



# Clinton County Health Department

133 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, New York 12901-2926

“Working Together for a Healthier Community”

[www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org)



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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**Administration Division**

**Phone: (518) 565-4840**

**Fax: (518) 565-4717**

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## News Release

Date: January 9, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department Releases 2019-2021 Community Health Assessment

The Clinton County Health Department, along with UVM Health Network-CVPH, its partner in community health assessment and planning, is pleased to announce the release of the 2019-2021 Clinton County Community Health Assessment (CHA). The assessment is a comprehensive report that evaluates and identifies priority issues related to the health and wellbeing of all residents of Clinton County.

After a year’s long process, that included participation by partner organizations and stakeholders from across the county, two top priority health issues have been identified: *Prevent Chronic Diseases* and *Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders*. The assessment process included a review of over 300 different health metrics. A survey of community residents added 1,600 local voices to the process. Providers of health, mental health, education and human services, along with representatives of the business community, shared their insight into the state of health in the county via surveys and at a community health priority setting session. Representatives from these sectors joined CCHD and UVMHN-CVPH in a Priority and Focus Area Finalization Process.

The goal of the CHA is to develop shared strategies to address the priority issues and improve the community’s health. These strategies are outlined in a work plan included in the CHA. Specific activities aimed at focus areas within each priority issue will be completed by various partners over the next three years. *Healthy Eating and Food Insecurity, Tobacco Prevention and Chronic Disease Preventive Care and Management*, along with, *Well Being and Mental and Substance Abuse Disorders and Prevention* will be addressed.

The priority areas selected for 2019-2021 are the same as those identified in the previous CHA. Mandy Snay, Director of Health Planning & Promotion at the Clinton County Health Department states, “Having both residents and health professionals weigh in and choose the same priority issues speaks to the complexity of these issues and the need to work together for collaborative, lasting solutions. By not changing course, we are able to build off of the great work toward health improvement already happening in our community.”

The Clinton County 2019-2021 Community Health Assessment and the resulting community health improvement plan can be found at [clintonhealth.org](http://clintonhealth.org).

#### About the Clinton County Health Department:

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”



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## News Release

Date: January 15, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### FLU CASES CONTINUE TO RISE

**Plattsburgh, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020:** Cases of influenza, more commonly known as flu, continue to rise in New York State and across the Country. Clinton County Health Department would like to remind residents that it is not too late to get your flu shot. Even in cases where the vaccine does not fully prevent you from getting the flu, it still helps your body fight the virus and you are less likely to end up being hospitalized with flu.

Please also take these precautions to keep yourself and everyone around you healthy:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- If you are sick stay home. People with flu are contagious for up to seven days after symptoms begin.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Do not sneeze or cough directly into uncovered hands.

Those who get the flu should contact their health care provider to determine if they are a candidate for treatment with anti-viral medications. Anti-virals can lessen the severity and duration of the flu. They work best when started within 48 hours of first symptoms.

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## News Release

Date: February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### UVHN Elizabethtown Health Center Becomes ‘Breastfeeding Friendly’

**Elizabethtown, NY February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020** UVHN Elizabethtown Health Center was officially designated as a *New York State Breastfeeding Friendly Practice* on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, making them the first designated health care practice in Essex County. UVHN Elizabethtown Health Center was supported in this effort by the *Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Communities* grant at the Clinton County Health Department.

According to pediatrician and provider champion, Dr. Michael Celotti, “Creating a breastfeeding friendly environment for patients, visitors, and employees is a positive step in ensuring breastfeeding moms feel encouraged and supported.” He adds that “Providing a comfortable space for moms to nurse and pump creates a welcoming atmosphere that promotes healthy behaviors.”

As part of the process, the practice has implemented policies and procedures such as; ongoing staff training, maintaining a breastfeeding friendly office environment and facilitating internal and external referral opportunities for mothers and infants. The practice also promotes a culture within the office that supports breastfeeding as the nature way to feed one’s baby.

The Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Friendly Practice include:

1. Develop and maintain a breastfeeding friendly office policy.
2. Train all staff to be breastfeeding friendly by promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding.
3. Eliminate infant formula and formula company materials from your office.
4. Create a breastfeeding friendly office environment.
5. Discuss breastfeeding benefits, especially exclusive breastfeeding, and the basics of breastfeeding management with women and their families during the prenatal period.
6. Discuss breastfeeding benefits, especially exclusive breastfeeding, and the basics of breastfeeding management with women and their families during the postpartum period.
7. Encourage breastfeeding mothers to feed newborns only breast milk.
8. Teach mother about maintaining lactation when separated from their infants.
9. Identify your local breastfeeding support network and foster collaborative working relationships and referral systems.
10. Provide comprehensive breastfeeding support to new mothers.

-more-



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*Because of the well-documented health benefits of breastfeeding for infants, children and mothers, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US Department of Health and Human Services recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, with continued breastfeeding as long as mutually desired by mother and infant.*

For more information about receiving Breastfeeding Friendly Designation:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/breastfeeding/>

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## News Release

Date: February 27, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Respiratory Illness Preparedness

**Plattsburgh, February 27, 2020.** As concerns over a novel (new) respiratory illness grow, Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) wants to remind residents that we’ve been practicing for this for years. Not just the Health Department but all of us! We cover our coughs. We wash our hands and stay home when we’re sick. Don’t we?

Messages about standard measures to stop the spread of infection are repeated by CCHD and other public health professionals around the state, the nation, and around the world as the flu season begins and throughout the year. “Sometimes we feel like a broken record,” states Karen Derusha, Supervising Public Health Educator and spokesperson for the department. “Hearing the same message over and over again may get tedious but these simple steps save lives.” Prevention measures for the new (novel) coronavirus, known as COVID-19 are the same as measures used to prevent the spread of flu. At this time, it is still more likely that an individual in the United States will contract flu than become ill with COVID-19.

Local public health partners have been preparing in other ways too. Health departments have *Emergency Preparedness Plans* that are reviewed and updated routinely. There are *Continuity of Operations Plans* (COOPs) that outline when certain day-to-day operations may be suspended, allowing more staff to focus on monitoring and prevention steps. Other organizations, businesses and schools throughout our community have COOPs as well.

Since December, CCHD has been monitoring information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health. Information has been shared with health care providers, and between border patrol, emergency service providers and others. Organizations that are part of the Clinton County Multi-Agency Coordination (CCMAC) group, which meets monthly, have begun reviewing their own plans, as have school districts and other entities. “Systems developed during previous outbreaks such as SARS, MERS, H1N1 and Ebola have helped to prepare us,” states Ms. Derusha. In the meantime, she reminds residents to take these precautions to protect themselves from contracting any respiratory illness.

- Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces that may harbor germs.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is ill.

Take these steps to protect others.

- Cover your cough.
- Sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue away.

-more-



- Stay home when you are ill.
- Do not return to work, school or attend social activities until your fever is gone for at least 24 hours without use of fever reducing medicines.

Ms. Derusha also notes that “COVID-19 is a new virus. The public health community is working hard to learn all it can about this virus to keep people safe.” That may include asking people to avoid close contact with others. She notes that today is a good day to check your own preparedness plan. Visit <https://www.ready.gov/pandemic> for tips. “If you had to stay home, would you have sufficient food, water and medication on hand? Generally we advise a 3-10 day supply. That’s a good place to start.”

Find more information about preventing the spread of respiratory illness at <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/index.html>. To stay up to date on COVID-19, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

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# Interim Guidance for Large Gatherings and Public Spaces During the COVID-19 Outbreak

March 13, 2020

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## Background:

In December 2019, a new respiratory disease called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was detected in China. COVID-19 is caused by a virus (SARS-CoV-2) that is part of a large family of viruses called coronaviruses. Recently, community-wide transmission of COVID-19 has occurred in the United States, including New York where the number of both persons under investigation and confirmed cases are rapidly increasing.

It is therefore directed that any gathering with 500 or more participants be cancelled or postponed. This guidance is intended to determine whether or not a gathering of 500 or fewer participants can safely continue during the outbreak period.

*This guidance is not intended for governmental, medical, educational, retail spaces, or mass transportation facilities, including but not limited to:*

- Schools,
- Libraries,
- Government Buildings,
- Hospitals,
- Residential Health Care Facilities,
- Retail Establishments, including:
  - Grocery Stores,
  - Pharmacies,
- Public Transit Facilities:
  - Trains/Railway Stations,
  - Subway Terminals, and
  - Buses and Bus Terminals.

