

## For Immediate Release

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### **Washtenaw County Health Department Issues Priorities for COVID-19 Case Investigation** *Everyone should take immediate action to isolate or quarantine if positive or exposed*

YPSILANTI, Mich., Nov 12, 2020 – COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are growing exponentially in Washtenaw County and across Michigan. Investigation and contact tracing calls and emails are likely to be delayed. Washtenaw County Health Department reminds everyone not to wait for a call from us. If you have tested positive, have symptoms, or have been exposed to COVID-19, you can take immediate steps to prevent additional spread of illness. Isolate yourself for 10 days if you are positive or have symptoms. Quarantine for 14 days if you are a close contact of a positive case.

“Don’t wait for a call from the Health Department. At this point, we all know we should be staying away from others if you tested positive, have symptoms, are waiting on test results, or are a close contact,” says Jimena Loveluck, MSW, health officer for Washtenaw County Health Department.

“With the surge in cases and related hospitalizations, we cannot get to all situations as quickly as we’d like. We can still prevent additional cases, protect everyone’s health, and preserve resources as much as possible by following [established public health guidance](#) for isolation or quarantine, depending on your situation,” continues Loveluck. “We are also continually monitoring, adjusting our priorities. and working to expand our capacity as much as possible.”

Washtenaw County Health Department is prioritizing Health Department case investigations in line with state guidelines and local data as follows:

- Individuals age 0-17 years,
- Individuals age 60 years and above,
- Individuals living in local zip codes 48197 and 48198,
- Individuals residing in high-risk congregate settings such as long-term care facilities, and
- Individuals of any age who are at higher risk of severe illness or complications.

Prioritized cases will be contacted as soon as possible after we receive the test result. All other individuals who test positive will be contacted as capacity allows and should follow [established guidance](#). If you are not contacted promptly or at all, please continue to isolate or quarantine according to the guidance.

#### **If you tested positive or have symptoms**

If you test positive for COVID-19, isolate 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. A close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 total minutes with or without a face covering. A person is considered contagious 2 days before their symptoms start or before their positive test if they do not have symptoms.

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Phone: 734-544-6700 • Fax: 734-544-6705  
[washtenaw.org/health](http://washtenaw.org/health)



Environmental Health Division  
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[washtenaw.org/envhealth](http://washtenaw.org/envhealth)

### **If you are a close contact (exposed)**

Close contacts should quarantine for 14 days. If you are exposed but do not have symptoms, please wait at least 5 days before testing, and remember that a negative test does NOT eliminate the need to quarantine for the full 14 days. Isolation or quarantine requires staying away from others and out of public places, except if seeking medical care or testing.

### **Workplaces**

The Health Department will continue to assist businesses and workplaces with COVID-19 related questions and positive employees as capacity allows. This includes prioritizing those situations or clusters that may be of greater concern because of their size, setting or impact on more vulnerable individuals. Do not wait for the Health Department to contact your business or organization to act. See [guidance for workplaces](#).

### **Washtenaw COVID-19 data trends**

Washtenaw County has reported a total of 6,885 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 as of Nov 10. A total of 133 new, confirmed cases and 9 hospitalizations were reported in the past 24 hours and as of Nov. 10. The average number of new cases per day was 97 for the past week, compared to 35 per day during the second week of October. Additionally, the majority of local cases are no longer associated with young adults or students, and the Health Department continues to work with university officials to follow up on student cases. Rather increases are being seen across the county.

### **Testing**

Testing is available at [multiple locations](#) and through various providers. With the current surge in cases across Michigan and the U.S. test results may be delayed. If your results take longer, please continue to isolate yourself while you wait for results.

The Health Department continues to work with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and [HONU Management Group](#) to provide accessible, drive-thru testing at no additional cost. The next pop-up testing opportunities are scheduled for **Sat, Nov 14** at the Ypsilanti District Library at 5577 Whittaker Road and **Sat, Nov 21** at Washtenaw County Health Department at 555 Towner Street.

- Both events are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Drive-thru or walk-up
- No-cost with or without insurance
- Testing is available with or without symptoms
- Pre-register for [Nov 14](#) or [Nov 21](#) and arrive any time between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

### **Prevention**

The virus that causes COVID-19 continues to circulate locally. Risk of exposure is present whenever you are out in public or having any direct contact with others. To reduce the spread of illness, the Health Department recommends wearing a face covering, maintaining 6 feet distance from others not in your household, cleaning hands frequently, and avoiding others if you have any symptoms.

These prevention strategies are most effective when combined. Using them remains vital to slowing the spread of illness and preventing as many cases of COVID-19 as possible – especially as the weather becomes colder, more activities are indoors, and [flu](#) may begin to circulate locally.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has also issued guidance for holiday [activities](#) and [travel](#) during COVID-19.

Local COVID-19 information is available at [www.washtenaw.org/covid19](http://www.washtenaw.org/covid19). Health Department staff are available to answer questions. Call 734-544-6700 or email [L-wchdcontact@washtenaw.org](mailto:L-wchdcontact@washtenaw.org).

#### **Resources from Washtenaw County Health Department**

- Guidance for individuals: [If you test positive for COVID-19](#)
- Guidance for [businesses and organizations](#)
- For testing options see [www.washtenaw.org/covid19test](http://www.washtenaw.org/covid19test) or the [statewide testing locator](#).
- [Prevention and Risk Reduction](#)

#### **Public Guidance from MDHHS**

- [MI COVID Alert App](#)
- Holiday [activities](#) and [travel](#) during COVID-19

#### **Washtenaw County Health Department**

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs. The Health Department has the authority and responsibility to protect public health, including responding to disease outbreaks.

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