



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

ADDITIONAL LIMITS ON SOCIAL GATHERINGS AND ORGANIZED EVENTS OCCURRING UNDER APPLICABLE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES EMERGENCY ORDERS WITHIN UNION TOWNSHIP AND THE CITY OF MOUNT PLEASANT, MICHIGAN

The Central Michigan District Health Department Local Health Officer issues this Order pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2453 as it has been determined that it is necessary to protect the public health from further spread of COVID-19 within Isabella County.

The novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, which causes the respiratory disease COVID-19, can result in serious illness or death. SARS-CoV-2 is a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans and easily spread from person to person. There is currently no approved vaccine or antiviral treatment for this disease. On March 10, 2020, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services identified the first two presumptive-positive cases of COVID-19 in Michigan. On that same day, Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued Executive Order 2020-4 declaring a state of emergency across the state of Michigan. On March 18, 2020, the first presumptive-positive case of COVID-19 was reported in Isabella County.

In response to the widespread and severe health, economic, and social harms posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor issued Executive Order 2020-33 on April 1, 2020. This order declared both a state of emergency and a state of disaster across the state of Michigan. Governor Whitmer has reissued the declaration of emergency on several occasions considering the continuing threat posed by the pandemic.

On July 17, 2020, Governor Whitmer issued [Executive Order 2020-153](#) strengthening requirements for wearing masks, including when outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household. On September 25, 2020, Governor Whitmer issued [Executive Order 2020-183](#) (Amended Safe Start Order), which extended restrictions crucial to addressing the pandemic, including limits on social gatherings and organized events. On Friday, October 2, 2020, the Michigan Supreme Court concluded that the Governor was not authorized by law to issue executive orders addressing COVID-19 after April 30, 2020. On October 5, 2020, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Director Robert Gordon issued an [Emergency Order Under MCL 333.2253 – Gathering Prohibition and Mask Order](#).

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Isabella County has reported a total of 677 confirmed cases of COVID-19 to date. County data showed that in the third week of August there was a 350% increase in the number of COVID-19 cases compared to the previous week. During that week, 92% of reported cases were among those 18 to 24-years-old. This is compared to the first 2 weeks of August in which 39% of cases were among this age group. With thousands of students returning to Central Michigan University in Isabella County, many from states with high rates of COVID-19, living in congregate settings, and traditionally disposed toward socializing in large groups, further restrictions need to be put in place to prevent outbreaks related to large social gatherings and organized events. Large social gatherings have demonstrated an increased public health risk with potential for further outbreak, including super-spreading events.

To help determine the least restrictive means to prevent outbreaks related to large social gatherings and organized events, this order applies only to Union Township and the City of Mount Pleasant. As such, the Central Michigan District Health Department Local Health Officer hereby orders the following to take effect immediately within Union Township and the City of Mount Pleasant.

Acting under Section 2453 of Michigan's Public Health Code, 1978 PA 368 (MCL 333.2453) the Health Officer finds it reasonable and necessary to further limit the size of outdoor social gatherings and organized events and reinforce COVID-19 protective measures as follows:

1. Based on public health data and the impact of thousands of returning students upon residents, housing density and local businesses, an area of increased public health risk for COVID-19 outbreaks and community spread exists within Union Township and the City of Mount Pleasant.
2. The requirements of the [MDHHS Emergency Order Under MCL 333.2253 – Gathering Prohibition and Mask Order](#), Section 1 are enhanced by this local order as follows within Union Township and the City of Mount Pleasant:
 - a) If it is outdoors, the gathering or event does not exceed 25 people. This order applies to residential and non-residential venues.
3. Notwithstanding the further limitation on gathering and event size, gatherings and events subject to this local order must continue to comply with all other provisions of MDHHS' Emergency Orders and any order that follows it or replaces it.

4. Any individual, group or entity organizing or hosting an outdoor gathering or organized event are strongly encouraged to make and keep a record of all attendees for 21 days thereafter. If confirmed COVID-19 cases become associated with the gathering or event, **the host must cooperate with the investigation of the local public health department** and the record will greatly facilitate case investigations by the Central Michigan District Health Department.

5. This order does not apply to:

- a. Social gatherings or organized events that take place outside of Union Township or the City of Mount Pleasant;
- b. Indoor gatherings, which are referenced in the MDHHS Emergency Order;
- c. Social gatherings or events that must comply with MDHHS Emergency Orders including schools, childcare organizations, community centers, places of religious worship and/or religious functions;
- d. Gatherings for the purpose of engaging in organized sports held in accordance with all applicable MDHHS Emergency Orders;
- e. Incidental encounters of persons in an outdoor space, including restaurants, workplaces, farmers markets, or parks;
- f. Outdoor weddings and funerals (which must meet the gathering requirements referenced in the MDHHS Emergency Order).

The contents of this Order will be published to the members of the public at large by all reasonable means available. This Order goes into effect immediately and shall remain in effect until lifted. The Emergency Public Health Order dated August 24, 2020, is rescinded.

Such measures will be enforced, and any violations are subject to citations and penalties as outlined in the Michigan Public Health Code.

October 7, 2020



Steve Hall, R.S., M.S., Health Officer