

COVID-19 UPDATE



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jennifer Michaluk, PIO/Media Spokesperson

Joint Information Center

(810) 662-8246

publicrelation@stclaircounty.org

St. Clair County – COVID-19 Update #45 The St. Clair County Health Department Contact Tracing Process

There are four critical, essential steps in preventing the spread of disease: testing, isolation, contact tracing and quarantine. If any steps are missing, a virus can continue to spread. Public health uses this process in all communicable disease outbreak investigations, including COVID-19.

The St. Clair County Health Department has been continuously working on controlling community spread of COVID-19 through the contact tracing process. Public health nurses contact every individual with a confirmed COVID-19 result, interview them, assess symptoms, document where they have been, and identify any close contacts. Close contacts of a confirmed case are considered high risk and are also notified directly. This process is critical in helping control a disease outbreak situation.

Dr. Annette Mercatante, Medical Health Officer, of the St. Clair County Health Department explains, “This work is time consuming, demanding and has been a 7 day a week process since St. Clair County’s first case in early March. Since March, over 3,100 hours of St. Clair County Health Department staff’s time has been spent on contact tracing for COVID-19, utilizing 80% of our nursing team. This is four times greater than the normal amount of hours spent on routine communicable disease investigations.”

Additionally, the Health Department is asking for the public’s help in answering their phones and returning voicemails left by our staff. Typically, many people who don’t recognize a number ignore the call. During this pandemic, we ask that you please answer, as it may be our staff reaching out with critical health information.

Below are some tips to help identify legitimate calls involving COVID-19 contract tracing:

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The St. Clair County Health Department will **NOT**:

- Request personal financial information, a social security number or driver's license number
- Ask for Medicaid or other insurance information for billing purposes
- Offer medication for treatment or prevention of COVID-19

The St. Clair County Health Department **WILL ask about**:

- Current health status
- Symptoms an individual may be experiencing
- Names of close contacts
- Places someone may have visited in recent days
- Other health-related questions

If an individual has concerns about a call they received, please contact the St. Clair County Health Department at (810) 987-5300.

COVID-19 Resources:

- St. Clair County COVID-19 Informational Hotline (810) 966-4163, Monday – Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm or e-mail questions, covid19@stclaircounty.org
- MDHHS Hotline 1-888-535-6136, 8:00am - 5:00pm daily, 7-days a week or e-mail questions, COVID19@michigan.gov
- St. Clair County Community Mental Health COVID-19 Support Line (810) 985-8900; Text (810) 956-6335; Email: covid19support@scccmh.org Monday-Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm
- St. Clair County information www.scchealth.co or social media @scchdmi
- Michigan information www.michigan.gov/coronavirus
- National information www.cdc.gov/COVID19

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