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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release

November 18, 2021

Health Department jurisdiction nears 80% of residents 16 and older with first dose

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has reached 79% of residents 16 years and older in Benzie and Leelanau County with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. In nearly one week 14.8% of children aged 5-11 have received their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine. The state's objective remains to get as many Michiganders vaccinated as possible, and the Health Department continues to provide opportunities for eligible individuals to receive their first, second, or additional and booster doses at every community vaccine clinic.

"Even with 79% vaccination rates in persons 16 and older, there are still many susceptible individuals and a circulating strain (Delta) that is highly contagious and spreads more easily than the original strain. Given the contagiousness of the virus it is unlikely that we will reach a level of immunity that will lead to elimination of this virus in the next few years," said Dr. Meyerson, Medical Director.

Despite reaching high vaccination rates, cases have continued to increase throughout the region. From October 4 – November 7, 2021, the Health Department reported 482 total cases of COVID-19 in Benzie and Leelanau County. The majority of the reported cases, hospitalizations, and deaths during this timeframe were unvaccinated. To view additional data from this five-week period, view the October 4 – November 7 Case Trend Summary located on the [Health Department website](#).

"Being vaccinated reduces your risk of infection but more importantly greatly reduces your risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death due to this virus. Most reported cases are in unvaccinated individuals, and over 90% of those currently hospitalized in our ICU's are unvaccinated," he added.

Health Department officials reiterate that vaccination is the best way to reduce an individual's risk of contracting COVID-19 well as the best method of reducing the impact of COVID-19 in our community. Anyone who receives a first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine through tomorrow, November 19, will be considered fully vaccinated by Christmas Eve.

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has an [electronic self-reporting survey](#) to make it easy and convenient for residents testing at home to report positive COVID-19 tests.

Vaccination continues to be our most powerful tool. The health department offers convenient COVID-19 vaccination clinics for all area residents and visitors 12 and older by appointment ahead of time. 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. A list of additional local providers that are offering COVID-19 vaccines can be found on the [health department's website](#). Clinics offer clients a choice of Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J's Janssen unless otherwise noted. Upcoming clinics for appointments only include:

Friday, November 19th- Benzie's Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- BLDHD Benzie Office, 6501 Frankfort Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 8:00-12:00 and 1- 4:30pm
- Vaccine: Pfizer (open to 5-11 years old ONLY, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: Call 231-882-4409

Friday, November 19th- Leelanau's Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- BLDHD Leelanau Office, 7401 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 8:00-12:00 and 1- 4:30pm
- Vaccine: Pfizer (open to 5-11 years old ONLY, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: Call 231-882-4409

Tuesday, November 23rd – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- VFW Post 7731, 7475 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 1:00-5:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Wednesday, November 24th – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- Crystal Cafe, 1681 Benzie Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 1:00- 5:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

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:

- On Monday from 10 - 3pm at the VFW Post 7731. To register visit: <http://honumg.info/OldSuttonsBayMS>
- On Tuesday from 10 am – 3pm at the Crystal Café in Benzonia. To register visit: <https://honumg.info/CrystalCafe>
- **No Testing Thursday, November 25th, and Friday, November 26th.** A list of additional local providers that are offering COVID-19 testing can be found on the [health department's website](#).

COVID-19 Case Counts

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

- On Tuesday, November 16, 48 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (28) and Leelanau (20), and one new COVID-19 associated death in Leelanau County.
- On Wednesday, November 17, 51 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (22) and Leelanau (29), and one new COVID-19 associated death in Leelanau County.
- Today, November 18, 41 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (21) and Leelanau (20), and two new COVID-19 associated deaths in Benzie (1) and Leelanau (1).

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

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,911, Leelanau– 1,962
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 302, Leelanau– 326
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,571, Leelanau– 1,612
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 38, Leelanau– 24
- Hospitalized: 238 total; 21 currently

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