

ALLEGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Call to Action for Allegan County Community Members as COVID-19 Cases Increase

(Allegan, MI)— Over the past few weeks, the Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) has experienced an increase in the number of new COVID-19 cases being reported. Currently, an average of 65 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 each day have been reported to ACHD, compared to an average of four new confirmed cases each day that was reported to ACHD over the summer. Our staff is working hard and even with our best efforts, we are not able to investigate everyone as quickly as we would like. The Allegan County Health Department is asking everyone to do their part in curbing this spike of COVID-19 cases in our community.

“This has been an incredibly long response and we are experiencing pandemic fatigue on some level. Now more than ever, we need our community to do practice the 3 W’s—wash your hands, watch your distance, and wear a mask—and minimize in-person interactions within your social circle. With the rapid increase of new cases, we know community spread is occurring,” states Allegan County Health Officer, Angelique Joynes, MPH, RN.

Do your part and help stop the spread

There may be a delay in contacting someone who tests positive for the virus or has been in close contact to someone who has COVID-19. If you receive a positive COVID-19 test result, [isolate](#) for a minimum of 10 days from the start of your symptom(s) or your positive test date if you didn’t have symptoms. Notify your close contacts that they may have been exposed and encourage them to [quarantine](#) for 14 days from their last date of contact with you. If you know you are a close contact, start self-quarantine.

Where we are seeing cases:

From 10/21/20 to 11/4/20, 628 cases have been reported to the Health Department from across the county. About 33% of Allegan County cases have an unknown source of exposure. This suggests that there is community spread occurring.

Rob Mach, FACHE, Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital Administrator, indicates that while Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital is prepared for the current increase in patients, it will take all of us to help mitigate the spread of the virus:

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"We currently have the capacity to treat all patients, including patients diagnosed with COVID-19. All of our Ascension Michigan hospitals, including Ascension Borgess Allegan, have a surge plan specific to that facility, and we are able to quickly adapt to the needs of our patients and to the healthcare demands of our community. Preparedness efforts are ongoing and involve local, statewide and national resources. As cases of COVID-19 rise in our area, Ascension Michigan is urging our communities to work together to mitigate the spread of the virus by wearing masks, washing our hands and adhering to social distancing," states Mach.

Actions to take:

- Practice the 3 W's—wash your hands frequently, watch your distance from others not in your household, and wear a mask. These actions have been stressed for months because we see when these steps are taken, it reduces the amount of virus transmitted.
- Limit the number of people you are around when possible—keep your bubble small. Choose to socialize with one other household or a small group of friends. Hold each other accountable to limiting the amount of interactions with others outside of the bubble.
- Talk to your employer on remote work options.

These actions not only help you stay safe, but your community stay safe. 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.

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