



## MEDIA RELEASE - ADVISORY

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### **\*REVISED\* Additional COVID-19 Variant Cases Identified in St. Clair County St. Clair County Health Department Reminds Residents to Continue COVID-19 Precautions**

Additional cases of the COVID-19 variant B.1.1.7 have been identified in St. Clair County. The first case, was identified in February. Variant identification is learned after (initial COVID-19 diagnosis) further testing of the specimen.

Case #2; male in his 30's; isolation completed

Case #3; female in her 60's; deceased

Case #4; female in her 40's; isolation completed, (close contact of Case #2)

The SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.7 variant originated in the United Kingdom and has been found throughout the United States. The B.1.1.7 variant spreads more easily and is believed to be more contagious. However, there is no indication that it affects the clinical outcomes or disease severity compared to the original strain.

"We (SCCHD) are doubling down with variant case investigations. Suspect cases will be contacted more often and required to quarantine for 14 days vs 10. Since the variant can be more contagious, the virus could potentially infect more people with less exposure", said Dr. Annette Mercatante, Medical Health Officer of the St. Clair County Health Department. "It is imperative our residents continue to follow all preventive measures especially as the severity of illness and vaccine efficacy for variants are still being studied."

Based on available evidence, current tests and vaccines for COVID-19 also work against this new variant. Protective actions include:

- Wear a face mask around others
- Keep at least 6 feet apart from others
- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid crowded areas or gatherings
- Ventilate indoor spaces if around others
- [Seek testing if ill, exposed, or after travel](#)
- Follow [isolation](#) or [quarantine](#) guidance if ill, exposed, or waiting on test results
- Get vaccinated when vaccine becomes available to you

This is a rapidly evolving situation. Further updates will be shared on [www.scchealth.co](http://www.scchealth.co) and social media @sccdmi.

**##END##**

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