



GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY HEALTH
2600 LaFranier Road, Suite A
Traverse City, MI 49686
231-995-6111

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
2650 LaFranier Road
Traverse City, MI 49686
231-995-6051

ADMINISTRATION &
MEDICAL EXAMINER
2600 LaFranier Road, Suite A
Traverse City, MI 49686
231-995-6100

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT &
PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS
2600 LaFranier Road, Suite A
Traverse City, MI 49686
231-995-6100

www.gtchd.org

Immediate Release:
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Six new positive COVID-19 cases, including public exposure reported heading into holiday weekend

As of July 3rd, 2020, Grand Traverse County Health Department is reporting a total of 49 confirmed cases, 15 active cases, 5 deaths and 29 recoveries. New cases this week include:

- A female in her 20s who was symptomatic, no known exposure
- Two females in their 30s who were symptomatic, exposed to another positive case
- A male in his 20s who was symptomatic, exposed to another positive case
- A male in his 80s, asymptomatic, no known exposures
- A male in his 60s, symptomatic, with history of contact to known positives and domestic travel
- Additionally, 3 other cases were initially reported in Grand Traverse County, but upon investigation were transferred to their state of residence for final follow-up.

We have identified the following potential community exposures to report out as a result of case investigations:

- Kilkenny's Irish Public House, June 26th, from 9:30 - 10 p.m.
- The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department reports that a resident who tested positive for COVID-19 flew out of Cherry Capital Airport on July 1, 2020 between 12:45 – 2 p.m. Passengers on Allegiant Air Flight 516 from Traverse City, Michigan to Phoenix, Arizona are asked to monitor for symptoms.
- The Chippewa County Health Department reports that a resident who tested positive for COVID-19 flew into Cherry Capital Airport on July 1, 2020. Passengers on Allegiant Air Flight 994 from St. Petersburg, Florida to Traverse City, Michigan are asked to monitor for symptoms.
- Both the airline and the airport have procedures in place and have notified staff and close contacts on both flights.

While we occasionally release information about public exposure sites when we can't effectively identify all close contacts, everyone needs to remember that approximately 40% of COVID-19 cases appear to be asymptomatic. Asymptomatic cases are especially difficult because they are not sick and therefore not staying home.

"Asymptomatic individuals are in the communities in which we live, work and play. They have no idea they are spreading a dangerous virus. This is why wearing a mask is so important," said Grand Traverse County Health Department Health Officer, Wendy Hirschenberger.

"Additionally, you should not travel if you are ill, if you have had contact with someone that has been sick or if you are quarantined waiting for test results," added Hirschenberger.

Over the past week, we have noted concerning trends surrounding the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, at the local, state, and national level. Since June 1st, Grand Traverse County Health Department

has reported 22 new cases. We have investigated each of these new cases within 24 hours and traced over 200 of their close contacts. In addition, we have assisted with case investigation on several cases that do not reside in our jurisdiction. The high number of contacts associated with recent cases reflects a shift to more frequent close interactions between people.

"As we compile this data to share, we are urging people to recognize how dangerous it can be when people congregate together without masking or social distancing," said Hirschenberger.

We recognize that July Fourth is a day for friends, family, barbecues, and celebrations. With COVID-19 cases spiking across the country and locally in the weeks since Memorial Day, these are anything but normal times. A typical Fourth of July celebration could further spread the virus and undo the progress made toward reopening our economy. We are asking people to protect themselves and others by limiting the size of gatherings, celebrating outdoors, exercising physical distancing of 6 feet from one another, wearing masks, and washing their hands or using hand sanitizer regularly. Consider limiting celebration gatherings to those you are already in close contact with, like family members and housemates this year to prevent an increase in COVID-19 transmission locally.

"The onus is on all of us to maintain a heightened level of awareness of the rapidly rising number of cases. There is no one safety measure that will fully protect us from COVID-19, but practiced in combination, these measures can provide much better protection," said Hirschenberger.

We all must do our part to STAY SAFE TO STAY OPEN.

Residents and Businesses are URGED to comply with the orders and recommendations in place:

- Executive Order 2020-115 REQUIRES that anyone in an indoor public place wear a facial covering unless they are unable to medically tolerate it.
- Executive Order 2020-114 REQUIRES that employees who cannot maintain 6 feet of distance wear a facial covering and that the employer provide them if needed.

This situation changes daily If you want the latest information, you can visit the Health Department Website <http://gtchd.org/2231/COVID-19-Novel-Coronavirus> where we provide resources for businesses, and links to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

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Media Contact: Emmy Schumacher, eschumacher@gtchd.org (231) 493-8376