



**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**

**December 23, 2020**

### **The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID-19 Update**

Today there were three new cases of COVID-19 reported in Benzie County and seven new cases of COVID-19 reported in Leelanau County. We were notified of an additional COVID associated death today of a female Benzie resident in her 80's. Seven cases (Benzie-1, Leelanau-6) were removed due to one duplication and the rest were moved to different jurisdictions.

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has received its initial Phase 1A allocations of the COVID-19 vaccine. We have been working hard to vaccinate the first priority group of medical first responders, EMS personnel, and public health staff who will be needed to vaccinate the rest of the priority groups. At the same time, hospitals have also begun vaccinating their employees and the pharmacies designated under a federal contract have begun implementing their vaccination plans for long term care facilities and other congregate settings.

Health Department vaccination clinics are being scheduled and are available for priority groups healthcare workers by appointment only. We will begin expanding beyond medical first responders and EMS personnel to other health care workers as we finish these groups. We have and will continue, to follow the phased approach based on the Center for Disease Control prioritization guidance. These phase 1A clinics will serve healthcare workers who are not being vaccinated through a hospital or other organization, and it is anticipated this process may take several weeks. While Phase 1A clinics will not be open to the general public, we are looking ahead to plan for future phases and want to remind the public that it is likely phases will overlap. The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is asking healthcare agencies and healthcare workers who identify themselves as part of phase 1A to complete this [COVID-19 Vaccine Information Form](#). We will use this information to contact employers and/or individuals via email in phase 1A when clinic appointments open for scheduling. To view phased, priority group information view the [Michigan COVID-19 vaccination prioritization guidance](#).

We anticipate vaccination clinics to grow weekly and know that community members may be interested in volunteering to support our clinics and other health department needs. If you feel you are able to help as a volunteer for any of our health department activities, please register by visiting the [MI Volunteer Registry](#). We are actively monitoring this database for potential volunteers in our communities.

“This is a very busy but exciting time for all of us,” stated Lisa Peacock, Health Officer. “We are eager to provide vaccinations to our communities at large, but we must continue to plan for this next step in order to have a seamless transition. We are asking our community members interesting in assisting the local COVID-19 response to visit the MI volunteer registry. We must continue to work together to take care of our communities.”

As of 4:00pm, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 638, Leelanau– 598
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 238, Leelanau– 213
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 378, Leelanau– 380
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 22, Leelanau– 5
- Hospitalized: 84 total; 7 current

The State of Michigan has reported 469,928 cases and 11,775 deaths.

Visit our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#) for the latest local information including recovered data and contact tracing. Michigan Department of Health and Human Service Dashboard: [Dashboard](#). Additional and updated information can be found on our [Website](#) and [Facebook](#) or by calling our public information line 231-882-2197. If you have COVID-19 related question, fill out a quick [survey](#), email questions to [hotline@bldhd.org](mailto:hotline@bldhd.org), or call our public information line at 231-882-2197.

Media Contact:

Rachel Pomeroy, PIO

231-882-6085

[RPomeroy@bldhd.org](mailto:RPomeroy@bldhd.org)

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