



## COVID-19 Situation Update for Ashe County

January 8, 2021

*This document is intended to provide a regular update on the local response to COVID-19 in our communities and timely, trended data related to COVID-19. This report will be published on Fridays.*

“This week we are excited to launch our COVID-19 interest form for anyone who would like to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. We are hopeful this will help us organize and coordinate our efforts to distribute the vaccine according to the outlined phases. We encourage everyone to be patient with us as we work through the phases and distribute the vaccine to those who are eligible within the current phase. Everyone who wants a vaccine will be able to get it. There is a spot for you when it’s your turn,” stated Jennifer Greene, Health Director, AppHealthCare.

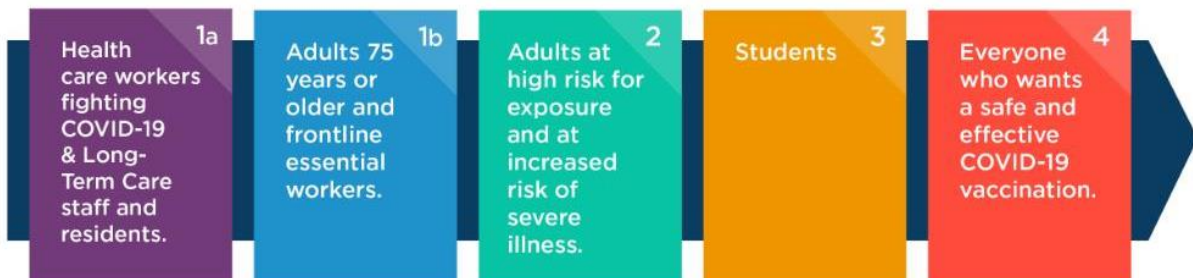


### Vaccinating Makes Everyone Safer - COVID-19 Vaccine Update

#### What phase are we in for Ashe County?

We plan to complete our vaccine administration for phase 1a this week at long term care facilities and group homes. Many facilities have been covered with the federal pharmacy program, but some were not. Those facility staff and residents are at high risk and are a priority for us, and there are some more logistics to consider that we have worked through prior to arriving at these facilities. We will still offer vaccine to those who qualify in phase 1a even as we move into the next phase.

We anticipate moving into phase 1b group 1 the week of January 11th for those who are 75 years or older. We will be following the state’s outlined phases and administering vaccines to those who qualify within the current phase.



### How many doses of vaccine do we have?

For Ashe County, we received our first shipment of 300 doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on December 21st. The following week we received 200 doses of Moderna vaccine. We have received 100 doses of Moderna vaccine this week. We have administered 298 vaccines as of January 7, 2021. We anticipate we will receive 400 doses of Moderna vaccine next week.

### Interested in Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine?

We have launched a COVID-19 vaccine interest form for anyone interested in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Anyone can fill out the form regardless of which phase they will fit into. You can find the form on our website [here](#).

### Want to Volunteer for a COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic?

If you are interested in volunteering your time to help with COVID-19 vaccine clinics in Alleghany, Ashe or Watauga County, please complete [this form](#).

The vaccine will be offered **free of charge to everyone** whether or not you have health insurance. To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit our website [here](#) or NC DHHS's website [here](#).

## Key Points

### Case Updates

For the week of December 27 - January 2 (graphs below), there was a slight increase for both new cases and the number of individuals in quarantine.

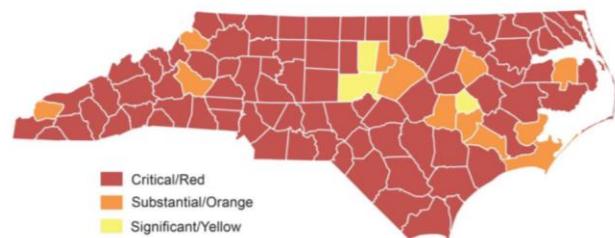
### Hospitalizations

We continue to monitor hospitalizations very closely because it is important we have hospital capacity for those who may need hospital care for things like a heart attack, stroke, car accident, etc.

