

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER



Dear Community Members:

This past week had a sharp rise with 74 new reported cases. The week of July 6 through July 13 marks the highest number of positive cases in a 7-day period for Medina County since the pandemic began. Before this week, our highest week of cases occurred during a time when we were testing nursing homes and long-term care facilities, which makes our current situation troubling. The cases we are seeing now are not from congregate living settings or from testing events. Through contact notification, we know that new cases are coming from graduation parties, weddings, out of state travel, and other types of group gatherings. It is important for everyone to be aware of the social interactions that you are having and to maintain distance, particularly in situations without a facial covering.

I know that testing is again not readily available. Regional labs are experiencing high volumes of requests and the turnaround for some labs is longer than 6 days. This makes disease control difficult, so we are asking everyone who feels ill, or receives a test and is waiting for results, to isolate at home away from friends and family.

Protective measures

Through all of this, my message has consistently been about the actions you can take personally. Every layer of protection that you can take lowers your risk of contracting this virus. You are likely tired of hearing about hand washing, facial coverings, and social distancing, but those layers all add up to the best protection. When all three are not possible, you need to weigh the situation. In terms of school re-opening, I know that committees, administrators, and school boards are all grappling with how to incorporate as many layers as possible into each environment. This won't be easy, and it won't be perfect. Every district will make those tough individual choices for their schools, and parents will in turn make those choices for their own families.

The purpose of the Ohio Advisory Public Advisory Alert System is to help counties understand their risk level based on data. This system will help indicate the county level impact of the virus and will help signal steps that may need to be taken locally. We all want to see Medina remain in yellow or orange with as many normal activities as possible. It will take the entire community acting with each other's health and safety in mind.

You may start to see posters pop up around the community and some social media campaigns encouraging community members to support our efforts in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Wearing a mask, avoiding groups of more than 10, and washing your hands are the courteous thing to do. These efforts worked to slow the spread early on in the pandemic and I am encouraging you to take all efforts to continue to practice them.

Update on data

The Health Department is committed to providing the most informative and timely resources available. This week you will see a change to our zip code map. Up until this point, the zip code map has shown the total number of reported cases in the county. We are changing to a 12-week reporting period, rather than a cumulative one, to show where COVID-19 is currently most active in the county. You can find that information, updated every Friday, on our website here:

www.medicinacountyohio.gov/community/current-outbreaks/data/

Where can I find the latest information?

[Medinahealth.org](http://www.medicinacountyohio.gov) or [Coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov) have the latest real-time information. You can find health and safety messages and information you can use to help make decisions that are best for you and your family.