Large gatherings and public spaces within the scope of this guidance include, but are not limited to:

- Theaters,
- Auditoriums,
- Concerts,
- Conferences,
- Worship services,
- Sporting events,
- Restaurants,
- Bars,
- Gaming establishments, and
- Physical fitness centers.

**Members of the public who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, troubled breathing) or susceptible to infectious illnesses (e.g. older adults and people with serious chronic medical conditions, such as lung disease, heart disease, diabetes) should not attend large gatherings.**

**Guidance:**

**Effective March 13, 2020 at 5:00PM, organizers hosting large gatherings must postpone or cancel any events with in-person attendance of more than 500 participants.**

**Effective March 13, 2020 at 5:00PM, private and public operators of establishments or organizers of events with fewer than 500 occupants or attendees must operate at no more than 50% of their maximum occupancy.**

*There are limited exceptions to the restrictions prescribed in this guidance. Specifically, businesses that are not gathering places can seek an exemption from the State Commissioner of Health that would allow for capacity in excess of these limits, if appropriate social distance can be maintained and the risk of viral transmission is low. Please call the New York State Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline at 1-888-364-3065 with specific questions about your establishment or event.*

**For all other gatherings or public spaces, private and public organizers and operators shall:**

- **Promote messages that discourage people who are sick from attending or visiting:** This should include messages requesting that people leave if they begin to have symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. They should seek medical advice promptly by calling ahead to a doctor's office or emergency room prior to a medical evaluation.
- **Review existing plans and procedures:** Private and public operators or small event organizers should review their existing emergency plans and procedures for outbreak response to ensure plans meet the needs of the current and anticipated state of COVID-19 outbreak. Planning considerations include but are not limited to protection of staff and patrons, planning for staff absenteeism and supply chain interruptions. Develop new contingency plans if gaps are found in the current plans. Private and public operators and small event organizers should engage with key stakeholders and partners in the planning process. These partners include the local health department, community leaders, law enforcement, hospitals, emergency and first responders and vendors.
- **Consult state and local officials about local preparedness and response capacities:** Work closely with local public health officials to assess local capacities related to healthcare and law enforcement in the area. During a COVID-19 outbreak, resource limitations among local healthcare systems and/or law enforcement can influence the decision to modify, postpone or cancel your events. If it is determined local capacities are already limited by the COVID-19 outbreak and may be further strained by the event, private and



public operators and small event organizers should provide an alternate method for event delivery, postpone, or cancel.

- **Use alternative event delivery:** Private and public operators and small event organizers should consider and, if possible, develop alternative ways for participants to attend or participate in the event, such as by television, radio, or online. Large meetings may be conducted remotely by phone or video conferencing. Concert organizers may choose to offer a paid video stream for attendees wishing to watch from home. Places of worship may choose to offer a video or audio broadcast or stream for congregation members. Organizers of sporting events that are not already broadcast may research the feasibility of offering that option. Depending on available technology, video streaming options may be available at little to no cost for event organizers.
- **If a small event proceeds with in-person participation, use procedures for community containment strategies:** Train staff on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Event organizers should ensure that all event staff are trained on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If any staff feel they have these symptoms, and possible exposure to COVID-19 they should call their healthcare provider. Staff should stay home if they are sick. The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, or trouble breathing.
- **Train all staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene:** Small event organizers should take steps to ensure that all event staff are trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene. Proper personal hygiene is a good preventative measure for all respiratory illnesses including COVID-19.

#### Hand Hygiene:

Signage with handwashing procedures should be posted in prominent locations promoting hand hygiene. Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:

- Before and after eating.
- After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing.
- After using the restroom.
- Before handling food.
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated.
- After using shared equipment and supplies like electronic equipment such as keyboards, mice and phones.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers by children should always be supervised by adults.

#### Respiratory Hygiene:

- Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or the bend of elbow.