### NC DHHS County Alert System Notes Critical Community Spread for Ashe County

In the latest update, Ashe County is **RED** which notes critical community spread. This system outlines actions we can take to lessen the impact and spread in our community. You can read more about the [County Alert System on NC DHHS's website](#).

NC Counties by Tier: Data from December 20 through January 2, 2021



**We continue case investigation and contact tracing efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19.** If you receive a call from a member of our case investigation or contact tracing team, we urge you to cooperate and provide information that will help us conduct response efforts. You may receive a call from (844) 628-7223 or (828) 264-4995. It may also show up as “NC Outreach” or “Contact Tracing.”

Your cell phone carrier may flag the call as spam. It is so important to answer the call of a contact tracer. It is a key tool in slowing the spread of this virus.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) levels remain stable in most areas.**

## Testing

**If you have COVID-19 symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, we recommend you be tested.** You can [check your symptoms](#) and determine if testing is needed. To find a testing site near you, visit [NC DHHS's Find My Testing Place](#).

**Turnaround Times for Testing remains between 2 and 4 days.** NC DHHS provides data on testing turnaround times. This data is updated daily and can be found [here](#).

**Free COVID-19 Testing at AppHealthCare by Appointment.** We are working toward building a consistent schedule of vaccinating and testing on set days of the week with Monday and Thursday focused on testing and Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday focused on vaccine administration. Please do not just show up for testing. We request that you schedule an appointment through our [website](#) or by calling our COVID-19 Call Center at (828) 795-1970.



Testing is also offered by appointment at Mountain Family Care Center (336) 846-6322 (located on the campus of Ashe Memorial Hospital), [CVS Pharmacy in West Jefferson](#), [Ashe Pediatrics](#) and other local healthcare providers may offer testing as well.

## Guidance Documents to Prevent & Slow the Spread

### Tips for Holiday & Private Social Gatherings

As we continue through the Holiday season, we encourage everyone to be mindful of the fact that this virus is still with us and there are actions we can all take to avoid and lessen our exposure and a potential spike that could overwhelm our healthcare system. If you will be hosting or attending an event, NC DHHS has compiled some [tips for gathering safely](#) and some [guidance for private social gatherings](#).

## Active Outbreaks and Clusters

Data is provided for outbreaks and clusters that are active and ongoing. The number of cases for outbreaks and clusters are current as of each Thursday at 9:00am. The case counts vary day by day as new cases are identified and as cases are moved in and out of isolation. This data may not match other reported data since this is a point in time. As we conduct outbreak and case investigations, the data included in this report are subject to change. For a current case count, visit the [AppHealthCare data dashboard](#), which is updated daily by noon.

An outbreak is defined as two or more laboratory confirmed cases. A cluster is defined as a minimum of five cases with illness onsets or initial positive results within a 14-day period and plausible epidemiologic linkage between cases. An outbreak or cluster is considered over if 28 days have passed after the latest date of symptom onset in a symptomatic person or first date of specimen collection from the most recent asymptomatic person, whichever is later. Additional information on the [definitions of outbreaks and clusters](#) is provided by the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services.

NC DHHS also provides regularly updated information on [outbreaks and clusters](#).

