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## PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

*Issued March 31, 2020*

**The Health Department of Northwest Michigan, in collaboration with the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA), issues the following advisory to protect the health of the public in the 31-county NMPHA region:**

Northern Michigan Counties are seeing an influx of individuals who are seeking shelter from areas with significant COVID-19 community spread or returning from travel outside of these counties. While we understand the desire to seek shelter in our communities with fewer COVID cases, this potentially poses an unnecessary risk to all residents of Northern Michigan.

The increased population to the northern Michigan area places a substantial strain on our communities as travelers seek supplies, such as groceries and toiletries, as well as potentially needing health care in the event they become sick. During this public health crisis, many rural communities may not be equipped with personnel, supplies or resources for a surge in population.

If you still choose to travel to your seasonal home or return home from travel, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, in addition to the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance, is advising that you abide by the following guidelines:

1. If you are sick, stay at home and do not leave your residence.
2. If you have symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider for assistance.
3. All individuals traveling to seasonal homes or returning home from areas with community spread should **self-quarantine for 14 days** upon arrival to your destination.
4. Following the 14-day self-quarantine period, please **obey the Governor's "Stay at Home" order** and do not go out unless absolutely necessary.
5. All residents, whether full time or seasonal, should adhere to the Governor's Stay at Home order and only venture out to obtain essential supplies and services when absolutely necessary. If you do need to go out, please adhere to social distancing protocols and limit the number of people going out for supplies or services.

By following these two simple guidelines, the risk for spreading COVID-19 lowers significantly, thus protecting everyone who lives, works, and plays in beautiful northern Michigan.

*Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego County residents who need resources can call 211 or utilize the Health Department's free Community Connections program by calling 1-800-432-4121.*

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Lisa Peacock, RN, MSN, WHNP-BC  
Health Officer