



## Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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### News Release

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### Immediate Release

#### ***Changes to Contact Tracing***

Kingsford and Iron River, MI- September 15, 2021- Dickinson-Iron District Health Department continues to see an increase in daily positive COVID-19 cases. “When we compare where we were in the month of August last year vs this year, we are facing a very concerning trend. Dickinson County cases are 7.5 times higher in 2021 compared to last year at the same time. Iron County cases are 3 times higher. Now that schools are back in session, we have already surpassed the number of cases reported last month and we are only half way through September” states Ruth Manier BSN RN, Director of Community Health Services. “We know that more than 95% of the cases reported to us are unvaccinated individuals. We also know that local healthcare systems are starting to feel the effects of the surge.”

As was the situation in previous surges, Dickinson-Iron District Health Department (DIDHD) has reached its capacity to respond to every positive case in a timely fashion. Contact tracing continues to be an integral part of COVID-19 mitigation and DIDHD has sought assistance to complete case investigations.

Individuals with COVID-19 positive results may be contacted one of three ways; directly by a DIDHD nurse, through text message/email sent by Patient Education Genius (PEG), or by a contact tracer working with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Participation in case investigation allows us to identify and address potential outbreaks early which helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community. All forms of case investigations are secure and confidential.

In the event that there is a delay in communication, COVID-19 positive individuals should remember to isolate for 10 days, either from symptom onset or the day the positive test was taken if asymptomatic. Identify and notify any close contacts that were made 48 hours prior to symptoms starting or the day of the test. Instruct close contacts to monitor their symptoms and quarantine for 10 days, if not vaccinated. If you are notified that you are a close contact, please quarantine and monitor for symptoms.

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The best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 continue to be the same: wash your hands, wear a mask, stay home when you are sick, get tested if you have symptoms, and get vaccinated. Vaccine appointments are available at DIDHD at 906-774-1868 or 906-265-9913.

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