

This copy is for your personal non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies of Toronto Star content for distribution to colleagues, clients or customers, or inquire about permissions/licensing, please go to: [www.TorontoStarReprints.com](http://www.TorontoStarReprints.com)

**HAMILTON REGION**

# Pandemic-high 301 new COVID cases in Hamilton on Wednesday

By **Joanna Frketich** Spectator Reporter

Wed., April 21, 2021 | ⌚ 4 min. read

🕒 Article was updated 11 hrs ago

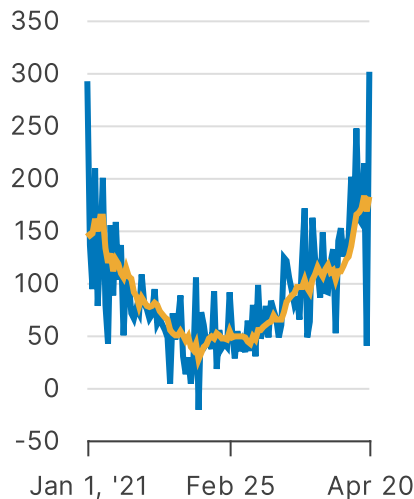
[Hamilton](#) reported more than 300 new [COVID](#) infections in a single day for the first time in the [pandemic](#).

A record [301 infections](#) were tallied Wednesday – smashing the former single-day high of 247 reported [April 16](#).

# New COVID cases in Hamilton for 2021

As of April 21 at 1:15 p.m.

New cases      Seven day average



Cases reported on Jan. 1 represent two days' worth of data because public health did not report data for the day prior. Cases reported on Feb. 2 are under-representative of the true case count due to a lab delay

SOURCE: HAMILTON PUBLIC HEALTH

SPECTATOR GRAPHIC/THE STAR

The third wave's record well surpasses the peak of the second wave, which saw single-day highs of roughly 200 cases.

The third wave is not expected to [peak](#) until around May 1 in Hamilton despite a number of key metrics already overtaking the height of the second wave. Modelling done for the city by [Scarsin Forecasting](#) predicts cases will continue to climb for roughly 10 more days.

Hamilton is on track for the worst-case scenario predicted by Scarsin of roughly 230 cases a day at the peak. Two better-case scenarios are now beyond reach. The modelling predicts Hamilton will be in [lockdown](#) until the end of June.

The seven-day average of new infections is 174 — the rolling average is considered a more reliable marker of where cases are at than the daily counts that can have wild fluctuations, such as 40 new cases reported Tuesday and 301 on Wednesday.

Fast-spreading variants account for an increasing number of Hamilton's COVID cases with recent [rolling averages](#) in April ranging between 65 per cent to 78 per cent depending on the seven-day period. It translates to 2,052 presumed variant cases. All three variants have been confirmed in Hamilton — B.1.1.7, which originated in the United Kingdom, P.1., first found in Brazil, and B. 1.351, from South Africa.

"I can not underscore enough just how serious a situation we are in," Hamilton's medical officer of health, Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, said Monday. "We're seeing it with the number of cases we have, we're seeing in terms of the age groups who are being affected."

An update to Hamilton's board of health Monday showed the vast majority of new cases are forecast to be among those age 20 to 59 with ages 0 to 19 being the second most infected group.

Hospitalizations have seen a dramatic shift with those under the age of 70 now making up roughly half of patients compared to fewer than one-third in the second wave.

Seniors age 80 and above are the only age group to see a drop in hospitalizations and now make up about 25 per cent of COVID patients compared to 45 per cent in the second wave.

"The vaccination program in those who are older ... has worked, but it means the transmission that's continuing to go on is happening in our younger age groups," said Richardson. "With this being a more infectious variant, it's spreading faster and faster and affecting more and more people."

Those under the age of 60 account for roughly 30 per cent of hospital cases, which is about double the second wave.

Hamilton hospitals were caring for 139 COVID patients as of Wednesday.

"We are seeing those people who are affected increasingly end up in our hospitals, increasingly end up in our ICUs and it's very, very worrisome," said Richardson. "When we've gotten to the state where we are relying on our colleagues across the country to come and help us in our ICUs ... it shows just how serious a situation we are in."

Hamilton had 1,645 active cases Wednesday, which is close to the record of 1,714 set at the height of the first wave when public health could no longer keep up with contact tracing.

The city reported one new COVID death in a senior age 80 and over. Of the city's 349 COVID deaths, more than two-thirds have been in this age group.

"I know there is a lot of challenge with COVID fatigue," said Richardson. "I'm very much encouraging people to continue to follow public health measures ... those will bring those numbers down. By this I mean staying home except for the most essential reasons."

Hamilton has 43 ongoing outbreaks as of Wednesday. Board of health heard that roughly 60 per cent of outbreaks are tied to fast-spreading variants.

New outbreaks were declared Tuesday at McDonald's at 970 Upper Wentworth St. after two staff tested positive, on the west Mountain at supportive housing Laurier Place with two residents infected and at St. Vincent de Paul Children's Centre with cases in one child and one staff. An outbreak was declared Monday at Pioneer Balloon Canada in east Hamilton after three staff tested positive.

A large workplace outbreak investigated by the Ministry of Labour was declared over Tuesday at [Connon Nurseries](#) in Waterdown, where 30 staff tested positive since March 29. Other outbreaks declared over include Hatts Off Girls' Country Home in Dundas, Turtle Jack's in Winona and TD Canada Trust Branch 237.

"It is critical people reduce their mobility, reduce the amounts of contacts you are having, ensure that whenever you are outside and anywhere near others that you are wearing masks and not going out at all if you are sick," said Richardson. "Really what we want to see is that return to the streets looking like what they looked like last April."



**Joanna Frketich** is a Hamilton-based reporter covering health for *The Spectator*. Reach her via email: [jfrketich@thespec.com](mailto:jfrketich@thespec.com)

## Read more about: [Global Health](#)

### More from The Spec & Partners

Copyright owned or licensed by Toronto Star Newspapers Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution of this content is expressly prohibited without the prior written consent of Toronto Star Newspapers Limited and/or its licensors. To order copies of Toronto Star articles, please go to: [www.TorontoStarReprints.com](http://www.TorontoStarReprints.com)