

From: Sandra Lindsey

Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 3:51 PM

To: Broadcast <Broadcast@sccmha.org>

Subject: MDHHS COVID Epidemic Order: Business Restrictions ,Guidance on Social Gatherings and CDC Thanksgiving Guidance

MDHHS COVID Epidemic Order on Business Restrictions, COVID Guidance on Social Gatherings as Holidays Approach and CDC Guidance on COVID Precautions for Thanksgiving Preparations

You may have heard that Governor Whitmer spoke over the week-end on additional COVID restrictions in response to the recent surge in COVID test positive cases across the state. The new Epidemic Order was issued along with related infographics related to these restrictions, to call out visually the content of the order and they have been attached above for your reference. The order goes into effect tomorrow, Wednesday, Nov 18th at midnight and runs thru December 8th at 11:59 p.m.

The Epidemic Order is largely directed at the closure of select types of businesses and other group and social gathering locations and size limitations. Healthcare is not an industry closing under this order and further, this order will not change our operations. We remain an essential health care workforce. I have already had an inquiry as to whether SCCMHA will be moving to working remotely as a result of the order. The answer is no, we will be staying the course in our current arrangement with all of our safety measures in place (mandated mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing and heightened building sanitation). I would only ask for additional safety precautions in considering any necessary face to face (mask to mask) meetings that still need social distancing as well. The SCCMHA offices remain some of the safest places to be in this pandemic.

I will not sugar coat conditions on the group in our state and in Saginaw County. Administration had a meeting with the Saginaw County Health Department senior officials last week and they are overwhelmed with new cases. They are asking all businesses to report COVID positive staff member names and related information to assist their contact tracing efforts, which we are complying with starting this week. They are aware that most all of our staff are back in the office, that we have a safety plan in place for employees which we have shared with them including; a mask mandate, hygiene and social distancing protocols, heightened sanitation and daily staff screening for symptoms, that in person treatment is for urgent care to the most vulnerable consumers and that the modality of service delivery is largely telehealth or telephonic. They like we, are very concerned for the Adult Foster Care facilities in the county as they are for nursing homes, both congregate living settings and are working with us to ease testing access for AFC consumers and staff.

I was also in a meeting last Friday of the local health care systems, colleges and universities, Intermediate School Districts, public health directors, Chambers of Commerce chapters and the largest employers in the region. The bad news is that COVID has our region at Level E "high risk" because of the rate of infection and the stress on the hospital system and their workforce. The senior hospital officials in the meeting indicated that unlike the spring, their supply chains for PPE seems to be holding up well but the adequacy of COVID testing supplies is unreliable and the numbers of patients presenting for care is much larger than earlier in the pandemic. The local hospitals want you to know that care there is safe and that if you have a need for non-COVID hospital treatment that you should know that they have the capacity to provide it. In other words, unlike the spring COVID surge, do not delay necessary treatment.

The largest concern expressed by the 4 public health directors in the region, is that so much of the population remains unmasked and not adhering to social distancing and group gathering size guidance. The testing capacity has improved but turn-around time for results continues to be inadequate compared to the rate of infection. Though rapid testing is helping in the hospital system and elsewhere it is not as accurate producing many false negative results. This is the concern across the state, hence the MDHHS Epidemic Order this week-end.

With so much COVID weariness and the holidays being innately times to gather with family and friends, everyone needs to be mindful of careful planning for how they will celebrate the upcoming season. The infographics and the CDC Guidance on planning for Thanksgiving attached above, are well worth your time and discussion with loved ones, to keep you, your family and friends safe this holiday season.

Recent announcements on the effectiveness of new COVID vaccines under development and in clinical trials now is very promising, with so far very high rates of efficacy, but availability is many months away. Then there are the vaccine distribution challenges ahead that are very complex and complicated by the presidential leadership transition in Washington DC.

As I have already stated, we will stay the course at this point. Our staff test positive rates have been low with exposures largely coming from outside the workplace. Our approach needs to continue to be to behave as though everyone may be infected and asymptomatic, as the safest orientation. Unlike other organizations we have for the most part more building space for staff to occupy and socially distance and the ability to deliver services via technology working in our favor. Our PPE inventory is abundant and the supply chain is stable. We continue to largely limit building access to non-staff, unless urgent care or intakes are needed with screening calls before appointments and at the front door.

Please be thoughtful as you move in our building space as well as the community. Always answer the COVID screening questions honestly, do not come to work if you are sick with anything as this is also the height of the regular flu season. If you see staff members not following the COVID safety protocols by all means say something to them or to their supervisor as violations put others at risk. Remember to always wear your mask covering your mouth and nose. Recent COVID-19 research is indicting mask wearing not only protects others in this pandemic but also is now known to protect you. Socially distance even when wearing a mask. Wash your hands frequently and keep your workstations clean.