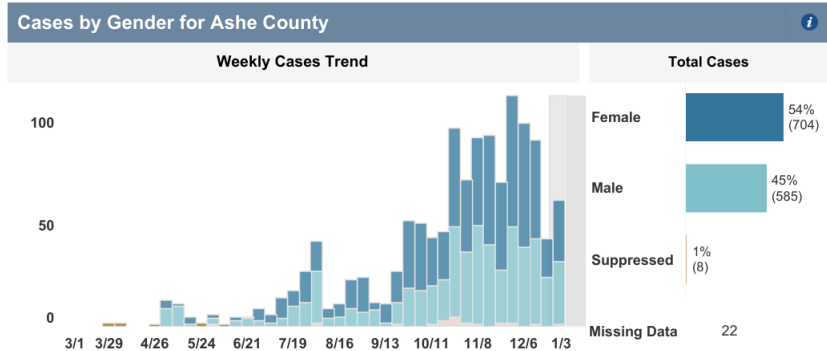
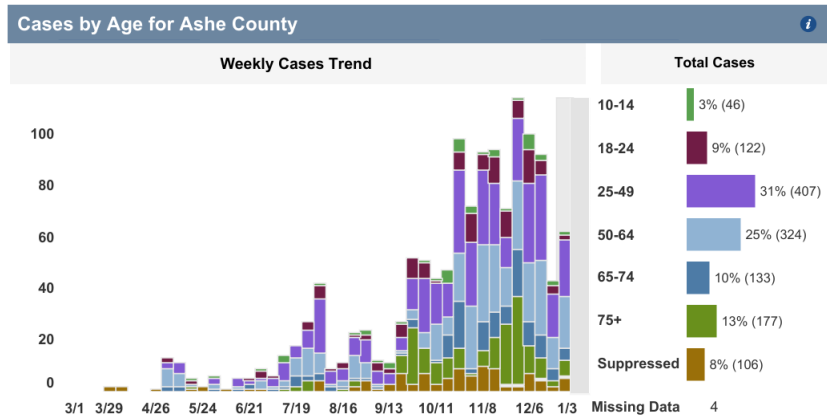
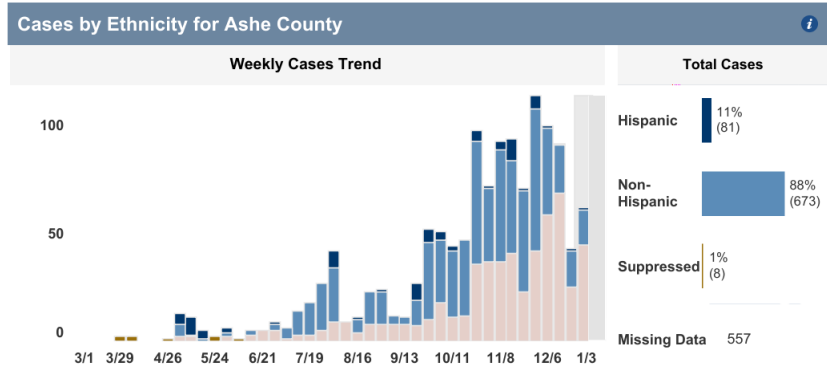
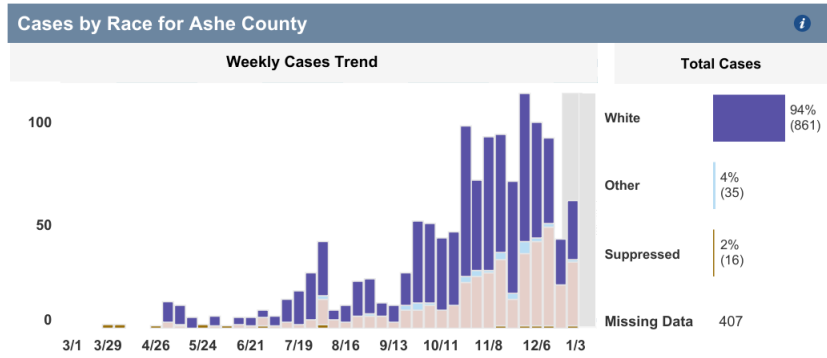
Active Outbreaks & Clusters				
<i>Data is current as of Thursday, January 7, 9:00am</i>				
Facility or Setting Type	Facility or Setting Name	Active Cases	Cumulative Cases	Last Positive Result
Long Term Care Facility	Margate Health & Rehab	1 staff 1 resident	55 staff 90 residents 18 deaths	01/02/2021

### Mitigation and Response Efforts

- Ongoing testing continues to monitor the health of residents in skilled nursing facilities
- Educational outreach on COVID-19 prevention with these facilities
- Positive cases are separated from others to allow for safe isolation
- Ongoing daily health monitoring is occurring at the facilities
- Monitoring of positive cases continues with public health staff

## Demographic Data from NC DHHS as of January 4th

NC DHHS updates this data daily and can be found on [NC DHHS's website](#).