- Disposing of soiled tissues immediately after use.
- **Plan for staff absences:** Event staff need to stay home when they are sick, or they may need to stay home to care for a sick household member or care for their children in the event of school dismissals. Identify critical job functions and positions and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff.
- **Make reasonable accommodations for workers:** Persons with underlying health conditions or older adults are considered to be at increased risk for severe illness and complications from COVID-19. Event organizers can consider reassigning duties for high-risk staff in order to have minimal contact with other persons. People in high-risk groups should consult with their healthcare provider about attending large events.
- **Provide prevention supplies at your events:** Plan to have extra supplies on hand for event staff and participants to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including sinks with soap, hand sanitizers, tissues, and disposable masks.

*Disposable masks should be kept on-site and used **only** if someone (worker or attendee) becomes sick at your event. Those who become sick should be immediately isolated from staff and participants who are not sick and given a clean disposable facemask to wear while awaiting medical attention.*

- **Identify a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill at the event:** Designate a space for staff and participants who may become sick and cannot leave the event immediately. Work with partners, such as local hospitals, to create a plan for treating staff and participants who do not live nearby. Include a plan for separating and caring for vulnerable populations.

For guidance on cleaning and disinfection of facilities that are hosting large gathering events, refer to the New York State Department of Health Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19 at [https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/docs/cleaning\\_guidance\\_general\\_building.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/docs/cleaning_guidance_general_building.pdf).

**For further information:** New York State Department of Health's COVID-19 Webpage <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

Local health department contact information can be found at: [https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact\\_information/index.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/index.htm)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>



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## News Release

Date: March 16, 2020

For Immediate Release

Contact: CCHD 518-565-4840 or UVM-CVPH

### Confirmed Case of COVID-19

**Plattsburgh, March 16, 2020.** Clinton County is closely monitoring the spread of coronavirus and today has confirmed a case of COVID-19 in Clinton County. The individual is receiving appropriate medical care. Health Department staff are working to identify those who may have come in contact with this individual prior to testing and will notify any person who may be at risk to provide information and guidance.

CCHD is reminding residents to practice social distancing which includes remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County further states “to the extent possible, people should stay home. Limiting exposure will slow the spread of the virus and prevent a sudden spike in cases that would potentially exceed the healthcare systems capacity to treat patients with or without COVID-19.”

Most people, even if they have been exposed and become ill, will only experience mild symptoms. These should be monitored and reported to a health care provider, especially if they include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. As with any other illness, if symptoms are severe, call 911. Mr. Kanoza also asked that residents help to support individuals and families affected by COVID-19, as well as the larger community by following recommendations offered by health care providers and public health partners.

While there is currently no vaccine to prevent the virus, these simple steps can help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses:

- Visit the grocery store or pharmacy at slow hours, where the number of people are reduced.
- Practice social distancing and avoid handshakes.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available then use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick. If you need to see a health care provider, call first.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from other people to help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

For more information on the virus, symptoms and preventing the spread of germs, please visit the New York State Department of Health website at <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.



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The Clinton County Health Department continues to work diligently, along with our community partners and New York State agencies, to contain and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the county.

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## Media Alert

Date: March 18, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID 19 Media Conference

#### Clinton County Public Health Partners to Discuss Resources Available to Residents.

**Plattsburgh, March 18, 2020, Clinton County Health Department, 133 Margaret Street.** A media conference is scheduled to take place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room today at 3:00 PM. Media outlets are invited to attend. The event will also be live streamed via Facebook.

Attendance by the following has been confirmed. Additional partners may also be in attendance.

- Clinton County Department of Social Services
- Clinton County Office of Emergency Services
- North Country Chamber of Commerce
- United Way of the Adirondack Region
- University of Vermont – CVPH Medical Center
- Clinton County Health Department

When you arrive, please keep social distancing in mind and allow 6 feet of separation between seated individuals.

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## News Release

Date: March 19, 2020  
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### **Another Case of COVID-19 Confirmed in Clinton County**

**Plattsburgh, March 19, 2020.** A second case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in Clinton County. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) learned of this case on Wednesday evening and immediately began the process of contact tracing. Staff are identifying and reaching out to all individuals who may have had close contact with the infected individual. Any person who may be at risk will receive information and guidance from CCHD. This case is not connected to the first identified case. The individual is isolated at home.

