



Health Officer

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elkhartcountyhealth.org

February 2, 2021

Message from Dr. Bethany Wait
Elkhart County Health Officer

I want to personally thank our community and business leaders for taking the necessary steps to ensure compliance with the COVID-19 mitigation directives set forth in Public Health Order 06-2020. In light of businesses positive response to education efforts, Elkhart County has not needed to issue any Citation Orders or levy any civil fines under Restated Ordinance 2020-38. The public health orders and community effort is working and we are seeing our positivity rate lower, our death rate lower, our hospitalization rate lower and vaccination numbers increase. Please understand that we are not out of the woods and that in order to maintain and continue to improve these numbers the public health orders will need to remain in place and the public will need to continue following the COVID-19 mitigation directives.

I also do not anticipate the Elkhart County COVID-19 mitigation directives being modified or lifted until the Elkhart County adult population reaches 70% vaccinated. While the Elkhart County Health Department is not mandating COVID-19 vaccinations, we do strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to get their vaccination. Our goal as a community should be acquiring 70% adult vaccination levels as this is the only way for our community to truly move forward.

Regarding the Governor's new executive order, Elkhart County has moved from red advisory level to orange advisory level last week. Please keep in mind that Elkhart County transitioning between different State metric map colors or State advisory level colors does not modify the existing public health orders. Elkhart County must continue to follow the COVID-19 mitigation directives set forth in Public Health Order 06-2020. This includes, among other things, continuing to wear face coverings, continuing to perform sanitation measures, and continuing social distancing measures. "The change of Elkhart County's advisory level color shown on the Advisory Level map only changes the number of people able to attend Gatherings or Meetings or Special or Seasonal Events with an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan."

Effective February 1, 2021 as a result of the Governor's Executive Order 21-02.

- **Any Color Advisory Level Status:**

Gatherings or Meetings and Special or Seasonal Events with a total attendance not exceeding 25 may occur without an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan so long as the remaining mitigation directive are followed.

- **Red or Orange Advisory Level Status:**

Gatherings or Meetings and Special or Seasonal Events with a total attendance exceeding 25 may occur with an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan, up to 25% of a facility's capacity, so long as the remaining mitigation directive (including sufficient space for six foot social distancing by individuals outside of the same household) are followed.

- **Yellow Advisory Level Status:**

Gatherings or Meetings and Special or Seasonal Events with a total attendance exceeding 25 may occur with an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan, up to 50% of a facility's capacity, so long as the remaining mitigation directive (including sufficient space for six foot social distancing by individuals outside of the same household) are followed.

- **Blue Advisory Level Status:**

Gatherings or Meetings and Special or Seasonal Events with a total attendance exceeding 25 may occur with an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan, up to 100% of a facility's capacity, so long as the remaining mitigation directive (including sufficient space for six foot social distancing by individuals outside of the same household) are followed.

Once again, many thanks to our community continued effort in mitigating COVID-19 in our community. Please continue to wear a mask, social distance and wash your hands. Please continue to get yourself tested for COVID-19 if showing symptoms, exposed to a person with COVID-19 or found yourself in a high risk event where risk of exposure is high. Please continue to participate with contact tracing through Elkhart County Health Department.