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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release

March 15, 2021

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID-19 Update

Today there were zero new cases of COVID-19 reported in Benzie County and two new cases of COVID-19 reported in Leelanau County. The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has reported 12 new cases – three new cases in Benzie County and nine new cases in Leelanau County - of COVID-19 since Saturday, March 13th.

The Benzie- Leelanau District Health Department is gearing up for the expanded eligibility announced recently, opening vaccination eligibility beginning March 22 for Michiganers' ages 16 and older with disabilities or medical [conditions that put them at high risk of negative COVID-19 outcome](#). The state also announced that beginning April 5, all Michiganers age 16 and up who were not previously eligible will be eligible to receive a vaccine.

"We are pleased that the vaccination rollout is moving more quickly than initially anticipated," said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer. "This will be a large expansion and it is expected that initially demand may exceed available doses of vaccine. Yet, we will work diligently every week to administer the doses we receive to those who need them most and meet eligibility requirements."

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is allowing anyone who meets eligibility requirements to pre-register for a COVID-19 vaccination, including the most recent expanded groups of those 16 and older. Despite eligibility opening to more residents, the health department continues to prioritize vaccinating seniors, who are among our most vulnerable population. Appointments - which are always subject to the amount of vaccine available - will be scheduled based on age (oldest to youngest), and other risk factors such as disability, underlying conditions, and other social vulnerability index factors such as transportation, and living arrangements, as well as other factors that may put someone at a higher risk of COVID-19. The most recent [vaccine prioritization guidelines](#) can be found on Michigan's COVID-19 website.

In the health department's jurisdiction is making progress towards the state's goal of vaccinating 70% of the population. As of Friday, 56.65% of the 65 to 74 years old population in the health department's jurisdiction have received at least one dose of the vaccine and 54.80% of those 75 years and older. More information on percentages and doses administered can be found on our [updated Dashboard](#).

"This is a significant expansion to vaccine eligibility, and as a result, appointments for individuals in these newly eligible groups may not be available immediately," Peacock said. "Please know that it will take time for us to coordinate making appointments for those currently on our waiting list and these new groups who will be signing up."

Even with the increase of COVID-19 vaccinations, health officials urge everyone to continue to practice preventative measures such as properly wearing masks, social distancing, and frequent handwashing to reduce the spread of the virus until the vast majority of people have been vaccinated.

As of today, here is where we are currently with the COVID-19 vaccine:

Number of vaccine doses allocated for next week: 1,228 doses (700- 1st dose, 528- 2nd doses)

Total number of vaccine doses received: 8,752 doses

Total number of vaccine doses administered: 7,512 doses

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

Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 918, Leelanau– 931

Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 44, Leelanau– 82

Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 843, Leelanau– 834

Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 31, Leelanau– 15

Hospitalized: 133 total; 0 currently

The State of Michigan has reported 610,580 cases and 15,783 deaths.

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