“This brings the total number of confirmed cases in Clinton County to two with another case in Essex County,” states John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County. “While not unexpected, these local confirmed cases should remind us how important it is to follow the recommended steps, such as social distancing, to prevent illness and contain the spread of COVID-19.”

For most people, COVID-19 produces mild symptoms. Certain individuals, however, including older adults and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk. Stopping or slowing the spread of COVID-19 can save lives. With or without testing, there are steps we can take.

“If you think you may have come in contact with a person who is sick with COVID-19, please self-quarantine by staying at home,” states Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department. “If you are ill with symptoms that include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, self-isolate at home. Separate yourself from other family members by using a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible. Family members of sick individuals should also self-quarantine. Residents with severe or life-threatening illness should immediately call 9-1-1.”

If you have been determined to be a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19, Clinton County Health Department will contact you directly. Additional guidance about stopping the spread of COVID-19 can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

The Clinton County Health Department is working alongside our community partners, state and federal agencies, and residents to contain and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the county.

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## News Release

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### Stay Home, Save Lives!

#### Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 and Protect Family, Friends and Neighbors

**Plattsburgh, March 19, 2020.** With a second confirmed case of COVID-19 identified in Clinton County, health officials are reiterating the importance of staying home. This is a critical step in slowing the spread of COVID-19 in our region.

“Stay home, save lives! The message bears repeating,” states Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department. “We recognize that social distancing is not always easy, but we cannot emphasize enough, how important this action is in slowing the spread of COVID-19.”

Those who are ill or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or someone who has tested positive for the illness, must stay home. Self-quarantine or staying at home if you have been in contact with someone who is sick, helps others stay healthy. “As a community, we need to protect each other. We need to ensure that our health care workers stay well and we need to slow the spread of infection so that hospital resources are not overwhelmed by a large influx of patients,” notes Ms. Streiff.

CCHD is working diligently, along with local, state and federal public health partners to keep the public as safe as possible. Other community partners are working together to address needs associated with school and business closures, reductions in the workforce and the sense of social isolation that may accompany “stay at home” directives. “This is not an easy time,” states Director of Public Health, John Kanoza, “but we will get through it together. We all have a role in safeguarding the health and well-being of Clinton County residents and our North Country neighbors.”

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# Clinton County Health Department

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## News Release

Date: March 20, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### New COVID-19 Case Confirmed in Clinton County

**Plattsburgh, March 20, 2020.** A third case of COVID-19 has been identified in Clinton County. The female, in her thirties, was identified as a direct contact of the second confirmed case. Since that time, she has been quarantined at home to limit the possibility of spreading the virus to others. The individual is now isolated at home and contact tracing by the Clinton County Health Department will begin. If you are identified as a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19, Clinton County Health Department will contact you directly.

“We anticipate that the number of cases in our region will continue to rise,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County. Our hospital, emergency services personnel and health care professionals are prepared to handle this crisis, however, we must all do our part to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Our goal is to slow the number of new cases so that local resources can keep pace.”

For most people, COVID-19 will produce mild symptoms. Certain individuals, however, including older adults and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk. Director of Health Care Services, Erin Streiff stressed, “Those who are ill or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or someone who has tested positive for the illness, must stay home. Stay home also if you have been in contact with anyone who is sick. She further advised “Even those who are well, should stay at home as much as possible.”

Mr. Kanoza added, “We need to shield those who are most vulnerable from this virus and we need to ensure that our health care workers stay well. Slowing the spread of COVID-19 will save lives.” Additional guidance about minimizing the spread of COVID-19 can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

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## News Release

Date: March 22, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 Numbers Continue to Change as Fourth Case Identified in Clinton County

**Plattsburgh, March 22, 2020.** As another case of COVID-19 is confirmed in Clinton County, numbers reported on the NYS Department of Health website are causing some confusion. As of yesterday, Clinton County had 3 positive cases, but the NYSDOH was reporting four. One individual who used to reside in Plattsburgh is listed within the Clinton County count, even though they had previously moved from the region. The person had not updated their license information with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Today, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, CCHD has been notified of another positive test result bringing the total number of cases in Clinton County to four (although the NYSDOH site will say five).

This most recently confirmed case is isolating at home. The individual, is a male in his fifties who was identified for testing through the Health Department’s contact tracing process. He was determined to have had close contact with the second case and was tested for that reason.

