



Jackson County Health Department

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Creating Healthy Communities



To: News Editor

From: Rashmi Travis, MPH, CHES
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Re: Current and Ongoing Jackson County COVID-19 Response Efforts

Date: May 1, 2020

For Immediate Release

Jackson, Mich- Governor Whitmer, with the recent release of Executive Orders 2020-59, 2020-60, and 2020-70 has now begun the economic re-opening of Michigan. Jackson County has a current case count of 360 resulting in 22 deaths. Similar to the statewide data, we are starting to see a decline in the 5 day moving average number of cases of COVID-19. Locally, this decline is due to the great response of the Jackson Community in following the request of the Governor with the first “Stay Home, Stay Safe, Save Lives” order back in March. Local schools responded quickly by shutting down physical operations and moving to remote learning. Businesses and residents responded positively to the Executive Orders issued by Governor Whitmer. With social distancing, isolation and quarantining of sick people and contact control tracing, the COVID-19 outbreak is beginning to take a turn for the better. The “flattening of the curve” that everyone has heard about is beginning to appear in Jackson County and statewide. Efforts continue to be increased across the board in the public health, medical and emergency response communities to keep this progress moving forward. Jackson County thanks all of our residents, business owners and responders for the sacrifices they have made in their lives that have helped drive down the “curve”.

Our Public Health, Medical Community, First Responder and Emergency Management staff have worked closely together to provide resources, education, monitoring, testing, and the provision of care for COVID-19 cases in Jackson County. The Health Department has conducted extensive contact tracing to monitor the spread of illness in our community which helps determine the depth of spread by this highly infectious illness. Positive cases of Covid-19 are investigated on a daily basis and other close contacts of the individuals testing positive are identified and provided instruction for quarantining and breaking the cycle of disease spread. Our medical care community from local providers, congregate care homes, home health agencies on up to our local hospital and EMS agencies have all ensured that those in need of care get care.

The Jackson community is coming together to help those in need during the coronavirus emergency. The Jackson COVID-19 Action Network, also known as JCAN, is bringing together local government, organizations and businesses to help. JCAN is working to make sure Jackson County residents have access to food, shelter, information and other basic needs during this crisis.

Working together to create and promote a healthy community through disease prevention and control, health education, environmental protection and emergency preparedness.

Families in need are directed to **call the 211 helpline** so they can be put on a list for assistance from JCAN. Those wishing to volunteer with the JCAN effort are also asked to call 211. JCAN's efforts are supported by the COVID-19 Response Fund created by the United Way of Jackson County and the Jackson Community Foundation. As of April 16, a total of 48,559 items have been distributed. Donations are being accepted through the United Way's website (<https://uwjackson.org/>), and have come from local businesses, organizations, and residents. Currently, no government funds are secured to fund these operations and they are all supported through the donation fund.

Jackson County currently has four drive through testing centers through Henry Ford Allegiance Health and the Center for Family Health that have increased capacity and offer testing based on pre-screening. Individuals can call the Henry Ford My Care Line at 313- 874-1055 or Center for Family Health at 517-748-5363 to obtain testing information and locations. In addition, we are seeing greater numbers of recovered patients who may be taking part in a Henry Ford Health System study to help with finding a cure and or a vaccine to fight this deadly illness. Both medical facilities have developed capacity and procedures for First Responders and other essential critical infrastructure workers to be tested quickly when needed so they can get back on the job of protecting and serving our residents.

The Michigan Association of Local Public Health (MALPH), an association of local public health officers, have provided the Governor's Office a consensus document regarding key strategies needed for reopening Michigan for business. The document identified nine items as necessary to be in place for a highly successful Michigan reopening to occur.

The list of recommended actions ensures 1. collaboration is occurring at all levels of government, 2. testing, surveillance and case investigation is available across all local communities, 3. businesses and worksites are practicing safe measures to protect their employees and patrons, and 4. ensuring everyone is able to receive services regardless of gender, race or socioeconomic status:

The recommended guidance list submitted is as follows:

Coordinated State & Local Strategies

1. Local public health to review and respond to new guidance and orders
2. Clear and consistent guidance and orders across Michigan
3. Gradual reopening process that prioritizes openings based on low risk to public health
4. Workplace controls to maintain public health

Shoring Up Local Testing, Tracing, and Surveillance Infrastructure

5. Testing available for every resident in every community
6. Real-time surveillance to measure COVID-19 in every county
7. Flexible and funded case investigation and contact tracing improvements

Pandemic Resilience & Recovery in Communities

8. Serving populations experiencing disparities and extreme hardship
9. Empowering Michiganders to take action to protect health

In Jackson County, residents and businesses have followed the Governor's Executive Orders and are now looking to open our county up economically through a carefully thought out and controlled plan. We will use the strategies outlined above to the extent possible locally. By working directly with local employers or through the Chamber of Commerce and maintaining a healthy and robust workforce, we hope to avoid any additional outbreaks or increase in COVID-19 illness rates. We encourage our employers in the community to do their part in protecting workers through social distancing, the use of cloth face masks, use of gloves, and proper

hygiene through frequent handwashing with soap and water or antiseptic dispensers placed strategically throughout their facilities, as outlined in the current Executive Orders. We encourage all residents to also do their part by maintaining social distancing, wearing masks in public areas and frequently washing your hands. If we all work together in unison now, Jackson County will be a stronger and more resilient community in the future.

Everyone can do their part in reducing the spread of COVID-19 in our community by practicing the following:

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water for 20 seconds or use of a hand sanitizer containing 60% alcohol.
- Covering your mouth when you cough with disposable tissue or elbow.
- Avoid large crowds and groups of people. Best practice is to just stay home.
- Practice social distancing – allowing at least six feet between you and others around you
- Wear a cloth mask that covers your mouth and nose when you are in public
- Don't touch your face with your hands, especially around the mouth and nose area.
- Stay home if you are sick such as a fever, coughing, headaches, runny nose, diarrhea, chills, muscle aches or sore throat.

Business Toolkit resources are available at the following location:

<https://www.mijackson.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=301> or on the Chamber of Commerce site at: <https://www.michamber.com/coronavirus-toolkit> Personal Protective Equipment can be purchased through these vendors listed on the Michigan Chamber of Commerce site located at: <https://www.michamber.com/personal-protection-equipment>

Extensive State of Michigan guidance for residents at:

https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_98155---,00.html

Extensive State of Michigan guidance for employers and workers at:

https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_98179---,00.html

Extensive State of Michigan guidance for mental health at:

https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_98179---,00.html

Lifeways Community Health COVID-19 Services offered at their website:

<https://lifewayscmh.org/COVID-19-Updates/ArtMID/942/ArticleID/1083/LifeWays-Essential-Service-Offerings-During-COVID-19-Outbreak>

If you have any questions, please visit www.mijackson.org/hd or call (517) 788-4420, Option 9.

Stay Home, Stay Safe, Save Lives. Thank you for all you are doing to stop the spread. We are all in this together.