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Grand Traverse County COVID Update November 23 – 25

As cases of COVID-19 continue to increase rapidly across the United States, the safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving is at home with the people you live with. Gatherings with family and friends who do not live with you can increase the chances of getting or spreading COVID-19 or the flu. Please comply with the current rules in Michigan which **limit indoor gatherings to 10 or less and no more than two households**. If you are expecting guests at your home, limit the number of guests, have conversations with guests ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together, and clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. Everyone can make Thanksgiving safer by wearing a mask and staying at least 6 feet from others who do not live with you.

For November 25, 2020, Grand Traverse County Health Department is reporting 32 new cases of COVID-19. The total case count is 1603, with 753 recovered and 19 deaths, leaving 831 active cases.

Beginning today, reporting of NEW COVID-19 cases to the public will be changing to minimize confusion and to better align with reporting on the MI Safe Start Dashboard where pandemic risk indicators are typically calculated using the combined number of confirmed and probable cases. With the wider use of a variety of testing methodologies, including rapid antigen testing, as well as the more frequent reporting of symptoms by close contacts, we are seeing more probable cases than ever before. A probable case is defined as either an individual who has been epidemiologically linked with a positive case and has developed symptoms, or someone who has received a positive antigen test result. Many of these probable cases are tested and become confirmed cases and it becomes difficult to represent this information clearly on our website. Starting next week additional changes will be implemented on our dashboard due to the staff time needed to gather certain data (recovered and active cases).

For all of these reasons, we will be reporting total COVID-19 cases which will include the total of confirmed and probable cases rather than displaying these categories separately. When compared to the MDHHS dashboard, this number will align with the number of probable and confirmed cases displayed as a total. Our team continues to work as quickly as possible to meet the case investigation demand that comes with increased cases in our jurisdiction.

There are no community exposures to report today, though community spread is very prevalent now and any activity or venue is an opportunity for exposure. The Grand Traverse County Health Department will no longer publish potential COVID-19 public exposure sites or case investigation summaries because we can no longer extend our limited resources to investigating potential

exposures. Due to the current caseload, we must focus our efforts on case investigation and contact tracing for the most vulnerable populations.

From November 23rd through November 24th Grand Traverse County Health Department completed 49 case investigations for confirmed COVID-19 cases. The following is information known at this time:

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