“As we see spread in our community, it becomes even more important that residents continue to take steps to slow the spread of COVID-19.” stressed Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for Clinton County Health Department.

“Our federal, state and local partners have taken unprecedented steps to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. Individuals and businesses need to comply with the directives that have been issued. Residents who are well should stay home except to take care of essential needs. Businesses that have been advised to close, must do so. And, businesses that are deemed essential and are remaining open, need to examine customer service practices so that the health and well-being of their employees are protected.”

For most people, COVID-19 will produce mild symptoms. Certain individuals, however, including older adults and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk. Those who are ill or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or someone who has tested positive for the illness, must stay home. Stay home also if you have been in contact with anyone who is sick. Other individuals should stay at home with limited exceptions such as shopping for food, picking up medications or going to medical appointments.

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# Clinton County Legislature



Clinton County Government Center  
137 Margaret Street, Suite 208  
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(518) 565-4600 - Phone  
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Chairperson  
Legislative Area 3

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**Gary L. Favro**  
Assistant County Attorney

A Message from the Clinton County Legislature:  
"Be prepared, not scared."

Dear Friends:

This is an unsettling time for our country and our community as we are in a public health emergency due to the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Your elected leaders and public health officials are working around the clock to slow the spread of the virus and provide care to those who need it. **It is important to remember that we need to be prepared, not scared.** Heed the advice of public health experts who agree that the most effective way to "flatten the curve" or slow the spread of the virus, is to practice social distancing. Below is some helpful information regarding COVID-19:

#### How can you be infected?

- Coronavirus can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Because these droplets can travel up to six feet, public health experts advise maintaining six feet of distance from others.
- The virus can also remain on a surface or object and enter the body through the mouth, nose, or eyes. This is why it is important to wash your hands before touching your face.

#### How long does it take to show symptoms after being infected?

- It takes 2 to 14 days to develop symptoms after exposure to the virus. The average is about 5 days.

#### What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Shortness of breath

#### When should you seek testing?

- If you are exhibiting symptoms
- If you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus
- If you have recently traveled to one of the high-risk countries

*Except in the case of an emergency, please call your healthcare provider before seeking treatment in person.*

While it is normal to feel anxious, there are ways to take control of the situation and **be prepared**. I urge you to take the following precautions to keep yourself and our community safe.

- Wash your hands often and for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Avoid physical contact like handshakes and hugs
- Stay home if you feel sick
- Avoid large crowds
- Abstain from unnecessary travel

#### What is the difference between "Safer at Home" and "social distancing"?

Safer at home is a stricter form of social distancing. There are some differences. Safer at home means:

- Stay home (stay unexposed and do not expose others)
- Only go out for essential services
- Stay six feet or more away from others
- Don't gather in groups

It is important during this national emergency that we unite as a community, follow the advice of experts and take responsibility for our actions to #SlowTheSpread of coronavirus. For more information, visit [coronavirus.health.ny.gov](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov) or call the NYS Novel Coronavirus Hotline at 1-888-364-3065.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Henry  
Chairperson



# Clinton County Health Department

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## News Release

Date: March 23, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 Case Update for Clinton County,

**Plattsburgh, March 23, 2020.** One of the more common questions that residents have been asking involves the current number of cases in our community. Clinton County Health Department has issued press releases with each of the first four cases in the County. There are now seven cases of COVID-19 and it is anticipated that, just as in other locales, this number will begin to rise more quickly. For this reason, CCHD will be providing a once-a-day case count along with other relevant information. The count will be updated by the day rather than by each newly confirmed test.

For today, March 23, 2020 the total number of confirmed cases among Clinton County residents is seven. Additionally, CCHD has shared that seventy-one individuals are quarantined, eleven of whom have a history of travel that warrants quarantine. Eleven other individuals are in isolation due to illness. So far, fifty-seven tests have come back negative.

John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County shared his appreciation for the sacrifices that residents are making to help protect our community. “It’s not easy to stay at home, especially if you are feeling well, but it is necessary.”

Guidance for anyone who is feeling sick includes staying home except to get medical care. This step is critical to reducing community spread of COVID-19. Other steps include separating yourself from other people in your home, cleaning commonly touched surfaces and monitoring your symptoms.