Lastly, do carefully plan for your holiday celebrations and as you navigate the environment outside the workplace, informed by the guidance provided above.

Thank you for all that you do to support our mission, stay safe and well.

Sandra M. Lindsey | CEO

Saginaw County CMH Authority

500 Hancock Street | Saginaw | MI 48602

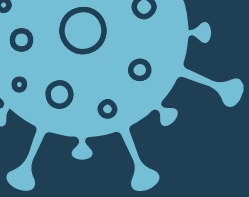
Tel: 989/797-3501 | Fax: 989/799-0206

Email: slindsey@sccmha.org | www.sccmha.org

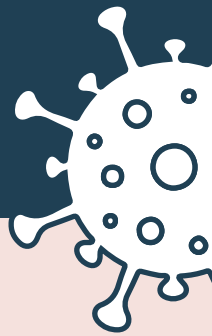
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SAGINAW COUNTY
COMMUNITY MENTAL
HEALTH AUTHORITY



PAUSE TO SAVE LIVES



Open



Two-household gathering
(high precautions)*



Small outdoor gatherings
(25 people)



Retail



Preschool through 8th grade
(local district choice)



Childcare



Manufacturing, construction,
other work that is impossible
to do remotely



Public transit



Hair salons, barber shops,
other personal services



Gyms and pools
(for individual exercise)



Restaurants and bars (outdoor
dining, takeout, and delivery)



Professional sports**
(without spectators)



Parks and outdoor
recreation



Funerals
(25 people)



Health care

*See Social Gathering Guidance.

**Includes a limited number of NCAA sports.

Not open



High schools
(in-person learning)



Theaters, movie theaters,
stadiums, arenas



Colleges and universities
(in-person learning)



Bowling centers, ice skating
rinks, indoor water parks



Workplaces, when work can
be done from home



Bingo halls, casinos,
arcades



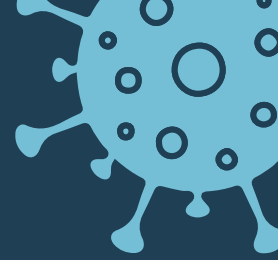
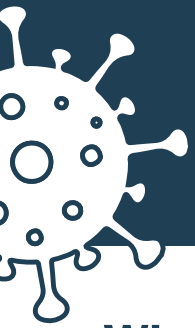
Restaurants and bars
(indoor dining)



Group fitness classes



Organized sports, except
professional sports



COVID-19

SAFE SOCIAL “PODS”

What is a pod?

A social pod is a core group of friends or family who agree to limit their in-person social activities to only each other, and practice physical distancing with anyone outside the group. Being part of a pod allows members to continue seeing people outside their household while reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Do

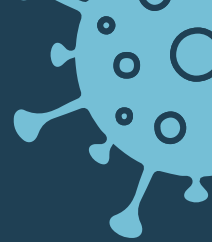
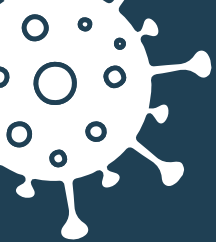
- ✓ **Agree up front exactly who is in the pod.** Keep your pod to under 10 people, and no more than one other household.*
- ✓ **Discuss how vulnerable to COVID members of the pod are** (underlying medical conditions, over age 65).
- ✓ **Agree on how all members of the pod will limit risk** (e.g., not seeing people outside the pod other than masked outdoors, not working or attending school in person). *The whole pod takes on the risk of each member's exposure.*
- ✓ **Pledge to be truthful with one another about activities.**
- ✓ **Stay outdoors as much as possible, even within the pod.**
- ✓ **Communicate immediately if anyone has symptoms or exposure to COVID-19.** The entire pod needs to stop getting together immediately, and the person with COVID-19 symptoms should get tested *immediately*.

Don't

- ✗ **Socialize with other people outside your pod,** except masked, outdoors, with at least 6 feet physical distance.
- ✗ **Pod with more than 10 people or two households.**
- ✗ **Be a part of more than one pod/social circle.**
- ✗ **Include people in your pod who have recently engaged in risky behaviors.**
- ✗ **Stop following essential public health guidance** (frequent handwashing, social distancing, wearing a mask).
- ✗ **Permit members of a household to be in different pods.**
- ✗ **Engage in activity that has not been agreed upon with your pod,** such as travel.
- ✗ **Stay in a pod if others are engaging in unsafe behavior** (e.g., going to large parties or gatherings).

* Households means a group of people living together in a shared dwelling with common kitchen or bathroom facilities.