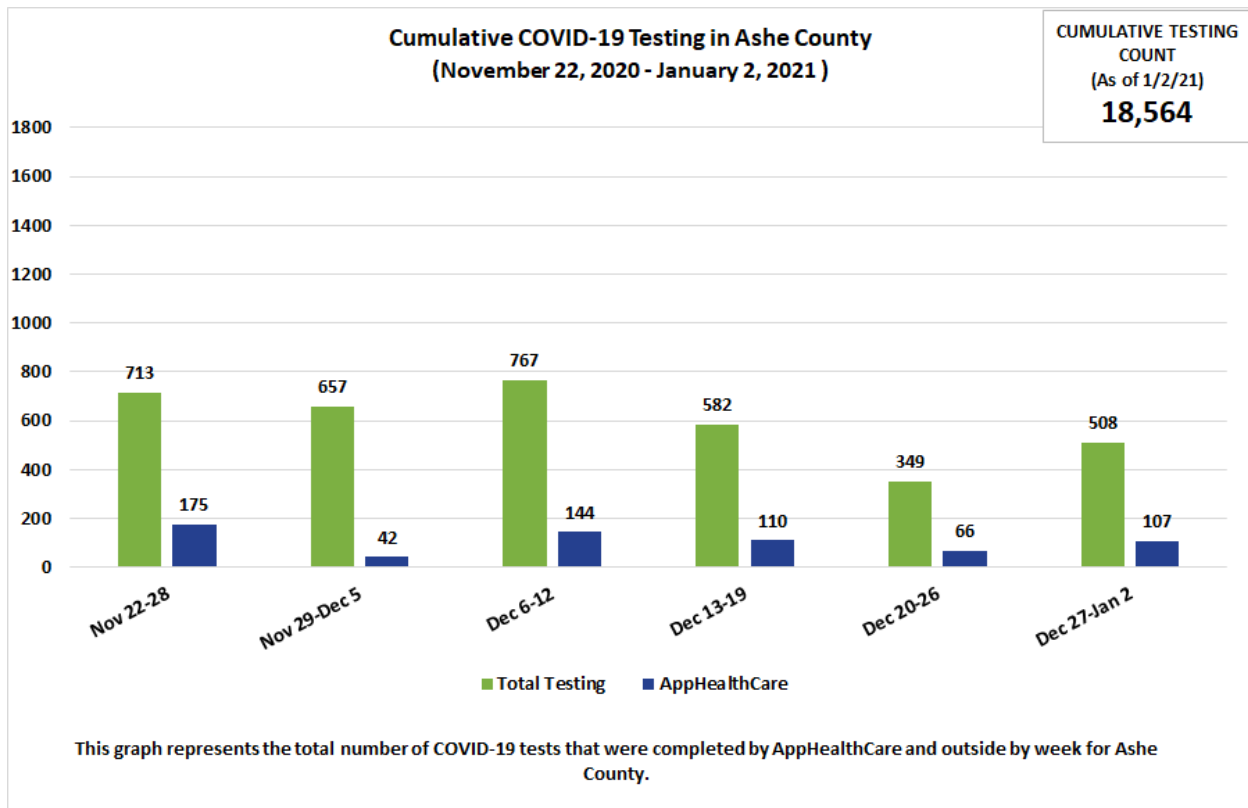
January 4, 2021

## Data for Ashe County

An important note about data context: The graphs below show the available data. Please carefully read the descriptions below the graph to understand the data limitations. The most current data is available on the [AppHealthCare dashboard](#), as the data below is past data trended.