“Most people who become infected with COVID-19 will have symptoms that can be managed at home,” states Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for Clinton County Health Department. “If you develop symptoms such as difficulty breathing; pain or pressure in the chest; new confusion or inability to arouse (wake-up); bluish lips or face call 9-1-1 and advise the call center if you suspect COVID-19 is the cause.”

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## News Release

Date: March 24, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 3-24-20 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, March 24, 2020.** As of Tuesday afternoon, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting eight confirmed cases of COVID-19; seven of these cases are community residents. Earlier today, CCHD received laboratory results for an eighth case. This individual is an inmate at Clinton Correctional Facility. CCHD has been in contact with Clinton Correctional Facility, the NYS Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS). All entities are focused on ensuring the health and well-being of the community.

To date, seventy-two tests have come back negative. Seventy-nine residents are in quarantine without symptoms and thirteen are isolated due to symptoms or positive test results. Many more individuals are also self-quarantining or self-isolating based upon general recommendations for anyone who suspects they may have been exposed or are having symptoms, even if they have not been tested.

In previous media releases, CCHD reported the number of tests pending. Ms. Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department, explained that the only numbers that CCHD can reliably share at this point are the number of positive and negative test results for residents of the County. “This is not just a local outbreak. Testing is happening outside the County which may include tests for our residents. In addition, other sites are testing and those tests are not always reported to CCHD as they are done. The results that CCHD receives through the NYS Electronic Clinical Laboratory Report System (ECLRS) consist of tests that are confirmed positive or negative.”

Community efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 continue to be our best defense. With limited exceptions for those providing essential services, residents are reminded to stay home as much as possible.

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## News Release

Date: March 25, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 3-25-20 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, March 25, 2020.** As of Wednesday morning, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting nine confirmed cases of COVID-19; eight of these cases are community residents and one is an inmate at Clinton Correctional Facility.

To date, ninety tests have come back negative. Eighty-one residents are in quarantine without symptoms and ten are isolated due to symptoms or positive test results. Many more individuals are also self-quarantining or self-isolating based upon general recommendations for anyone who suspects they may have been exposed or are having symptoms, even if they have not been tested.

As of Monday, Clinton County Government Departments including Public Health, Emergency Services, and Law Enforcement expanded the unified incident command. In recognition of the breadth of the impact of COVID-19 across all sectors of community life, county partners have expanded the command and operational model. Eric Day, Director of the County’s Office of Emergency Services; Sheriff Dave Favro; Mark Henry, Chairman of the Clinton County Legislature; and John Kanoza, Director of Public Health, now share the duties of Incident Commander.

“Over the years (since 9/11), organizations and individuals in our county, across the state and across the nation have been trained in applying the Incident Command System (ICS) to all types of situations, including public health emergencies. The Incident Command System is the formal process used by firefighters to maintain effectiveness in any situation,” stated Mr. Kanoza. The ICS allows for expansion as needed and a smooth transition back to day-to-day operations at the end of an incident. “Moving forward, updates from CCHD will include information from other County entities as we all work together to address issues and resident concerns over COVID-19.”

Sheriff Favro reminded residents and businesses that in New York State, Governor Cuomo has prohibited non-essential gatherings. Individuals and businesses should not promote activities that cause people to congregate. In response to questions about enforcement, Sheriff Favro noted, “while law enforcement may have other priorities at the moment, information gathered now may be used in the future with a possibility of civil penalties against individuals and businesses that refuse to comply.”

All local public health and governmental entities continue to reiterate that in order to combat the spread of COVID-19 in our community, residents must stay home as much as possible.



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## News Release

Date: March 26, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 3-26-20 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, March 26, 2020.** Thank you! That’s what CCHD is saying to residents who have been asked to stay home, and are doing so. CCHD also thanks those who are continuing to provide essential services at their usual worksite or by working from home. Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for Clinton County Health Department noted, “We might be in a lot worse shape right now if residents were not following guidance for slowing the spread of COVID-19.” She also gave a shout-out to the individuals in quarantine and isolation that her staff has been monitoring. “They have been great to work with.” Through rigorous contact tracing, CCHD staff have identified and contacted over 100 people in the last few weeks. Those who are quarantined or in isolation at home are being monitored by CCHD throughout this period.

