



Public Health
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Tuscarawas County
Health Department

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Tuscarawas County Health Department Redirects COVID-19 Response Efforts

DOVER—Following the direction and recommendation of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), effective this afternoon (1/26/22), the Tuscarawas County Health Department will discontinue individual COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing and redirect efforts to a more strategic approach that prioritizes cases and outbreaks in high-risk settings or in specific settings such as nursing homes, shelters, correctional facilities, and organizations with high case rates. During the three weeks from 12/31/21 to 1/21/22 (no data was reported on New Year’s Day 1/1/22), 3,827 new cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed in Tuscarawas County residents, the highest case number volume since the first case was confirmed in the county on March 14, 2020.

“While the pandemic is far from over, the Ohio Department of Health recommended we make this transition to alleviate the strain on the public health system,” explained Katie Seward, MPH, CHES, CRHCP. “Our level of commitment to helping county residents has not wavered. The same CDC guidelines remain in place for the isolation of positive cases and the quarantine of close contacts. Even though we will no longer be calling each person who has been newly diagnosed with COVID-19, our phone lines remain open from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday, to take calls from the community. We are here to help with any questions a person or organization may have. This transition simply allows us to refocus our efforts with an emphasis on working more closely with those in high-risk settings to better protect the public’s health.”

“We need help to reduce the number of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in Tuscarawas County,” noted Seward. “We are asking the public to take action when COVID-19 infection is suspected by seeking testing, staying home to prevent transmission to others, rapidly notifying close contacts, and seeking medical treatment if they are at higher risk for severe outcomes. Additionally, it is critical to continue wearing masks, especially during this time of record-breaking case numbers; choose to get a COVID-19 vaccine or booster; avoid large gatherings; washing hands often; improving ventilation; and social distancing.”

Those who test positive for COVID-19 with a rapid home test are still encouraged to self-report their results through the online self-reporting form that is available at the website home page, www.tchdnow.org or by calling 330-343-5555, ext. 100. Those who self-report will be sent an informational packet by mail that will include documentation to justify COVID-related school or work absences.

TCHD staff will continue to offer COVID-19 vaccination services as well as both PCR and rapid COVID-19 drive-up testing services. Additionally, to make it easier for the public to find guidance for how

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to isolate or quarantine, TCHD has made an FAQ document and a flow chart available near the top of its website home page at www.tchdnow.org.

For more information or to ask questions, call TCHD at 330-343-5555, ext. 100. Phone lines are open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4 pm.

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