



MEDIA RELEASE

Information **Advisory** **Warning** **Update**

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Jennifer Michaluk, M.Ed, CHES
Public Information Officer
St. Clair County Health Department
jmichaluk@stclaircounty.org

Public Health Mask Order Set to Expire January 28

Dr. Annette Mercatante, Medical Health Officer of the St. Clair County Health Department has determined the Public Health Order requiring that masks be worn in K-12 educational settings will not be extended and, therefore, will expire upon the completion of classes on Friday, January 28, 2022.

This decision was made after careful consideration and is based on the following factors. COVID-19 case counts in the schools have leveled out in such a way that they are manageable by the schools. Absences in the schools are down and the schools have been able to maintain the staffing levels sufficient to operate. Fortunately, the schools were able to remain open and the mitigation provided by masking met its intended purpose. Also, although local hospitals are challenged, the number of cases in our local hospitals are decreasing. All of this supports Dr. Mercatante's decision to allow the order to expire. At this point the mitigation measures to be used will be left to the local Schools as they had previously requested.

With the Order expiring, the St. Clair County Health Department strongly recommends masks continue to be worn in K-12 setting as well as all public and crowded spaces until viral transmission rates are below 10%. Applying preventive measures that include physical distancing, mask wearing, hand hygiene, and cleaning of high-touch surfaces does reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19.

Email COVID-19 questions to covid19@stclaircounty.org or call (810) 966-4163. For more COVID-19 information visit the health department website www.scchealth.co and social media @scchdmi.

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