



MEDIA RELEASE – PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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St. Clair County Health Department Issues Public Health Alert High Community Transmission; COVID-19 Rates Likely to Impact Workforce

St. Clair County is experiencing a rapid and concerning acceleration of COVID-19 positive cases. As of Monday, November 9, the county is experiencing a record 9.5% positivity rate. Due to the increase in people infected, the current level of new cases per day in November represents a 144% increase compared to the number of new cases per day reported in October.

The impact and rate of these changes is already considerably more than a week ago. Additionally, the Health Department's ability to effectively investigate cases to determine sources and exposure of infection have become increasingly limited. Furthermore, SCCHD has been made aware of a growing number of workplace and school related cases. With the upsurge of exposures and quarantines, local businesses, agencies and facilities may find it challenging to properly staff their organizations. Workplace guidance has been developed and can be found at: www.scchealth.co (COVID-19 page).

- Do not work while ill, regardless of whether you have had a COVID-19 test or not. Assume you have COVID-19 until you KNOW otherwise.
- If you think or know you have COVID-19, remain in isolation for the full 10 days even if you are feeling better.
- If exposed, stay in quarantine to the best of your ability for 14 days, and make every effort to avoid contact with others during this time.
- Avoid crowds.
- Wear a mask when around people outside of one's immediate family.
- Make contingency plans for children that may not be able to attend school in-person or day care.
- Avoid indoor dining outside of your home.
- Schedule virtual meetings for social and work related activities.
- Avoid extracurricular activities and social gatherings that will put you face to face with others.
- Support each other as we make difficult decisions and sacrifices.

Dr. Annette Mercatante, Medical Health Officer explained, "In these weeks or months between high transmission rates and the release of a vaccine, we simply have to deal with this reality. Remember what is making you mildly ill can be life threatening to someone else. These difficult times will get better, but we have to work together to minimize the impact of this on our community and economy. And we have to act now."

General COVID-19 questions can be directed to the St. Clair County informational hotline line at (810) 966-4163, or email covid19@stclaircounty.org. Additional resources are available on the Health Department website at www.scchealth.co or follow us on social media @scchdmi.

**St. Clair County Emergency Operations Center & Joint Information Center
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