

ALLEGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

3255 – 122nd Ave., Suite 200, Allegan, MI 49010

Office Administration

(269) 673-5411 Fax (269) 673-4172

Bioterrorism Preparedness

(269) 673-5411

Personal Health

(269) 673-5411



Communicable Disease

(269) 673-5411

Environmental Health

(269) 673-5415

Resource Recovery

(269) 673-5415

NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2020

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Lindsay Maunz, MPH, CHES®, CPH

Public Information Officer

269-673-5411

lmaunz@allegancounty.org

Allegan County Health Department Releases Forms to Assist with Case Investigations

(Allegan, MI)—The Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) announces new procedures for case investigation and contact tracing, effective today. As reported on November 9, COVID-19 cases continue to rise. In addition to following isolation and quarantine practices, ACHD is asking individuals that have tested positive or have known exposure to COVID-19 to complete a self-reporting form.

- If you test positive, complete this [“I tested positive” form](#).
- If you have a known exposure, complete this [“I have been exposed” form](#).

The forms submitted online will give the health department the information it needs to complete each case in the Michigan Disease Surveillance System. Until now, that information was gathered over the phone. Filling out the online form versus having a lengthy phone call from investigators will be simpler and easier for both the public and health department staff. The new process will allow ACHD to contact cases that fall in higher risk categories. **Filling out the form is REQUIRED for those who want or need an isolation or quarantine letter for their employer.** Individuals that are unable complete the online forms are asked to call the ACHD COVID-19 hotline at 269-686-4546.

This new way for case investigations and contact tracing will also help the health department prioritize investigations on outbreaks in schools, businesses, and in vulnerable populations. ACHD will prioritize case investigations 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;

With the upsurge of cases and exposures, local businesses, agencies and facilities may find it challenging to properly staff their organizations. Workplace guidance can be found at www.michigan.gov/leo (COVID-19 Workplace Safety tab).

-more-

- Do not work while ill, regardless of whether you have had a COVID-19 test or not. Assume you have COVID-19 until you KNOW otherwise.
- Talk to your employer to consider remote work for any work activities that can be completed remotely.
- If you think or know you have COVID-19, remain in isolation for the full 10 days even if you are feeling better. Complete this [“I tested positive” form](#).
- If exposed, stay in quarantine to the best of your ability for 14 days, and make every effort to avoid contact with others during this time. Complete this [“I have been exposed” form](#).
- Avoid crowds.
- Wear a mask when around people outside of your household.
- Make plans for children that may not be able to attend school in-person or day care.
- Avoid indoor dining outside of your home.
- Schedule virtual meetings for social and work related activities.
- Avoid extracurricular activities and social gatherings that will put you face to face with others.
- Support each other as we make difficult decisions and sacrifices.

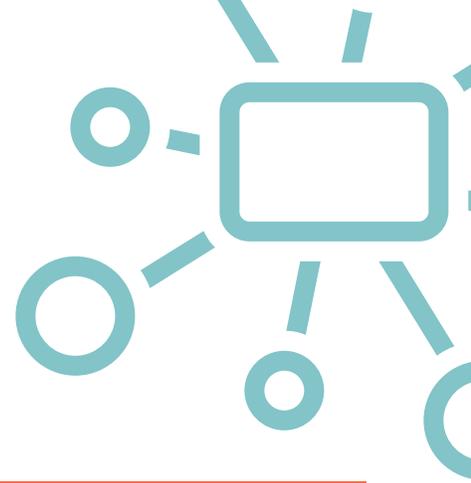
Allegan County Health Officer Angelique Joynes MPH, RN, explains, “We are at a pivotal moment in this pandemic response. We need to work together to lessen the impact of this virus on our community and economy, but also minimize the number of deaths related to COVID-19. Everyone has a part to play. Wear your mask, stay 6 feet apart from others, and wash your hands. If you test positive or have been exposed, start isolating or quarantining as quickly as possible and complete the new self-reporting form. The new online forms will help us get you the information needed so you can keep your family members, co-workers, and community members healthy.”

For more information on COVID-19, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus; www.michigan.gov/coronavirus; or www.allegancounty.org/health. The Allegan County Health Department COVID-19 operates from Monday-Friday, excluding holidays, from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Individuals can call the COVID-19 hotline at 269-686-4546.

###

Attached: If You Test Positive for COVID-19 informational handout

IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19



With the increase in COVID-19 cases in our area, you might not hear from the health department right away. We ask everyone to follow these steps to help stop the spread.

Start isolating yourself right away. Stay home except for medical care. Let your employer know you have COVID-19.

Notify your close contacts so they can start to quarantine themselves.

- Close contacts = those who were within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes total in a 24 hour period, when the person was contagious.
- Contagious = starts 2 days before symptoms appear (or 2 days before positive test, if no symptoms), through the end of the isolation period.

You can resume normal activities when

- 10 days have passed since symptoms started (or test date if no symptoms), and
- you are fever-free for 24 hours, and
- your symptoms have improved.



If you need an isolation or quarantine letter for your employer, complete the self-reporting form, found on www.allegancounty.org/health

CLOSE CONTACTS: QUARANTINE INSTRUCTIONS

Start quarantining right away if you are told you are a close contact.

Stay home except to get medical care. Close contacts of a positive case (<6 feet, 15+ minutes total) need to quarantine for 14 days from your last contact to COVID+ person while they were considered contagious and monitor for symptoms. If you develop symptoms, get tested.

You cannot test your way out of quarantine. Because the incubation period of this virus is long, close contacts need to stay home 14 days from your last contact, even if you receive a negative test result.



**HEALTH
Department**