

Grand Traverse County COVID-19 Community Update - December 4, 2020



UPDATES FROM THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

New Quarantine Guidance

On December 2, 2020, the [CDC updated its procedure for quarantine](#). Based on new research and to help lessen the burden on our communities, quarantine periods MAY be shortened from 14 days to 10 days when there are NO SYMPTOMS of COVID-19. This will help in compliance to public health orders and hopefully alleviate some stress communities are feeling while being off work or school for that lengthy period of time. **PLEASE NOTE** - the best way to reduce risk is to continue with a 14-day quarantine.

For best practice, the Grand Traverse County Health Department recommends keeping a journal of symptoms while monitoring yourself during quarantine. *Remember*, even something mild like the sniffles can be the beginning of actual symptoms. Being aware of this may help reduce the overall time of quarantine.

Symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

***Positive cases** still require a 10-day period of isolation AND improvement of symptoms AND fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication in order to be released from isolation.

Daily Numbers

The Grand Traverse County Health Department is reporting 57 new cases of COVID-19 for Friday, December 4, 2020. Since Monday, November 30, 2020, GTCHD has reported 206 new positive cases and three deaths, bringing the cumulative total to 1,982 total cases. With approximately 1,120 active cases in Grand Traverse County currently and 23 deaths, that leaves 885 who have recovered.

Grand Traverse County and the Traverse City Region as a whole is at a risk level E on the [MI Safe Start Map](#). The current 7-day average of 11.5% positivity reflects a 1 week increase in rate and Grand Traverse County incidence is currently at 216 cases per million which reflects an decrease from last week's report. Additional statistics are available on the Health Department's [dashboard](#) and [Facebook page](#), which updates new case information daily at 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Regionally, Munson Healthcare is reporting COVID-19 testing results on [its website](#) for each of its hospitals. Numbers listed are by hospital, not county of residence.

[Michigan has reported](#) 420,268 positive cases and 10,117 deaths of COVID-19 as of Friday, December 4, 2020. As of November 25, 2020, 165,269 have recovered in Michigan.

Prioritization of COVID-19 Case Investigations

Due to the surge in positive cases during the month of November, the Grand Traverse County Health Department [announced that positive COVID-19 case investigations will now be prioritized](#). Priority cases and situations include: acute and outpatient healthcare workers, people under age 22 years; anyone linked to a school (includes child care facilities, K-12 schools, and colleges); people over age 65 years; anyone linked to an acute care, skilled nursing or long-term care facility; and any time a death has occurred. The health department will also take the recency of the case into account. These priority groups are consistent with state recommendations that are being used at local health departments throughout the state.

We continue to urge anyone that receives a positive COVID-19 test to please self-isolate. Additionally, notify any of your close contacts that they will need to quarantine for 10 days from their last contact with you. If you have school-age children, they should stay home from school and all school-related activities as part of their quarantine.

Data Reporting

To better align with the MI Safe State Dashboard, CDC, Johns Hopkins and other dashboards, the Grand Traverse County Health Department is now combining both probable and confirmed cases for the county. 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.

With widespread community transmission of the virus, the health department is no longer report low-risk community exposure sites as it has done in the past. Any venture out into the community should be considered a risk for exposure and proper precautions should be taken. When a high-risk exposure site is identified, the public will be notified. High risk exposures will be reported out when identified.

COVID-19 TESTING:

Grand Traverse County testing sites include:

[Munson Healthcare Foster Family Community Health Center](#) (priority 1 & 2 only)

[Northwest Michigan Health Services](#) (testing all by appointment)

[Rite Aid at Chums Corner](#) (testing all by appointment)

[Walgreens at Chums Corner](#) (testing all by appointment)

See [Michigan's COVID-19 test finder](#) for more options

Testing sites have capacity and tests are available. Individuals seeking tests can call:

- Their healthcare provider
- The Munson Healthcare Covid-19 hotline: 231-935-0951
- The Michigan COVID-19 hotline: 888-535-6136

If you seek testing, please remember that once you get tested you should not be going out and visiting local shops and restaurants or other public spaces while waiting for test results. Anyone who gets tested for COVID-19 must remember to stay home and away from others as much as

possible until they have received a negative test result, or once they have passed their isolation period as advised by the health department if they test positive. The public should also assume the potential risk for COVID-19 exposure when going into any business and should always be wearing masks, social distancing and follow other safety guidelines to reduce the spread in Grand Traverse County.

NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION WEEK

The Grand Traverse County Health Department wants to bring attention to National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW). The annual observance December 6-12, encourages everyone six months and older to get vaccinated against the flu to be protected during the upcoming season. Flu vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic should be of added importance because it can help reduce the overall burden of respiratory disease and save medical resources for the care of COVID-19 patients.

For flu vaccinations and other immunization services, the Grand Traverse County Health Department [Immunization Clinic](#) located at 2600 LaFranier Road Traverse City, MI 49686 is open Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. **by appointment only**. To schedule an appointment, please call 231-995-6131.

MENTAL HEALTH

Anyone having difficulties navigating life during the COVID-19 pandemic, you are not alone. MDHHS has a mental health hotline you can access for free and confidential access to counselors 24/7. Language translation is available for non-English-speaking residents who call the counseling line.

MDHHS COVID-19 Help Hotline: 1-888-535-6136, choose prompt 8.

To access other mental health resources for coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, visit Michigan.gov/StayWell.

HOMELESSNESS

The day shelter at Safe Harbor that is operated by Goodwill is open from 8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Safe Harbor's overnight shelter opened on Saturday, October 31 and is currently looking to add more volunteers. If you or someone you know may be interested, reach out to volunteer coordinator, Brad Gerlach by emailing: volunteers@gtsafeharbor.org or fill out the [application online](#).

SENIOR CENTER

The Senior Center Network and the Commission on Aging each have disposable masks available for seniors in Grand Traverse County. Parties may call either office to arrange for curbside pick-up or could be mailed upon request.

Senior Center Network: 231-922-4911
Commission on Aging: 231-922-4688

STAY SAFE TO STAY OPEN

Residents, businesses, and visitors are encouraged to ***Stay Safe to Stay Open***. This includes the following measures while in public:

- Staying 6 feet apart from others
- Wearing masks while indoors or even outside when you are unable to maintain social distancing
- Limiting large social gatherings - not hosting or attending large gatherings
- Continuing basic prevention measures like frequent hand washing
- Following workplace safety protocols
- Daily monitoring of yourself for symptoms including your temperature (even if you feel fine)
- Staying home if symptomatic - even if it is just very mild symptoms
- If others in your household have tested positive or are symptomatic, stay away and take extra precautions to not become infected.

Businesses and individuals can download ***Stay Safe to Stay Open*** resources and get additional information at the [gtcountycovid19.com website](http://gtcountycovid19.com) and communication templates and graphics on the [Traverse Connect website](#).

ABOUT THE JOC

Grand Traverse County's Joint Operations Center has been meeting to coordinate efforts and communication on the COVID-19 pandemic since Friday, March 13. Members include key community partners from health, government, first responders, education, social service, and business sectors.

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Media Contact: Emmy Schumacher, eschumacher@gtcountymi.gov, 231-493-8376