

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

Dear Community Members:

Last week we talked about a change to the zip code map on the Health Department data dashboard: <https://medinahealth.org/community/current-outbreaks/data/>. We've updated it to show the amount of cases per 10,000 people per 12 week period to help you see the level of disease burden in each zip code. This way of reporting can better put into perspective areas of concern where community transmission is a problem.



Medina County has not yet been considered “high risk” in the Ohio Public Health Advisory System but moving back to a red level designation is a concern. We are averaging 85 new COVID-19 cases per week right now which means the rate of community transmission is the highest it's ever been. My hope is that the updated zip code map will more clearly show the case density we've seen and hopefully encourage everyone to be more aware of interactions.

Early on in the pandemic, we saw coronavirus affect our older adults and those with high risk conditions. But now the virus is circulating through our youth. Containing it has been difficult since symptoms among younger people are usually mild and people are continuing to go to work or to social gatherings thinking they just have a cold or allergies.

The more the virus is circulating, the greater the chance for a person to have a negative consequence. This could be cardiac impairment, long haul syndrome with lingering symptoms, or an extended hospitalization. While these are not the norm, they do occur and we have the power to keep this out of our communities with some everyday actions. I am encouraging all residents to be aware of how they are feeling every day. A light cough or headache and congestion may not feel bad enough for you to stay home from work, but those symptoms could put others at risk. It's our responsibility to our friends and neighbors to protect one another. A young, healthy individual will likely recover just fine, but the concern lies in people they could unknowingly infect who may not have the same outcome.

I know the last few months have felt like an eternity. There have been changes, many unknowns, and plenty of opinions. Especially heading into the fall after months of restrictions and an impending flu season, I understand the frustration people are feeling. This will pass and we will get through it. The changes we are living with are inconvenient but they are ultimately temporary. We continue to learn more about this virus and ways to treat and manage it. Our goal is to keep businesses and schools in compliance so we can safely engage in normal activities. We are offering the best guidance we can to slow the spread, but the success of that will be dependent on our actions. We have so many strong people, businesses, schools, and organizations in our county. The best thing we can do is come together and look forward.

### Where can I find the latest information?

Medinahealth.org or Coronavirus.ohio.gov have the latest real-time information. Information for parents and schools administrators on safely returning to schools and extra-curricular activities can be found here:

<https://medinahealth.org/community/current-outbreaks/schools/>