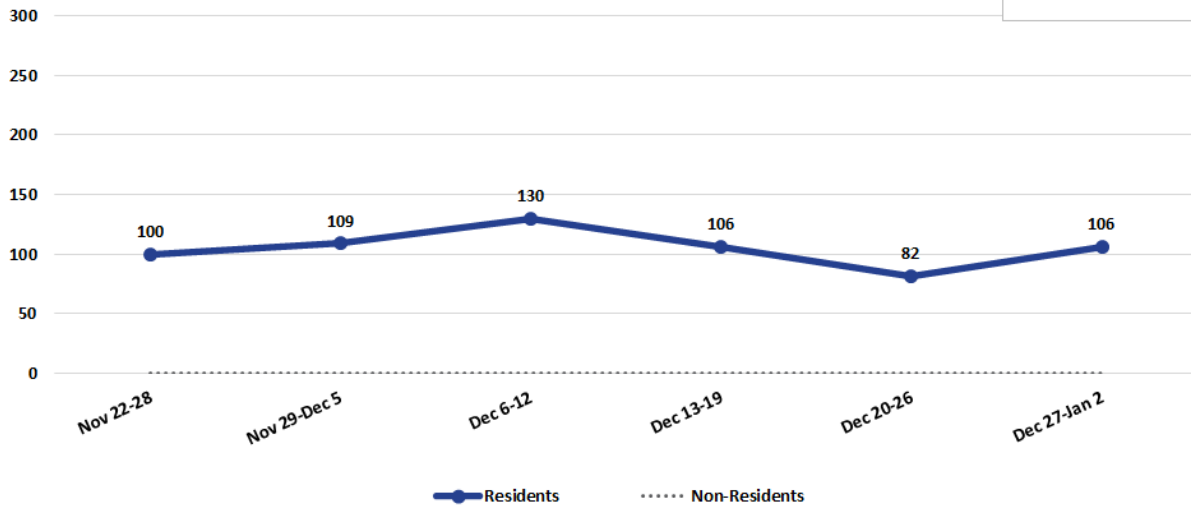
### Important Disclaimer About Data

It is imperative that this report and the data contained within is understood in the appropriate context. Please, if you use this report, please be certain that the information included within is shared within the appropriate context. Doing otherwise may be damaging to the public health response efforts. There are multiple factors involved in addressing this virus, including compliance with public health control measures implemented by the local health director and referenced in NC GS 130A. These measures are imperative for limiting the spread of COVID-19. **AppHealthCare strongly advises that when data is shared for the purposes of educating the public or informing policy decisions, it should come directly from NC DHHS or AppHealthCare as it is presented with appropriate context from those directly involved in public health response.**



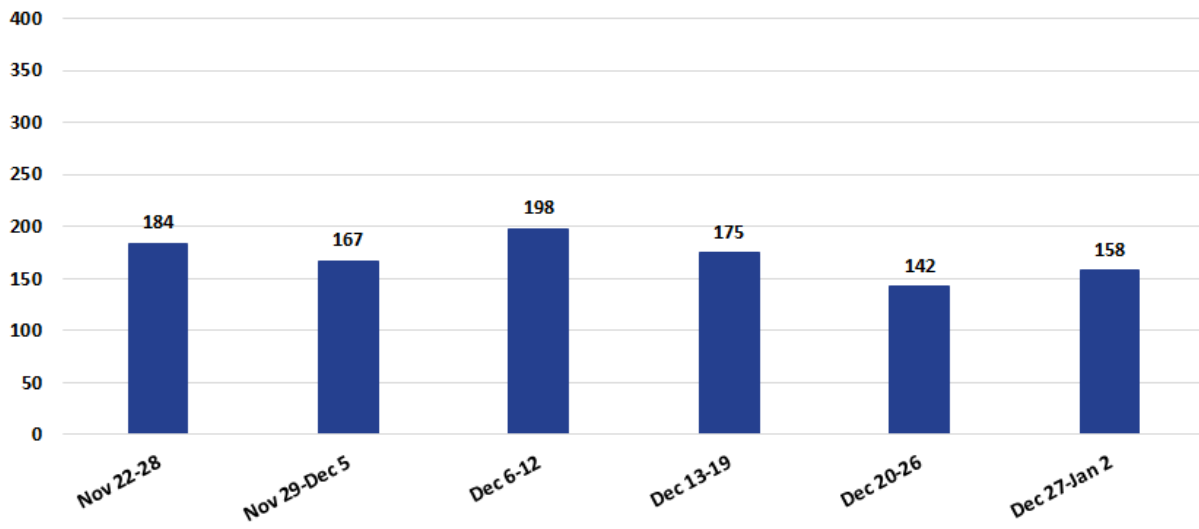
**Cumulative Case Count by Week in Ashe County  
(November 22, 2020 - January 2, 2021)**

