



LIVINGSTON COUNTY
Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Livingston County Health Department Shifts Prioritization of COVID-19 Investigations; Asks for Residents to Take Personal Action if They Test Positive for COVID-19 or are Close Contacts to a Case

HOWELL, Michigan. - (November 10, 2020) Livingston County has entered into a second wave of COVID-19 and is experiencing an immense surge in community transmission, reaching higher case numbers than those seen during the first wave in early spring. Widespread community transmission has placed tremendous strain on public health capacity throughout Michigan and locally, stretching well beyond capacity limits. This strain has resulted in decreased ability for local public health to effectively conduct and keep up with the increased demand for case investigation and contact tracing.

Because of the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases, there have been delays in the amount of time it takes to contact all persons who test positive for the virus as well as those who have been in close contact to someone who has COVID-19. Residents are urged not to wait for the Livingston County Health Department (LCHD) to call, but to take personal responsibility and action if someone becomes aware of a positive test result or potential exposure to COVID-19.

In order to maximize staffing resources and prevent outbreaks amongst vulnerable individuals, LCHD will begin prioritizing case investigation to notify those who are:

- Age 65 and older, especially those with chronic underlying conditions;
- Children who are 18 years old and younger, especially those attending school in-person;
- Individuals residing in congregate living environments, such as long-term care facilities;

-more-

All other individuals who test positive will be contacted as capacity allows. If someone is awaiting test results, they must stay home until the results are in. If you receive a positive COVID-19 test result, isolate at home immediately for a minimum of 10 days from the start of your symptoms or your positive test date if you didn't have symptoms. Notify your close contacts that they may have been exposed to you while you were contagious; encourage them to quarantine and consider getting tested. Contact your employer to let them know you tested positive so they are able to perform contact tracing. Someone who tests positive for COVID-19 is contagious beginning two days prior to when symptoms started (or two days prior to positive test date) through the end of their isolation.

A close contact is someone who has been within six feet (about two arms' length) of an infected person for at least 15 minutes in 24 hours including brief encounters (it does not need to be consecutive minutes) with or without a face covering. Close contacts should quarantine—generally 14 days from the last exposure—since a person can be infectious up to 48 hours before showing any symptoms. Isolation and quarantine mean staying home from work, school, social gatherings, extracurricular activities and any other public place except when seeking medical care.

As we look toward the upcoming holiday season, LCHD strongly encourages residents to help reduce the risk of community transmission by social distancing, wearing masks, practicing hand hygiene, and gathering only with household members. For more information, visit www.LCHD.org. Questions related to COVID-19 can be emailed to COVID19@livgov.com.

CONTACT:

Natasha Radke, Public Information Officer
Livingston County Health Department
(517) 546-9850
nradke@livgov.com
www.lchd.org
<https://www.facebook.com/myLCHD>
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