

Joint Information Center Wednesday, July 29

As of 11 a.m. on Wednesday, July 29, Calhoun County has a cumulative total of 621 confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported to Calhoun County Public Health Department (CCPHD), with a total of 40 deaths attributed to the virus. This information is updated once daily, Monday through Friday, at www.calhouncountymi.gov.

Data Points to Keep in Mind

The Calhoun County Joint Operations Center is monitoring key data to understand the spread of the virus in our community. Two helpful data points are, the percent of positive cases, and cases per day per million. State and local leaders monitor these in addition to other data to determine phased reopening, as well as regional status.



A reliable place to see these updated data points is the state's MI Safe Start Dashboard, which can be found at mistartmap.info. Calhoun County is within the Kalamazoo Region, and on this dashboard users can narrow their search by region and even county. As of today, Wednesday, July 29, Calhoun County's positive test rate is 2.0% and our cases per million per day is 19.1. What does this mean?

Positive test rate: When testing levels are high, a low positive test rate is evidence of declining spread. States across the nation are experiencing a range of positive test rates, and Michigan's overall on this day is 3.4%. Health officials have cited 5% or higher as the threshold for concern, including moving regions of the state to different phases of reopening. Local schools have also decided to use this as a gauge for the state of the virus in our community.

Cases per million: This number provides a baseline understanding of the transmission of the virus in our community. Low levels of new cases suggest limited continued transmission. The state's cases per million is approximately 36.7 per day, which is down from earlier in July.

These are two important data points that provide Calhoun County, as well as Michigan and the nation, a framework for understanding the spread of the virus and benchmarks for when to ramp up our response. The Calhoun County Unified Command Team monitors these numbers for Calhoun daily.

The Health Department also is following confirmed cases, probable cases (people with symptoms who are awaiting test results), and contacts. The change in contacts over the last

few months is the most significant. In the beginning, during the statewide shutdown, a positive case might have one or two close contacts, likely from their household. Today, a positive case comes with 10 to 13 close contacts.

"People are spending more time in groups, with more people," said Calhoun County Health Officer Eric Pessell. "We still have community spread. If you find yourself in a group, and someone tests positive for COVID-19, you might find yourself in quarantine for 14 days."

Please **answer your phone!**

It could be someone from Calhoun County **or** the State of Michigan calling about COVID-19 exposure.

This is called **contact tracing**.



Pick up the phone, Calhoun County!



Pick Up The Phone, Calhoun!

The Calhoun County Public Health Department has joined a State of Michigan program that helps with contact tracing related to the coronavirus pandemic. This assistance will ensure that individuals who have COVID-19 in Calhoun County, and their close contacts, are notified within 24 hours of the positive test result. This has always been performed by the Public Health Department, but this additional help will allow some Health Department staff members to return to other duties, as necessary.

If you receive a phone call from an unknown phone number, we encourage you to pick up the phone. The faster individuals are informed of their potential exposure to COVID-19 and can begin isolation, as necessary, the less risk of community virus spread we will face.

The Health Department will track anyone who begins experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. The community should see no difference from this program, other than the person contacting you.

Bright Spot: Honoring Battle Creek Firefighters

The Calhoun County Faith-Based Coalition has spent time giving appreciation to first responders in the community, all of whom have continued serving throughout the pandemic.

From July 21-23, the group celebrated each Battle Creek Fire Department shift (see photos below).

In mid-August, the group plans to celebrate the health care community.



Sign up to [receive all Joint Operations Center communications](#).

For updates from Calhoun County, about County operations and COVID-19 in Calhoun County, visit the County website, calhouncountymi.gov.

For updates from the City of Battle Creek, please visit battlecreekmi.gov/coronavirus.

The State's COVID-19 Hotline is available for anyone who has questions or concerns related to the virus. The hotline is open seven days a week from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Call 1-888-535-6136. For state COVID-19 information, visit michigan.gov/coronavirus.

For information, contact

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