

For Immediate Release

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Washtenaw County Health Department Identifies Multiple COVID-19 Cases and Exposures

Large holiday weekend party in Saline area linked to over 40 cases & more than 65 exposures, including area businesses, restaurants, a retirement community and areas outside of Washtenaw

YPSILANTI, Mich., July 13, 2020 – Washtenaw County Health Department is confirming an increase in local COVID-19 cases. The majority of new cases are among young people ages 15-25 years and can be connected to a large house party July 2 – July 3 in the Saline area, with additional events and workplace exposures occurring in the following days. To date, the Health Department has identified 43 cases and 66 exposed close contacts, not including family members in the immediate households of cases. A close contact is anyone who had face-to-face contact with an identified case for 15 minutes or more.

Anyone who attended the initial event or knows they were exposed should self-quarantine and monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days. Seek immediate testing if any unusual symptoms appear. Remember a negative test done prior to 14 days does not eliminate the need to self-quarantine.

“This is a very clear example of how quickly this virus spreads and how many people can be impacted in a very short amount of time” says Jimena Loveluck, MSW, Health Officer with Washtenaw County Health Department. “We cannot hope to accomplish our goal of containing COVID-19 and preventing additional cases, hospitalizations and deaths without full community support and cooperation.”

“We need people of all ages, including young people, to take COVID-19 seriously and follow public health guidelines and instructions. That means avoiding large gatherings without physical distancing or face coverings. It also means cooperating with the Health Department to complete case investigation and contact tracing,” continues Loveluck.

The Health Department is working to reach every individual identified as a close contact directly to provide guidance and monitor for illness. If you have not returned a call from the Health Department or followed guidance to isolate or self-quarantine, please reconsider and help contain this growing cluster of cases.

“None of us wants to be the reason someone in our community or county becomes seriously ill or dies,” says Brian D. Marl, Mayor of the City of Saline. “We have the opportunity to work together and with our local health department to contain this as quickly as possible. We know what we need to do, and we can certainly do it.”

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The Health Department's investigation is ongoing. To date, the initial party and subsequent events have led to exposures among employees or participants at retail stores, restaurants, businesses, canoe liveries, clubs, camps, athletic teams and a retirement community. There are also at least several exposures in other counties and out of state because individuals traveled while infectious; these include at least two northern Michigan exposures, one out-of-state exposure and one neighboring county exposure. Close, personal contacts of cases are being notified directly and instructed to self-quarantine. Washtenaw County Health Department will also work with health departments in other jurisdictions to investigate the exposures not in Washtenaw County.

At this time, any public exposures at these locations are considered low risk. Remember low-risk exposure is assumed at any public location because the virus is circulating in our community. **If close, personal contacts are identified at these or other locations and the individuals cannot be contacted directly, the Health Department will name the locations.**

To reduce the spread of illness, the Health Department recommends wearing a face covering, maintaining 6 feet distance from others not in your household and cleaning hands frequently. Testing is recommended for anyone reporting to work in person, with known exposure or with any mild or unusual symptoms. Symptoms may take up to 14 days after exposure to appear, and individuals are considered contagious two days before symptoms appear.

The number of local cases, guidance for employers, prevention information, testing options and more are available at www.washtenaw.org/covid19. Health Department staff are also available to answer questions. Remember that additional details about individual cases or locations is not available at this time. Leave a message at 734-544-6700 or email lwchdcontact@washtenaw.org.

Resources from Washtenaw County Health Department

- [Contact Tracing can Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- For testing, ask your health care provider or see www.washtenaw.org/covid19test
- [Prevention and Risk Reduction](#)
- [Guidance for Businesses](#)
- [COVID-19 Cases in Washtenaw County](#)
- [What to do if you're Sick](#)
- [Materials in English and other languages](#)

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 Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board and maintains state accreditation through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Visit us at washtenaw.org/health or call 734-544-6700.

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