CUMULATIVE CASE COUNT  
(As of 1/2/21)  
**1,475**

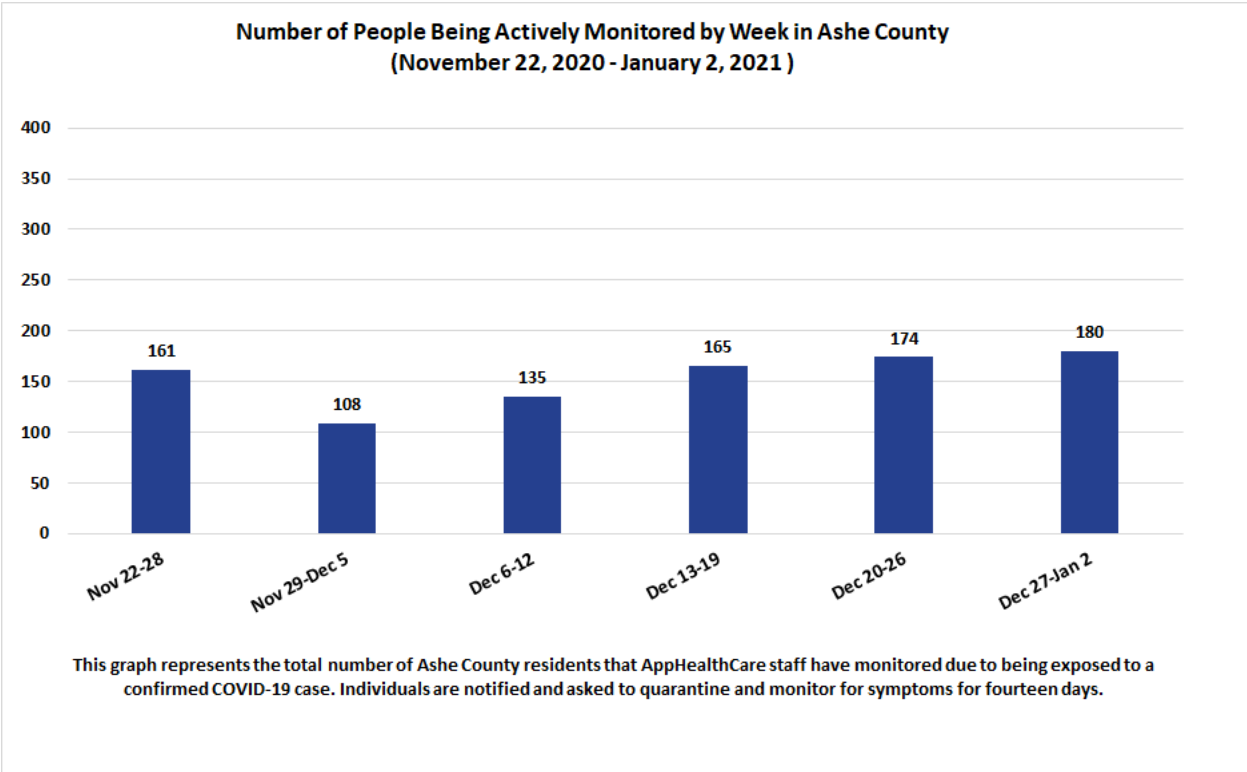
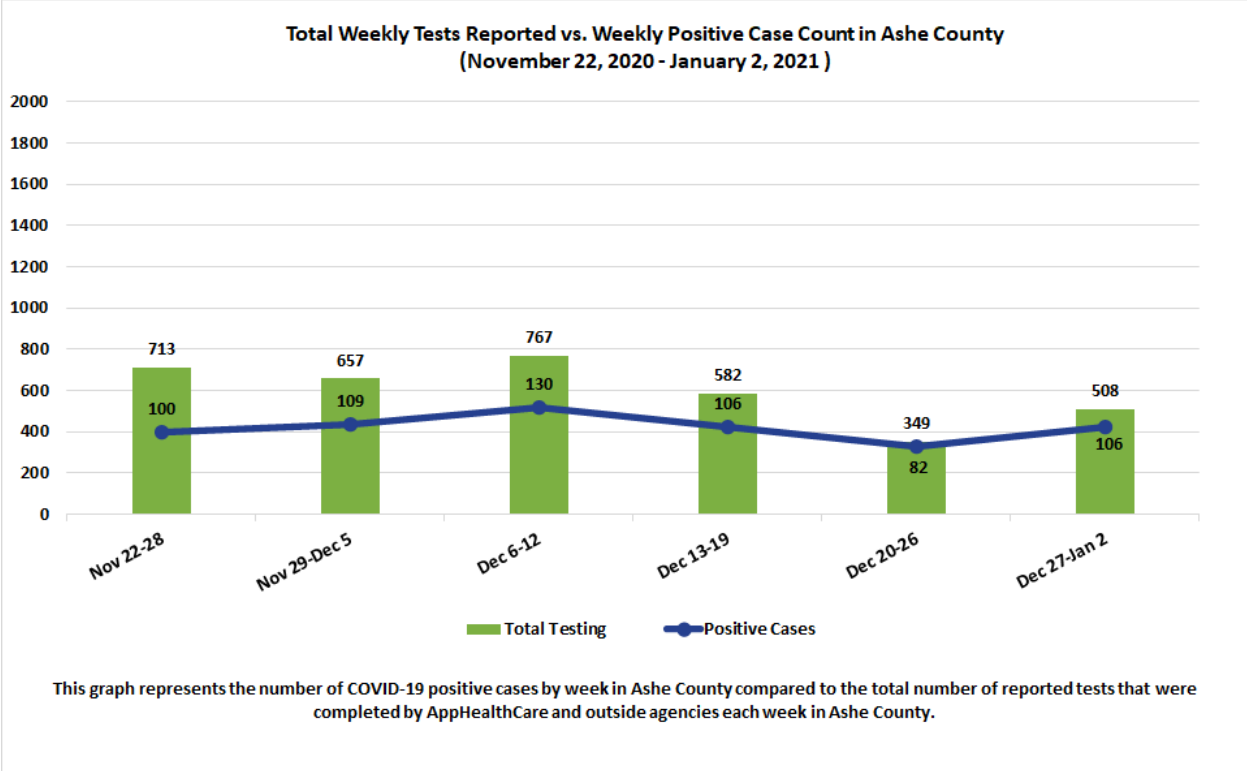


The solid navy blue line in this graph represents the number of positive COVID-19 cases among Ashe County residents by week. This graph also shows the number of non-residents that have tested positive for COVID-19 but reside in another county.

**Number of Active Positive Cases by Week in Ashe County  
(November 22, 2020 - January 2, 2021)**



The graph represents the number of active COVID-19 positive cases by week in Ashe County. A positive COVID-19 case is considered active for ten days after the initial positive test result.



Additional data can be found on [AppHealthCare's data dashboard](#). This data is updated each day around noon.



Alleghany (336) 372-5641 | Ashe (336) 246-9449 | Watauga (828) 264-4995

AppHealthCare COVID-19 Call Center (828) 795-1970

General COVID-19 Questions: [preparedness@apphealth.com](mailto:preparedness@apphealth.com)

Media inquiries: [media@apphealth.com](mailto:media@apphealth.com)

[www.AppHealthCare.com](http://www.AppHealthCare.com) and follow us on Facebook & Twitter

