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## **Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update**

### **Food, ag workers eligible for vaccine but health department keeps focus on seniors**

As food processing and agricultural workers become eligible to register for the COVID-19 vaccination starting today, March 1, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan will continue to administer vaccines based on allocating 75% for the 65 and older population and 25% for all other eligible workers.

The health department has clinics scheduled in all four of its counties this week and expects to administer just over 2,000 first doses and just over 1,000 second doses. Registrants on the current waiting list are being scheduled for the first vaccine appointments; second dose appointments are scheduled at the time the first dose is administered.

“Two important principles we are asked to follow are administering 90% of the first dose allocations we receive within seven days and using 75% of our allocated doses for the 65 and older population,” said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer. “The great news is that our registration waiting list is shrinking and the vaccine coverage in our communities - and especially for our seniors - is increasing! As of last week, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) dashboard, 45.8% of those 65 and older in our jurisdiction have received at least one dose. I know that vaccinating 70% of the population is a tall mountain to climb but we are getting there which is something to celebrate.”

Peacock explained that food processing and agricultural workers who are eligible to register starting today may wait a few weeks before they are scheduled into clinic appointments as vaccine supply becomes available. Employers can register their [eligible workers](http://www.nwhealth.org) at [www.nwhealth.org](http://www.nwhealth.org).

According to the MDHHS, the state’s food and agricultural sector is critical to feeding Michiganders, the health of the economy, and spans a wide range of jobs. Within the sector, workers at highest risk are those who must work in close proximity to many other people for extended periods of time.

Eligible food processing staff includes some workers in: meat processing and meatpacking facilities, processing of fruit and vegetables, dairy processing, animal feed manufacturing, food and animal feed and ingredient manufacturing, beverage production, and production of food packaging.

Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers who are by nature of their work in close proximity and contact with other people includes some workers involved in agricultural commodities including: raising, cultivating, harvesting, packing, storing, and distributing.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan reported 15 new cases on Saturday, February 27: Antrim (4), Charlevoix (3), Emmet (7), and Otsego (1) counties. On Saturday, February 28, 4 new COVID-19

*The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit [nwhealth.org](http://nwhealth.org).*

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associated deaths were recorded in Charlevoix (1), Emmet (1) and Otsego (2) counties. These recorded deaths were reconciled at the state level and may be due to, but are not limited to, a record review of deaths adjusting for county of residence, a recently recorded COVID-related death certificate, or a newly recorded death this weekend. On Sunday, February 28, 8 new cases were reported: Antrim (1), Charlevoix (2), Emmet (5), and Otsego (0) counties. Today, Monday, March 1, 9 new cases were reported: Antrim (2), Charlevoix (1), Emmet (5), and Otsego (1) counties. As of 4 p.m. today, the health department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (944), Charlevoix (1,050), Emmet (1,544), and Otsego (1,170).
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (831), Charlevoix (957), Emmet (1,305) and Otsego (1,003).
- Confirmed COVID-19 associated deaths in the following counties: Antrim (20), Charlevoix (13), Emmet (38), and Otsego (27).

The State of Michigan is reporting 589,150 cases and 15,534 deaths. As of February 26, 2021 cumulative recovered cases statewide are 541,258.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS [vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#).