for competing in and winning the Brigade's Soldier of the Quarter Board at Fort Benning, Georgia. This is a high pressure board conducted by the Army's Highest Senior Non Commissioned Officers.

The board evaluates Soldiers on all aspects of military service. Leadership, Military bearing, technical and tactical proficiency in occupational skills, knowledge of uniform wear and appearance, weapons qualifications, drill and ceremony, physical fitness, first aid, current events, history and many other topics are evaluated. Only highly qualified Soldiers who are recommended by their unit leadership can compete. Each unit sends their very best Soldiers to compete in this competition.

PFC Marshall competed against all these other Soldiers and won 1st Place bringing the title of Soldier of the Quarter back to his own unit and qualifying him to compete in the Soldier of the Year Board.

The citation reads, "For exceptional meritorious achievement while competing for the brigade Soldier of the Quarter, Private First Class Marshall's hard work, dedication to duty, professionalism, and selfless service greatly contributed to the successful accomplishment of the unit's mission. His actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of the military service and reflect distinct credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army."

The Bearcat Battalion congratulates him on a job well done and wishes him luck on future boards.

## Anson's Unemployment Rate Rose to 7.7% in January

Anson County's unemployment rate for January was 7.7%. In December it was 7.1%. In November the rate was 7.2%. The October rate was 7.2%, the September rate was 8.5%, the August rate was 8%, the July rate was 10%, the June rate was 7.9%, May's rate was 10.1% and April's rate was 8.2%. In March 2020 the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%.

Statewide the January and December unemployment rates were 6%. In November and October the rate was 6.1%. In September the rate was 7%. In August the rate was 6.8%. In July the unemployment rate was 8.9%.

Anson's total labor force in January was 10,576. Of that number 9,764 were employed and 812 were unemployed. In December the total labor force was 10,718, with 9,956 employed and 762 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in 62 of North Carolina's counties in January, increased in 25, and remained unchanged in 13. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 11.4 percent while Orange County had the lowest at 4.3 percent. Thirteen of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases, one increased, and one remained unchanged. Among the metro areas, Fayetteville had the highest rate at 8.2 percent while Durham-Chapel Hill had the lowest at 4.9 percent. The January not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 6.0 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in 99 counties and decreased in one. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases over the year.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in January by 35,585 to 4,674,598, while those unemployed decreased by 10,464 to 296,669. Since January 2020, the number of workers employed statewide decreased 212,718, while those unemployed increased 111,710.

## Accelerated Timeline for Vaccination Eligibility in NC

### State launches public-private partnership on vaccine equity

Governor Roy Cooper and North Carolina Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D., announced an accelerated timeline for moving to Groups 4 and 5 for vaccine eligibility with the rest of Group 4 eligible on March 31st and all adults eligible beginning April 7th. The move will allow the state and vaccine providers to continue to get vaccines into arms quickly and continue to reach underserved and historically marginalized populations. A new public private partnership, Healthier Together: Health Equity Action Network, will enhance the state's work to deliver equitable access to vaccines, and DHHS released a new biweekly equity data report to provide another avenue for transparency.

"I'm grateful for North Carolinians who are taking this seriously and getting the shot when it's their time and I'm encouraged that North Carolina will be able to open eligibility to all adults well ahead of the President's May 1 goal," said Governor Cooper.

Beginning on March 31, additional essential workers and people living in other congregate settings such as student dormitories will be eligible for vaccination. Essential workers include frontline workers who do not have to be in person for work and those in a range of sectors such as construction, energy, financial services, public works and others as categorized by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. All North Carolinian adults will be eligible to be vaccinated beginning on April 7.

The accelerated timeline will allow the state to double down on its "fast and fair" approach to getting shots into arms. Healthier Together, a new public private partnership with the NC Counts Coalition, will help increase the number of individuals from historically marginalized populations that receive COVID-19 vaccinations and provide a foundation for a longer-term framework for health equity.

Healthier Together will implement strategies to increase access to vaccines to historically marginalized populations by conducting outreach and education efforts, coordinating local vaccine events at trusted and accessible locations, helping people schedule and get to vaccine appointments, providing on-site translation services, and helping ensure people get to second dose appointments.

