



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Livingston County Health Department to Report Probable COVID-19 Cases

HOWELL, Michigan. - (May 5, 2020) The Livingston County Health Department (LCHD) will begin reporting probable cases of COVID-19 starting today, Tuesday, May 5th. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is expected to start reporting probable cases in the near future. Probable cases of COVID-19 disease are individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19, but have not been tested, and meet one of the following conditions within the past 14 days:

1. They have been in close contact with a laboratory confirmed case or close contact with another probable case of COVID-19.
2. They have been in close contact with a symptomatic contact of a laboratory confirmed case.
3. Have traveled to an area experiencing sustained, ongoing community transmission of SARS-CoV-2 (the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 disease).
4. Are people within the community who public health authorities consider more likely to be exposed, such as health care workers or people living in group homes.

As local health department staff investigate confirmed cases of COVID-19, individuals who were in contact with and may have been infected by a confirmed case are identified. These contacts are interviewed to determine if they have developed symptoms and meet the definition of a probable case. Once a probable case is identified, they are asked to self-isolate and local health department staff begin the process of identifying their close contacts. "Stopping the chain of transmission is vital to keeping our community safe. By identifying persons who may have been exposed and asking them to stay home for a

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period of time, we can slow the spread of disease in our community and save lives,” said Dr. Juan Marquez, Medical Director of LCHD.

Both local and state authorities recognize confirmed cases of COVID-19 only reflect part of the infected population. Access to testing for COVID-19 has been limited for many in Michigan. The reporting of probable COVID-19 cases is intended to provide a more accurate picture of the COVID-19 outbreak within our community.

While seeing how many additional people in our community are likely to have COVID-19 can be worrying, there are still steps residents can take to protect themselves. LCHD strongly encourages residents to continue taking preventive actions, practicing social distancing, and remaining at home as much as possible to help slow the spread of COVID-19. For more information, read our Probable Cases FAQ's found here: <https://www.livgov.com/health/ph/Documents/Probable-Case-FAQ.pdf>.

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