

LENAWEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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lenaweehealthdepartment.org



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2021

COVID-19 Transmission Level at “Substantial”. Delta Variant Identified in Lenawee. Masking recommended.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and Lenawee County Health Department fully support and endorse the new CDC recommendations for masking to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

With the Transmission Level Now at “Substantial”, the Lenawee County Health Department Recommends Masking in Indoor Public Places Regardless of Vaccination Status.

On July 27, 2021, CDC updated guidance to state that individuals should wear a mask indoors, regardless of vaccination status, in areas of substantial or high transmission. The CDC COVID Data Tracker ranks community transmission levels as either Low, Moderate, Substantial, or High. The level of community transmission in Lenawee County is trending upward. Our transmission level was rated as low for the week of July 6, increased to moderate the week of July 13 and increased to substantial today with a case rate of 60.94 per 100,000 persons (Time frame: July 28-Aug 03) and a test positivity rate of 4.67% (Time frame: July 26-August 1). Neighboring counties have also met the substantial or high transmission threshold.

The Health Department Recommends Universal Masking in All School Settings.

Additionally, the updated guidance from CDC recommends that all staff, students and visitors in k-12 schools wear masks, regardless of vaccination status or community transmission level. On August 2, 2021, MDHHS released new recommendations to operate schools safely which include recommendations for universal masking https://www.michigan.gov/documents/coronavirus/COVID-19_Guidance_for_Operating_Schools_Safely_728838_7.pdf. **The Lenawee County Health Department strongly recommends that schools implement layered prevention strategies, including universal masking in the school setting, to protect the safety and welfare of students and staff.**

The Lenawee County Health Department Strongly Encourages Businesses to Implement Face Mask Wearing for All Individuals – Fully Vaccinated and Unvaccinated – While Indoors In Public.

The health department also encourages businesses to use a layered protection strategy to protect employees and customers. This will allow all Lenawee County residents the best chance to remain healthy and physically present at work. Layered prevention strategies should include the following risk mitigation measures:

- Receive the COVID-19 vaccine, if eligible
- Wear your face mask while indoors
- Wash your hands frequently
- Maintain a distance of six feet from others
- Enhance ventilation within buildings
- Stay home when sick and get tested for COVID-19
- Adhere to isolation if you test positive for COVID-19 or quarantine if considered a close contact

The Delta Variant has been identified in Lenawee County. Residents are urged to get vaccinated.

This updated CDC mask guidance is due largely to the fact that the Delta variant is spreading rapidly throughout the United States, especially in areas with low vaccination rates. Some vaccinated people can get Delta and may be contagious. Overall, however, vaccinated individuals represent a very small amount of transmission occurring around the country. Two Lenawee County COVID-19 cases have been identified as Delta variant cases. “Vaccination remains the best tool in our toolbox to prevent COVID-19 infection, severe disease, hospitalization, and death. We know that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, and the best defense against the virus. Please get the vaccine as soon as possible to help yourself and others stay healthy,” stated Dr. Dennis Chernin, Medical Director of the Lenawee County Health Department.

To date, 49.0% of Lenawee County residents 12+ years and older have received at least one dose of vaccine. The health department, located at 1040 South Winter Street, will be offering walk-in COVID-19 vaccinations on August 9, 10, 11 & 12 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30am and 1 to 3:30 p.m. and on August 13 from 8 to 11:30 a.m. There is no cost to individuals for vaccination, no ID is required, and no appointment is needed. You will be able to select which vaccine you would like to receive: Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson. Please see our website <https://www.lenawee.mi.us/988/Upcoming-Vaccine-Clinics> for information regarding additional vaccination opportunities or call 517-264-5226, Option 2.

“I understand the frustration associated with changing recommendations to mitigate the pandemic, however, as more is learned about the virus and the new variants, we must change our recommendations to best protect our community,” stated Martha Hall, Lenawee County Health Officer. “Wearing masks in indoor public spaces will help protect our community from the spreading Delta variant.”

For more information about COVID-19, visit www.lenaweehealthdepartment.org or call 517-264-5226, Option 5.

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The mission of the Lenawee County Health Department is to promote a safe and healthy environment.