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## PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

**For Immediate Release**  
**January 20, 2022**

### **Health Department shifting case investigation procedures, with focus on patient education and treatment for COVID positive residents**

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has begun shifting away from universal contact tracing and case investigations to focus on high-priority community groups at risk for outbreak and severe disease and those in congregate settings. This move follows guidance from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services which updated these guidelines statewide. When community transmission is as widespread as it is currently, certain public health measures such as individual case investigation and contact tracing lose some of their effectiveness.

"Across the state, as the pandemic evolves, health departments are shifting their focus to provide tools for the public to use to protect themselves," said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer with the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. "With other partners, we are collectively working to maximize early access to testing, including the availability of home tests, and providing instructions for people to take into their own hands isolation and contact tracing guidelines," she said.

Although health department staff will no longer be following up with every individual who tests positive for COVID-19, staff will continue to provide direct education, resources, and support. If a provider/pharmacy/medical professional tests a person then they are still required to report it as usual and those results are entered into a statewide database. Some settings are unique, such as long-term care facilities and schools and therefore have specific guidelines they need to follow. Local health department staff continue to support these facilities in their efforts to protect their population.

Although the general public no longer needs to report a positive at-home COVID-19 test, they are welcome to visit the health department's website for information about [isolation or quarantine guidelines](#). [Visit MDHHS](#) for information on what to do next if you have been exposed to COVID-19 as it is important to immediately take steps to get the care you need and avoid giving COVID-19 to people around you, health officials stress.

Health Department officials want to remind residents of four key points amid case increases and the Omicron variant being detected in Leelanau counties:

1. Stay home if sick and experiencing any [symptoms of COVID-19](#).
2. Get tested if symptomatic or once 5 days have passed after exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 and stay home until your results are received. Testing locations in Benzie and Leelanau County can be found [here](#). Additional testing dates and times have been established in Emmet County at the Health Department's new mobile lab.
  - a. Under a new Michigan rule, private insurers will be required to cover up to eight FDA-approved over-the-counter COVID-19 tests per month for each person covered by a health plan. For information on how to get your at-home over-the-counter COVID-19 test for free, visit <https://www.cms.gov/how-to-get-your-at-home-OTC-COVID-19-test-for-free>.
  - b. At the federal level, citizens can request free rapid coronavirus tests from the federal government. The website to process the requests is [covidtests.gov](http://covidtests.gov).
3. Wear a mask when out in public settings correctly and consistently, whether fully vaccinated or unvaccinated, as an extra layer of protection. See the CDC's guide on masks [here](#).
4. Get vaccinated and boosted. Safe and effective vaccinations are offered at a number of local pharmacies and at health department clinics. See a list of locations in Benzie and Leelanau County [here](#) or visit the

health department website to see clinic schedules for 5-11 year-olds, and [12 and older](#) to self-schedule an appointment.

- a. Wondering if you are eligible to receive a booster? See the U.S. FDA graphic illustrating booster eligibility [here](#).

The health department offers convenient COVID-19 vaccination clinics for all area residents and visitors 12 and older. Walk-ins are welcome at the health department's community clinics. Parent consent is required for minors. Anyone may call the Michigan COVID-19 hotline at 888-535-6136 if they have questions or are not able to find a time or date that works for them and/or their child. Clinics offer clients a choice of Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J's Janssen unless otherwise noted. Upcoming clinics include:

**Tuesday, January 25th – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic.**

- VFW Post 7731, 7475 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 2:00-5:00pm
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

**Wednesday, January 26th – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic.**

- Platte River Association, 12990 Honor Hwy, Honor, MI 49640.
- Time: 2:00-5:00pm
- To schedule an appointment: [Click here](#)

**Wednesday, January 26th- Leelanau's Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic**

- BLDHD Leelanau Office, 7401 E. Duck Lake Road, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 8:00-12:00 and 1- 4:30pm
- Appointments required
- To schedule an appointment: [Click here](#)
- Vaccine: Pfizer (open to 5-17 years old ONLY, parent/guardian must accompany minor)

**Friday, January 28th- Benzie's Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic**

- BLDHD Benzie Office, 6051 Frankfort Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 8:00-12:00 and 1- 4:30pm
- Appointments required
- To schedule an appointment: [Click here](#)
- Vaccine: Pfizer (open to 5-17 years old ONLY, parent/guardian must accompany minor)

**COVID-19 Testing**

The health department is offering free COVID-19 testing with the support of HONU lab. The test is free, and no doctor's order is required. Pre-registration is not required, but it is recommended to reduce time spent at the testing clinic, and walk-ins are welcome. Testing is available:

Testing will be available as follows:

- Mondays and Thursdays, 10:00-3:00, VFW Post 7731, 7475 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI. To register for testing in Leelanau, [click here](#).
- Tuesdays and Fridays, 10:00–3:00, Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital, 224 Park Ave, Frankfort, MI 49635. The testing clinic is located in the trailer by the cardiac rehab entrance (lower-level parking lot). To register for testing in Benzie, [click here](#).

\*Note that lines may be longest at the beginning of the day and waiting outside may be necessary. Please dress accordingly.

**COVID-19 Case Counts**

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting the following case information:

- On Tuesday, January 18, 73 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (25) and Leelanau (35), and one new COVID-19 associated death in Benzie (1).
- On Wednesday, January 19, 58 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (30) and Leelanau (47).
- Today, January 20, 109 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (64) and Leelanau (44).

As of 4:00 p.m. today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 2,939, Leelanau– 3,140
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 581, Leelanau– 656
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 2,306, Leelanau– 2,447
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 52, Leelanau– 37

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