

September 30, 2021

Tonight at 11:59, the health department is rescinding the quarantine order from Wednesday , Sept. 22, 2021. What this means is they no longer requiring quarantining of close contacts. White Pigeon Community Schools will be using the following guidelines-

Parents of students who are identified as close contacts will be contacted by the district.

All students who test positive will be required to quarantine for ten days.

All students who are identified as close contacts will be notified, and if they are showing symptoms will be required to quarantine for ten days. If a student is identified as a close contact to a family member where they reside, the close contact will be required to quarantine for ten days.

All students who are identified as close contacts will be notified and if they are not showing any symptoms it will be recommended they quarantine but not required and will be the parent's decision.

All students who are identified as close contacts who have been vaccinated or have had COVID in the last 90 days will not be required to wear a mask in school.

Please see below the press release from the Health Department-

**Health Officer's Report to the Board of Health for September 29, 2021
Prepared by: Rebecca A. Burns, M.P.H., R.S.**

Public Health Orders:

Michigan's Public Health Code provides the framework to promote health and prevent disease by protecting all individuals that live within a community. The American Public Health Association defines Public Health as, "Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play." Public health is different from the practice of medicine. For example, while a doctor treats people who are sick, those of us working in public health try to prevent people from getting sick or injured in the first place. We also promote wellness by encouraging healthy behaviors. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought Public Health to the forefront of American's conscious. I used to hear it said that the best Public Health is invisible, because it is the diseases that don't spread in our communities. Well, Public Health is definitely not invisible at this time. The work we are doing is front and center and has moved from a scientific discussion to a political discussion.

All of the actions that we have taken at BHSJCHA during the pandemic have followed the science and been implemented with our Public Health lens of promoting and protecting the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play. This includes the most recent Quarantine Orders that were issued on September 3rd which was rescinded and replaced with a new order on September 22nd. We know from published scientific research on this virus that people with a close contact exposure may develop COVID-19. We also know that people that develop COVID-19 are contagious and can spread the virus 48 hours prior to symptoms starting and that some people never develop symptoms but

can shed the virus to others. We know that some people develop severe illness from COVID-19 and that some will die. A recent article from Johns Hopkins Medicine states that, "The COVID-19 situation continues to change, sometimes rapidly. Doctors and scientists are working to estimate the mortality rate of COVID-19. At present, it is thought to be substantially higher (possibly 10 times or more) than that of most strains of the flu." Reference: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-disease-2019-vs-the-flu> The Quarantine Orders were implemented to protect the health of people in our communities.

Yesterday, Wednesday, September 29th, Governor Whitmer signed the FY22 budget bill. That bill contains language that funding for Essential Local Public Health Services will be taken back if an Order issued under a provision of the Michigan Public Health Code, 333.2453 is in place on October 1st. Although the Governor has written that this provision in the budget boilerplate is unconstitutional, our Agency Counsel has advised that the matter would have to be decided in a court of law. Because of this, I am rescinding the Quarantine Order issued on September 22nd at 11:59 pm tonight. The Essential Local Public programs that our Agency does are too important to the communities we serve to put that funding in jeopardy.

Rebecca A. Burns, M.P.H., R.S.
Health Officer