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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release
February 15, 2022

Wearing respirator-type mask indoors provides greatest protection against COVID-19

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department reminds families that masks and respirators are effective at reducing transmission of COVID-19 when worn consistently and correctly.

Although the [First Amended Order](#) which requires masks to be worn in school settings will be lifted at 11:59 p.m., Thursday, February 17, 2022, health officials still advise individuals to wear a mask in public indoor spaces while community transmission levels remain high. The change in the school mask mandate was announced February 11 and was based on rapidly decreasing COVID-19 cases in the region, less pressure on healthcare facilities and services, and the availability of the vaccine for anyone 5 years of age or older.

Health officials stress that vaccination, masking, testing, and therapeutics continue to be critical tools in our fight against the impact of COVID-19.

“Properly and consistently wearing a mask in public indoor locations protects those around you and the individual wearing the mask,” said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, health department medical director. “And, wearing a N95 or KN95 mask is more effective at filtering the viral containing particles and reducing one’s risk of contracting COVID-19,” Dr. Meyerson added.

[A recent study](#) published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report found that consistent use of a face mask or respirator in indoor public settings reduces the odds of testing positive for COVID-19. For example, wearing a cloth mask reduces one’s risk 56% over wearing no mask. [A graphic visualization](#) shows wearing a surgical mask reduces that risk by 66% and wearing a respirator-type mask (N95/KN95) reduces one’s risk by 83%.

“Wearing a respirator-type mask with higher filtration capacity is associated with the most protection against the virus,” Dr. Meyerson explained. The health department recently distributed KN95 masks from their office locations (check your local location for availability) and the masks are readily available at local stores. More information about masks and respirators, including free N95 mask manufacturers, can be found at the [CDC website](#).

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is offering free COVID-19 Home Test and KN-95 masks at each of their locations. The home testing kits are available for the public in our offices, while supplies last. Each kit has 2 tests, and each person can take one kit as supplies are limited. The masks are available in packs of two, first come first served while supplies last, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. All offices are closed from 12-1 p.m. for lunch. Office locations include:

- Benzie Office, 6051 Frankfort Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Leelanau Office, 7401 E. Duck Lake Road, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653

The health department also 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. These clinics will be open to first, second, additional, and booster dose appointments and offers all three vaccines unless otherwise noted.

Upcoming clinics include:

Wednesday, February 16th – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic for 12 years and older

- Platte River Association, 12990 Honor Hwy, Honor, MI 49640.
- Time: 3:00-5:00pm
- To schedule an appointment: [Click here](#)

Tuesday, February 22nd – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic for 12 years and older

- VFW Post 7731, 7475 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 3:00-5:00pm
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Wednesday, February 23rd - 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)

Wednesday, February 23rd – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic for 12 years and older

- Platte River Association, 12990 Honor Hwy, Honor, MI 49640.
- Time: 3:00-5:00pm
- To schedule an appointment: [Click here](#)

Thursday, February 24th- 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)

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. Additional vaccination sites can be found at vaccines.gov.

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](#).

No testing on Monday, February 21st, 2022, due to Presidents Day.

COVID-19 Case Counts

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

- On Wednesday, February 9, 11 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (4) and Leelanau (7).
- On Thursday, February 10, 10 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (6) and Leelanau (4).
- On Friday, February 11, 16 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (7) and Leelanau (9).
- On Saturday, February 12, 9 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (6) and Leelanau (3).
- On Sunday, February 13, 7 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (1) and Leelanau (6).
- On Monday, February 14, 15 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (7) and Leelanau (8).
- Today, February 15, 4 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (2) and Leelanau (2).

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

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 3,308, Leelanau– 3,503
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 420, Leelanau– 400
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 2,832, Leelanau– 3,063
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 56, Leelanau– 40

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