



MEDIA CONTACT:
Erin Luckhardt, PIO
O: 231-347-5628
e.luckhardt@nwhealth.org
www.nwhealth.org

March 23, 2020

Health Department of Northwest Michigan Daily COVID-19 Update

As of March 23, 2020, at 4:00PM, the State of Michigan has confirmed 1,328 cases of COVID-19 and 15 deaths.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is reporting positive COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Charlevoix – 3; Otsego – 4; Emmet – 1; Antrim – 0. Confirmed cases within the Health Department of Northwest Michigan's jurisdiction will be updated daily by 4:00pm on our website.

The Health Department continues to monitor and conduct contact tracing. When we receive notice that a laboratory test confirms a person has COVID-19, our communicable disease team works diligently with the individual and their healthcare provider to determine who had significant exposure while that person was contagious. We attempt to contact any of the individual's close contacts to have them self-quarantine. If there are locations of concern, we will share this information with our residents.

Although there are few confirmed cases in the Health Department's four-county jurisdiction, public health officials expect to learn of additional cases. Public health officials expect there are many others that have not been confirmed. This is why it is so important to practice social distancing to help "flatten the curve".

"Now is the time for us as to work together as a community," stated Medical Director Dr. Josh Meyerson. "We must all do our part to protect our community, especially our citizens at high risk for severe illness, and prevent our hospitals from becoming overburdened."

Governor Whitmer issued a *Stay Home, Stay Safe* Executive Order that temporarily requires all Michigan residents to "suspend activities that are not necessary to sustain or protect life" starting Tuesday, March 24th at 12:01am and continuing through April 13th, 2020. Under this "stay at home" order, all Michiganders must stay in their homes unless they are a part of the area's critical infrastructure workforce. With only a few exceptions, all public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring among persons not part of a single household are prohibited. When individuals do leave their homes, they must adhere to social distancing measures recommended by the CDC, including remaining at least six feet from people from outside the individual's household to the extent feasible under the circumstances.

Businesses and operations that employ critical infrastructure workers may continue in-person operations, but must adhere to social distancing practices and mitigation strategies to protect workers and patrons, including the promotion of remote work to the fullest extent possible and preventing workers from entering the premises if they display respiratory symptoms. Included in the list of critical infrastructure workers are restaurant employees and childcare workers, as restaurants can continue to provide carry-out/delivery food service and daycares can continue to operate to serve the children or dependents of critical infrastructure workers. Gas stations and grocery stores are also able to remain open for people to use.

Individuals may leave their homes and travel as necessary, including for outdoor activity, to perform their jobs as critical infrastructure workers, and to conduct minimum basic operations, such as to perform tasks

that are necessary to their health and safety, or to obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves or their loved ones. There is no need to rush to such places or to hoard supplies.

For more information about this “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order and to get answers to frequently asked questions, please visit Michigan.gov/coronavirus.

The Health Department is working to share updates and essential information through our website at nwhealth.org/covid19 or at [the Health Department's Facebook Page](#). The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has created a statewide hotline for COVID-19. The hotline will be open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1-888-535-6136. Additionally, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan has a Public Health Information Phone Line – 1-800-386-5959 and email publichealthinfoline@nwhealth.org.