"Our work will support the state's ongoing priority to maximize the speed and efficiency of North Carolina's COVID-19 vaccine distribution while adhering to its commitment to equity," said Stacey Carless, Executive Director of the NC Counts Coalition. "Through Healthier Together, we will begin working with the state to address and dismantle systemic and structural barriers to healthier equity."

As part of this initiative, Healthier Together will provide grants to community-based organizations to do this work and hire regional health equity teams to support community-based organizations in their outreach and education efforts, help match vaccine providers with community-based organizations, and work with DHHS to ensure that communities have the vaccine supply, outreach, and transportation resources they need to get people vaccinated. The program is funded by federal COVID-19 dollars.

"Healthier Together is another embodiment of our commitment to equity," said Secretary Cohen. "It brings together the expertise and relationships of trusted community-based organizations with the policy tools and resources of state government to create a new partnership model to address vaccine equity."

The state's experience with the federally-supported site in Greensboro demonstrates that the principles guiding Healthier Together produce results. NCDHHS has partnered with grassroots, nonprofit, and community organizations on the ground to lead on outreach and facilitate appointments. The Department set aside half of all appointments for these trusted partners to schedule. To date, 22 percent of vaccinations at the Greensboro Community Vaccination Center have gone to Black/African American populations and 14 percent have gone to Hispanic/Latinx populations.

Throughout the pandemic, NCDHHS has relied upon data transparency, with a focus on disaggregating data by race and ethnicity, to keep itself and its partners accountable and to drive inform needed actions. A new report expands upon this work. Promoting COVID-19 Vaccine Equity in North Carolina (available at [governor.nc.gov](http://governor.nc.gov)) reports the share of vaccinations in the past week going to Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and American Indian or Alaskan Native populations as well as key metrics for earning trust, embedding equity in vaccine operations, and promoting accountability through data transparency. The report also highlights best practices to promote equitable access to vaccinations. It will be updated every two weeks.

North Carolina has been recognized nationally for its work to get COVID-19 vaccines to historically marginalized populations. North Carolina was named the only state to collect and publicly report race and ethnicity data for nearly 100% of vaccinations. According to the CDC, two-thirds of those vaccinated in North Carolina between December 14, 2020 and March 1, 2021 were from "highly" or "moderately" vulnerable communities, ranking the state in the top ten for equitable vaccine coverage. North Carolina was also featured in Bloomberg News for its data-driven approach to reducing disparities in vaccination rates.

For accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines, visit [YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov](http://YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov).

## Anson Board of Commissioners Meets April 6

The next regular meeting of the Anson County Board of Commissioners is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6 at 6 p.m.

The meetings take place in the Board Room, Suite 209, of the Anson Government Center which is located at 101 South Greene Street in uptown Wadesboro.

To schedule an appearance at a board meeting, please sign up prior to the meeting. Information is available at 704-994-3201.

The Commissioners' board meetings are live streamed on their YouTube channel. Also, the videos are archived so they can be viewed at any time. Visit [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) and search for Anson County Commissioners.

## Free Groceries for Families in Need April 6

For families in need, free groceries will be available. The Anson and East Union Missional Network, Anson Crisis Assistance Second Harvest Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry will be held on Tuesday, April 6 at Peachland United Methodist Church, 131 South Clinton Avenue in Peachland. Please arrive and register between 8 and 10 a.m. The food distribution begins upon the truck arrival, between 9 to 9:30 a.m.

- Be sure to bring your own bags, baskets, boxes or carts to carry your food.
- Arrive between 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. to be sure you can receive food.
- If it is raining the day of or before the delivery, contact Anson Crisis Ministry for a recorded message to know if it is cancelled: 704-694-2445.
- You can only pick up food for yourself and one other registered household.

Interested in volunteering for the Mobile Food Pantry? Email: [tschumpert@wncumc.net](mailto:tschumpert@wncumc.net).

The goal of the Mobile Food Pantry is to feed the hungry and serve those in need.

If you are in need before or after the distribution of food date, please contact Anson Crisis Ministry at (704) 694-2445 or Union County Crisis Assistance at (704) 225-0440.

## Easter Egg Drive-Thru in Ansonville Saturday

Ansonville will have an Easter Egg Drive-Thru this Saturday, April 3 at 12 noon. All are invited to bring your children, and goodie bags will be given out until they are gone. You will not have to get out of your car.

This event will take place at the former Ansonville Historical Society Museum, located beside Ansonville School.