
HEALTH DEPARTMENT STATEMENT



Statement from Kent County Health Department *Regarding Kent County's Process in Notification of COVID-19 Exposure*

There have been several media reports regarding Allegan County Health Department's notification process when an individual exposed to COVID-19 is required to quarantine. These stories detail Allegan County's warning letter that non-complaint individuals could face legal repercussions or be "taken into protective custody to protect the public's health." **While Allegan County has clarified its overall process, we want to be clear that the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) does not use this type of notification letter when communicating with an individual requiring quarantine.**

When the KCHD is notified of a positive case of COVID-19, a member of our staff contacts the patient to identify individuals with whom the patient has been in contact during their contagious period. Those individuals who are identified as a contact will be notified by the KCHD or the State of Michigan staff through phone or letter. This process, known as contact tracing, is used by public health departments to help curb the spread of an infectious disease within a community and has been used in the past to help contain outbreaks of SARS, Ebola, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections, etc.

Our approach with any compliance issue is to seek cooperation and to provide guidance and support. With COVID-19 contact tracing, our goals are to inform an individual they may have been exposed to COVID-19, assess their medical condition and other risk factors, and gather information for continued monitoring and support.

In the end, the KCHD strongly believes that matters of public health are best addressed when we all work together to promote and protect a healthy community. To date, we have received excellent cooperation from the individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts. We will continue to work with our residents to help prevent the spread of the virus in our community.

Attached is the letter the KCHD sends to parents and guardians of students in school settings when an outbreak has been identified.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

700 FULLER AVE. NE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

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KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

700 FULLER N.E.
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503-1918
PH: 616-326-0060
FAX: 616-632-7085



Requirement to Quarantine

Your child, **NAME**, has been identified by their school as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in a school-related outbreak. This means that your child had direct contact or was within six feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more while either the person who tested positive and/or your child was not consistently wearing a mask.

The Kent County Health Department recommends that your child limit all activities outside of your home for 10 days from the last date of exposure to minimize the potential spread of the virus should your child become positive. You are encouraged to monitor your child for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following the date of last exposure.

Because an outbreak has been identified in an educational setting, your child's school is required to enforce the quarantine of any students identified as close contacts to a COVID-19 case within the school setting. Your child's school is aware of this requirement to quarantine and can provide you additional information and resources if you have questions.

Students who are fully vaccinated may attend school and participate in sports and extracurricular activities but must wear a face mask for 10 days after exposure or until there is a negative PCR test done on or after day 3 after exposure. A family who believes their student is exempt under one of the two exemptions (fully vaccinated and/or diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 90 days) must provide the school with proof. If the family does not want to share information or provide proof, the student is not exempt and must quarantine.

Your child was last exposed on **DATE**.
The return to all activities date is **DATE**.

During this time of quarantine, it is important to monitor for symptoms, including:

- o Cough or tightness in your chest or difficulty breathing
- o Sore throat, nasal congestion
- o Nausea or vomiting, headache
- o Fever
- o Muscle aches or weakness
- o Loss of taste or smell

If your child begins showing symptoms or has another exposure, the length of quarantine could change. Please be sure to contact your child's primary care physician if your child begins to show any symptoms to get a test for COVID-19.

Here is a list of actions you can do to help limit the spread of the virus during your child's quarantine period:

- o The person in quarantine should wear a mask while at home (if appropriate)
- o Clean surfaces frequently and everyone in the home should wash hands regularly
- o Stay at home as much as possible; do not have visitors

The other members of the family do not need to quarantine at this time. Everyone should monitor for symptoms every day.

If you have any questions, reach out to your child's primary care physician or call 616-326-0060.

For more information on quarantine & isolation: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

"To serve, protect, and promote a healthy community for all."

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