



Elkhart County Health Department

Health Officer

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elkhartcountyhealth.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2020

The Elkhart County Health Department remains concerned that our community has not sufficiently mitigated the risk of COVID-19. The positivity rate in Elkhart County has not shown a continued downward trend. The Elkhart County Health Department wants to encourage everyone to take all necessary steps to allow our schools to reopen. That includes wearing masks, engaging in social distancing, and washing your hands. One of the critical factors for schools to reopen is evidence that Elkhart County shows at least a downward trend of its positivity rate over a 14 day period.

The Governor announced efforts that he is taking to help ensure schools are able to reopen statewide. The Governor is issuing a mandate requiring masks across the state of Indiana beginning Monday, July 27, 2020. Although the Governor desires for schools to reopen, the Governor noted that the local schools and health department will have to decide if the schools can reopen based upon their specific information and data. The Elkhart County Health Department is hopeful that you will take all measures available to you to help Elkhart County obtain a downward trend of its COVID-19 positivity rate over at least a 14 day period. Our concern, along with many parents, teachers, and school officials, is the potential for a rampant spread of COVID-19, which will create an inconsistent pattern of in-class, virtual, and possibly no school occurrences.

We will be monitoring the Elkhart County citizen's ability to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19 over the course of the next week. If we do not see the downward trend of positivity rates, we will be forced to consider delaying the reopening of our schools. This decision will be discussed with the school superintendents by July 31, 2020. The public will be notified via the Elkhart County Health Department's Facebook page and through the media of any action taken or recommendation issued by the Elkhart County Health Department.

We ask that everyone wears their mask, be socially distant, and wash your hands. We are all connected to flattening the curve and lowering the positivity rate. Your actions impact our schools.

Lydia Mertz, MD
Health Officer

Improving the Lives, Health and Environment of our Community



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.