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## PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

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**For Immediate Release**

**March 8, 2021**

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

Today there was one new case of COVID-19 reported in Benzie County and eight new cases of COVID-19 reported in Leelanau County. The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has reported 16 new cases – six new cases in Benzie County and ten new cases in Leelanau County - of COVID-19 since Saturday, March 6th. One new COVID-19 associated death was reported today in Benzie County.

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department plans to hold two COVID-19 vaccination clinics in each of its counties and administer over 1,000 first and second doses this week. Appointments have been scheduled with eligible residents, including those 50 and older with medical conditions or disabilities and caregiver families and guardians who care for children with special health care needs, an eligibility category that opened today, March 8.

First dose clinics, where 650 vaccines will be administered, are scheduled in Benzonia and Suttons Bay. Additionally, 400 second doses will be administered at clinics in Lake Ann and Suttons Bay.

“This schedule reflects progress toward our goal of having regularly scheduled clinics in each county each week,” said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer.

Another exciting development is the receipt of the first allocation of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine, which is a single-dose series and can be stored at refrigerated temperatures.

“This vaccine option allows for some additional creativity in developing strategies to reach additional people,” Peacock noted. “We are hoping one of those strategies can be redistributing some of this vaccine to local partners and eligible providers not currently offering the vaccine to create more access points for our residents. We anticipate using the single dose Janssen vaccination for harder to reach populations while continuing to use Pfizer and Moderna for our community clinics,” she said.

It is important to note that while supplies are increasing so are the number of individuals eligible to receive the vaccine. Additionally, there remains a limited amount of vaccine available, so residents may experience a wait period for appointments.

To help guide residents as they sign up for an appointment, the health department is updated its registration process for COVID-19 vaccination clinics through a software program called Patient Education Genius (PEG). Individuals who pre-registered using the health department’s initial online form *will not* lose their place in line to receive the vaccine. Those who have already pre-registered will receive an email or text message from PEG which will ask them to provide updated information. The purpose of collecting this updated information is to align with the updated eligibility definitions. The PEG system will be used to do the following:

- Send the current list of pre-registrants an email to collect more information and update an individual’s priority group and eligibility status.
- Request vaccination status in order to update our list to include only those still needing appointments.
- Provide a tool for future communications, as needed.
- Provide for additional security in the scheduling process.

It is critical that anyone who has pre-registered on the health department’s website frequently check their email, including junk and spam folders for emails received from Covidvaccine@bldhd.org.

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

- Number of vaccine doses allocated for this week: 1,050 doses (650 1<sup>st</sup> dose, 400- 2<sup>nd</sup> doses)
- Total number of vaccine doses received: 6,519 doses
- Total number of vaccine doses administered: 6,511 doses

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

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 904, Leelanau– 908
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 37, Leelanau– 65
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 836, Leelanau– 828
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 31, Leelanau– 15
- Hospitalized: 130 total; 0 currently

The State of Michigan has reported 598,014 cases and 15,670 deaths.

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