



Serving Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet & Otsego Counties

MEDIA CONTACT:

Erin Luckhardt, PIO

Office: 231-347-5628

Information Line: 1-800-386-5959

e.luckhardt@nwhealth.org

nwhealth.org

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**Health Department of Northwest Michigan Advises Residents to Prepare
not Panic for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is continuously working on preparedness and response planning for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Communication occurs daily with federal, state and local officials/partners. The Health Department is monitoring the situation at a local level and coordinating efforts with other local health departments -- this includes Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department, Central Michigan District Health Department, District Health Department #2, District Health Department #4, District Health Department #10 and Grand Traverse County Health Department. Michigan, including Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego Counties have no confirmed cases at this time.

As COVID-19 cases increase worldwide, including in the United States, it is important to be mindful of preparing for a shift from an epidemic to a pandemic. At this time, we are encouraging our communities to *prepare, not panic*. It is still uncertain when COVID-19 will impact the greater United States, for how long, or the severity, and information is changing on a daily basis.

Health Officer, Lisa Peacock, reminds residents that "It is important to consider actions to reduce the spread of illness in general – things like staying home if you are ill, coughing into an elbow or tissue, and frequent handwashing are important. While the situation is regularly changing, it is also important to stay up to date with reliable sources and to begin identifying some actions that can help protect your health and those you care about."

These measures will help decrease and slow the spread of infection, and reduce the impact on our community:

- Pay attention, and comply, with public health requests and recommendations.
- Get your information from credible sources (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Health Department, etc.).
- Support your family, friends and neighbors when they need your help.
- Practice good hand washing hygiene – wash hands regularly or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% or more) if soap and water are not available.
- Stay home when you are sick (work, school, social gatherings, events, etc.).
- Clean all "high touch" surfaces every day with household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover coughs, sneezes and avoid touching your face.
- Avoid sharing personal household items.
- Be current on your routine vaccinations.
- Call ahead before going to the doctor or hospital if you are sick (most Coronavirus infections are not serious, but as always, be mindful of concerning symptoms like shortness of breath and prolonged fever).