For more information about social pods, visit Michigan.gov/Coronavirus.
Questions or concerns can be emailed to COVID19@michigan.gov.



COVID-19

SOCIAL GATHERING GUIDANCE

PAUSE TO SAVE LIVES

Socializing with family or friends may feel safe, but it is risky – especially with COVID everywhere in Michigan today. It's best to only get together outside. If you must gather indoors, you may only see one other household at a time.

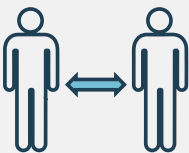
To reduce risk, follow these guidelines:

- Pick only one other household to see over the next three weeks.** Even better, form a consistent **social pod**.
- Choose a household that is also being careful.** If anyone in either group feels sick, postpone the gathering.
- Limit duration indoors.** The longer the visit, the greater the risk.

Follow these rules as much as possible:



Wear a mask – only take it off when you eat or drink, then put it back on.



Stay six feet apart.



Keep voices down and avoid shouting or cheering.



Do not share utensils.

After a gathering, monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19. If anyone in the group feels sick, get tested.

For more information about social gatherings, visit Michigan.gov/Coronavirus.
Questions or concerns can be emailed to COVID19@michigan.gov.



Celebrating Thanksgiving

Updated Nov. 9, 2020 [Print](#)



Traditional Thanksgiving gatherings with family and friends are fun but can increase the chances of getting or spreading [COVID-19](#) or the [flu](#). Follow these tips to make your Thanksgiving holiday safer.

The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year is to celebrate with people in your household. If you do plan to spend Thanksgiving with people outside your household, take steps to make your celebration safer.

Everyone Can Make Thanksgiving Safer

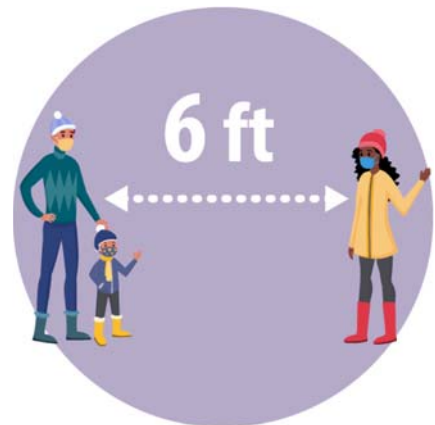
Wear a mask

- Wear a mask with two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Wear the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Make sure the mask fits snugly against the sides of your face.



Stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you

- Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread COVID-19 or flu.
- Keeping 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from others is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](#).



Wash your hands

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Keep [hand sanitizer](#) with you and use it when you are unable to wash your hands.
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.



Attending a Gathering

Make your celebration safer. In addition to following the steps that everyone can take to make Thanksgiving safer, take these additional steps while attending a Thanksgiving gathering.

- Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils.
- Wear a mask, and safely [store your mask](#) while eating and drinking.
- Avoid going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen.
- Use single-use options, like salad dressing and condiment packets and disposable food containers, plates and utensils.



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

[MENU >](#)

Hosting a Thanksgiving Gathering

If having guests to your home, be sure that people follow the steps that everyone can take to make Thanksgiving safer. Other steps you can take include:

- Have a small **outdoor meal** with family and friends who live in your community.
- Limit the number of guests.
- Have conversations with guests ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together.
- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched surfaces and items between use.
- If celebrating indoors, make sure to open windows.
- Limit the number of people in food preparation areas.
- Have guests bring their own food and drink.
- If sharing food, have one person serve food and use single-use options, like plastic utensils.



Thanksgiving Travel

Travel increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others.

If you do travel

- Check travel restrictions before you go.
- Get your **flu shot** before you travel.
- Always wear a mask in public settings and on **public transportation**.
- **Stay at least 6 feet apart** from anyone who is not in your household.
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer.



- Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer.

Consider Other Thanksgiving Activities

Host a virtual Thanksgiving meal with friends and family who don't live with you

- Schedule a time to share a meal together virtually.
- Have people share recipes and show their turkey, dressing, or other dishes they prepared.

Watch television and play games with people in your household

- Watch Thanksgiving Day parades, sports, and movies at home.
- Find a fun game to play.



Shopping

- Shop online sales the day after Thanksgiving and days leading up to the winter holidays.
- Use contactless services for purchased items, like curbside pick-up.
- Shop in open air markets staying 6 feet away from others.

Other Activities

- Safely prepare traditional dishes and deliver them to family and neighbors in a way that does not involve contact with others (for example, leave them on the porch).
- Participate in a gratitude activity, like writing down things you are grateful for and sharing with your friends and family.



Last Updated Nov. 9, 2020