



**Benzie County Office**  
6051 Frankfort Hwy, Ste 100  
Benzonia, MI 49616

Phone: 231-882-4409  
Fax: 231-882-0143

[www.bldhd.org](http://www.bldhd.org)

**Leelanau County Office**  
7401 E. Duck Lake Rd  
Lake Leelanau, MI 49653

Phone: 231-256-0200  
Fax: 231-882-0143

## PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

---

For Immediate Release  
March 4, 2020

### **Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department Advises Residents to Prepare, not Panic for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD) is continuously working on preparedness and response planning for COVID-19 both locally and with other local Health Departments across Northern Michigan – this includes the Grand Traverse County Health Department, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW), District Health Department #10, District Health Department #4, District Health Department #2, and Central Michigan District Health Department. In addition, communications occur daily with federal, state and local officials/partners. BLDHD is monitoring the situation at a local level. Michigan, including Benzie and Leelanau counties, has no confirmed cases at this time.

As COVID-19 cases increase worldwide, including in the United States, it is important to be mindful of preparing for a shift from an epidemic to a pandemic. We find ourselves in a unique situation of being able to advise our community before the event happens to **PREPARE, NOT PANIC**. It is still uncertain when it will impact the United States, for how long, or the severity, and information is rapidly changing on a daily basis. Taking action early can help protect your health and those you care about.

Health Officer, Lisa Peacock, reminds residents that “It is important to consider actions to reduce the spread of illness in general – things like staying home if you are ill, coughing into an elbow or tissue, and frequent handwashing are important. While the situation is regularly changing, it is also important to stay up to date with reliable sources and to begin identifying some actions that can help protect your health and those you care about.”

These measures will help decrease and slow the spread of infection, and reduce the impact on our community:

- Pay attention, and comply, with public health requests and recommendations – see website for current information
- Get your information from credible sources (CDC, MDHHS, Health Department, etc.)
- Practice good hand hygiene; wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% or more) if soap and water is not available.
- Stay home when you are sick (work, school, social gatherings, events, etc.)
- Clean all “high touch” surfaces everyday with household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover coughs, sneezes; avoid touching your face.
- Avoid sharing personal household items.
- Be current on your routine vaccinations.
- Call ahead to your Healthcare Provider if you have a serious respiratory illness (most COVID-19 infections will not be serious).
- Plan now for caring for loved ones who may be sick or medically compromised; and how not to expose each other.
- For those over 65 or those who have chronic medical conditions (congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes), keep prescription medications filled and over the counter medications on hand.
- Maintain a good supply of non-perishable food items, including pet food.
- Plan ahead in the event that daycare or schools were to become closed
- Talk to your employer on contingency plans for absenteeism, working from home, or other strategies for the continuation of operations.

For information about COVID-19 precautions for schools and daycare centers, please visit  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>.

For information about COVID-19 precautions for businesses, please visit:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>.

For additional general information about the coronavirus, please visit:  
<https://www.michigan.gov/coronoavirus>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

###

Media Contact:  
Rachel Pomeroy MPH, CHES, CHW  
[Rpomeroy@bldhd.org](mailto:Rpomeroy@bldhd.org)  
Phone: 231-256-0204  
Cell: 231-882-6085