



## Portage County Combined General Health District

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### COVID-19 Stay-At-Home Health Advisory

**Issued: November 20, 2020**

**Ends: December 18, 2020**

Portage County is experiencing a rapid increase in COVID-19 cases and the number of hospitalizations locally and within our region have dramatically increased to a point of concern. Positivity rates for our state have risen from 3% to 12% and Northeast Ohio hospital systems are reporting positivity rates even higher. According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) the positivity rate for Portage County is 10.5% as of 11/16/2020.

Additional guidance, advisement, warning and intervention is warranted to mitigate case growth and preserve hospital capacity. It is more important than ever to follow guidance from local, state, and federal officials on how to stop and slow the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

Taking the steps listed below is critical to preventing the spread of the virus, protecting the lives of you and your loved ones, and preserving our acute and other healthcare services and capacity.

#### **Section 1. Stay-at-Home Advisory**

Beginning on Friday, November 20, 2020, the Health Commissioner for the Portage County Combined General Health District advises all residents to stay at home to the greatest extent possible due to the rapid rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the county. Residents are advised to only leave home to go to work or school, or for essential needs such as seeking medical care, going to the grocery store or pharmacy, picking up food, or receiving deliveries.

Additionally, residents are strongly advised to:

- a) Avoid traveling in and out of the state and
- b) Forgo having guests in their homes during the upcoming holiday season.

This advisory shall remain in place for two consecutive incubation periods of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (28 days), or until such time as the Portage County Health District determines a change to the guidance is appropriate.

#### **Section 2. Adherence to All Current Orders**

All orders set forth by Governor R. Michael DeWine, the Ohio Department of Health, County, and the municipalities shall continue to be enforced and adhered to by all residents.

#### **Section 3. Advisory on Indoor and Outdoor Meetings and Social Events**

Residents are advised to limit meetings and social events to 10 individuals, from the issue date of this advisory. The advice applies to both indoor and outdoor events, birthday parties, and other events that may occur at a banquet hall, event venue or other similar space. This advisement also is intended for overall review and planning of events such as weddings or funerals. A meeting or social event that is outside of normal operations is advised to have no more than 10 individuals.

#### **Section 4. Private Gatherings**

Residents are strongly advised to not have any indoor gatherings with guests in their homes from other households. Maintenance and general household repairs using hired workers (e.g. plumbing, heating, electrical) can continue provided that the COVID-19 preventative practices of masks, physical distancing, etc. are followed.

#### **Section 5. Response to Illness and Exposure – Isolation and Quarantine**

Residents that are exhibiting any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 must shelter in their place of residence. They shall not go to their workplace or congregate setting and shall only leave their place of residence to seek necessary clinical care, or for essential life sustaining needs, such as obtaining medicine or food via safe contact methods such as drive through pharmacy and curbside grocery would be advisable.

COVID-19 symptoms include, but are not limited to, new onset of fever, cough, shortness of breath, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, body aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or unusual fatigue.

Residents diagnosed with COVID-19 by a laboratory test or through their medical provider must isolate for 10 days from the date of their symptom onset, or from the date of test collection (until you are not experiencing symptoms). In the home, sick or infected individuals should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area, and use a separate bathroom, if available. Cleaning and sanitizing regularly are essential.

Residents that have been identified as a contact to an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 should quarantine for one full incubation period (14 days) from the date of last contact. Individuals in quarantine should stay home, separate from others, monitor their health, and follow all instructions regarding quarantine from the Portage County Health District.

Residents who are either confirmed positive or a close contact **should not wait** to hear from the health district staff and immediately follow the guidance as described. Information about isolation and quarantine can be found on the website of the Portage County Health District [www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net) , [www.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov) or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) .

#### **Section 6: Employers and Schools**

Employers are strongly encouraged to identify and accommodate as many employees as possible to work from home during this time. All businesses and local governments are advised to transition as many transactions and functions as possible to conduct business remotely as opposed to in-person transactions and functions. Public and private K-12 schools are advised to maintain awareness of case numbers both within their district buildings and the general community. Shifts to alternate learning modalities such as hybrid or virtual could become necessary.



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