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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release
May 22th, 2020

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID-19 Update

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department wants to remind our residents how important a careful approach to this initial phase of reopening is for our region. While enjoying some of the local businesses during the holiday weekend and moving forward, everyone should continue taking all necessary precautions to protect themselves and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Keep in mind the follow tips for **safer gatherings**:

1. Keep it small. Gatherings of up to 10 people are permitted.
2. Meet outside.
3. Stay at least 6-ft apart.
4. Wash or sanitize hands often.
5. Wear masks if possible.
6. Do not share food, drinks, or other items. Have everyone bring their own snacks or serve food with single-use serving utensils.

“We recognize that living under a Stay at Home order for an extended period of time comes with many risks beyond the virus itself and as we move forward, we need to find the balance between viral risk, economic risk, as well as the risks associated with our general well-being while living in difficult social conditions,” shared Lisa Peacock, Health Officer. “Therefore, we look forward with cautious optimism to the preliminary stages of re-opening of local businesses including restaurants, bars, and retail stores as well as the gathering of small groups of less than 10 outside of our households”.

We have received questions and concerns regarding travel and housing as a result of the preliminary phases of re-opening in our region.

The following is prohibited:

- Travel to vacation rentals
- Campground housing, unless primary residence
- Hotel and motel rentals/use, unless to house someone aiding in the COVID-19 response

The following is allowed:

- To return to a home or place of residence from outside this state.
- To leave this state for a home or residence elsewhere.
- Between two residences in this state, including moving to a new residence.
- As required by law enforcement or a court order, including the transportation of children pursuant to a custody agreement.
- For individuals in Regions 6 or 8, to go to a restaurant/bar or a retail store or to attend a social gathering of up to 10 people.

As of 2pm today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department continues to report four positive cases of COVID-19 in Benzie County and eleven positive cases in Leelanau County. The State of Michigan has reported 53,913 cases and 5,158 deaths. Visit our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#) for the latest local information including recovered data and contact tracing: [BLDHD COVID-19 Dashboard](#). Additional and updated information can be found on our [Website](#) and [Facebook](#) or by calling our public information line 231-882-2197.

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