As of this morning, Clinton County has 10 positive cases, including one inmate at the Clinton Correctional facility. Ninety tests have come back negative. Sixty-one residents are in quarantine without symptoms and fourteen are isolated due to symptoms or positive test results. These numbers will change as contacts of the tenth case are identified. Other individuals are also self-quarantining or self-isolating based upon general recommendations for anyone who suspects they may have been exposed or are having symptoms, even if they have not been tested.

Community leaders, organizations, and businesses are continuing to work together to implement processes to protect the public, as well as, to secure and distribute needed resources such as test kits, masks, and other personal protective equipment. “This effort will continue as long as needed,” stated Eric Day, Director of Clinton County’s Office of Emergency Services. “We are working together and we will prevail.”

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## Media Alert

Date: March 26, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID 19 Media Conference

#### Clinton County COVID-19 Unified Command Update.

**Plattsburgh, March 27, 2020.** A Facebook Live Press Event will take place at 11:00 AM on Friday, March 27, 2020, to discuss how county entities are increasing inter-agency coordination through a Unified Command System. Incident commanders John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County; Eric Day, Director of the County’s Office of Emergency Services; Sheriff Dave Favro; and Mark Henry, Chairman of the Clinton County Legislature will provide remarks and accept questions via the Facebook Live platform.

Updates will be provided on current case numbers and efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19; the function of a Unified Command System in providing a coordinated local effort; the status of Clinton County services and; workforce and economic impacts.

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members. This will be a closed event only accessible via Facebook.

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## News Release

Date: March 28, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Health Department and other Clinton County Departments are Providing Needed Services

**Plattsburgh, March 28, 2020.** Clinton County Health Department staff continue to track the number of tests that come back positive for COVID-19 and trace contacts for each confirmed case. As of this morning, Clinton County has 12 positive cases including one inmate at the Clinton Correctional facility and one probable case. There are also 3 suspect cases associated with one of the lab confirmed cases; these three have not been tested. One hundred and eighteen (118) tests have come back negative. Fifty-eight (58) residents are in quarantine without symptoms and 13 are isolated due to symptoms or positive test results. These numbers will change as contacts of additional cases are identified. Other individuals in the community are also self-quarantining or self-isolating based upon general recommendations for anyone who suspects they may have been exposed to COVID-19 or are having symptoms, even if they have not been tested.

Other Health Department staff are supporting the effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by filling planning, logistics, and finance roles; other staff are developing social and traditional media content to keep the public informed of the status of the COVID-19 outbreak as well as how to remain physically and emotionally healthy during this difficult time. A significant number of the Department’s employees are working from home. Those on site are practicing social distancing and other practices to combat spread of the virus. “We need to keep our workforce healthy because we care and because our community needs us,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County

CCHD is not the only county department hard at work. Others directly involved in COVID-19 response activities include the Legislature, Sheriff, Office of Emergency Services, Airport, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Social Services, and the Building and Grounds Departments. County leaders have reduced the workforce to comply with New York State Executive Order 202.4 and to protect workers and residents; however, many County Departments are still operating and continue to provide normal essential services to residents. The County’s website ([www.clintoncountygov.com](http://www.clintoncountygov.com)) has been updated with information on the operational status of each department. A pink bar across the top of the website’s homepage reads: *Current Clinton County Operational Status – Click Here for Information*. According to County Administrator, Mike Zurlo, “This information is a useful tool for residents who may be wondering what services are available to them. It will be updated as changes occur.”

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## News Release

Date: March 29, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **COVID-19 Update for 3-29-20 Staying Home is Critical to Contain Spread of COVID-19**

**Plattsburgh, March 29, 2020.** CCHD has learned that an individual who was ill and later tested and confirmed positive for COVID-19 was active in the community while symptomatic. Through standard contact tracing and with the assistance of the Clinton County Sheriff's Department, several businesses visited by this individual have been identified. Notification of those with whom this person had contact began on Saturday. Sheriff's Deputies worked to pinpoint additional dates, locations and times and CCHD staff made phone calls to contacts. Individuals who were considered to have had close contact at Beekmantown Central School, SUNY Plattsburgh, Sawatdee Restaurant, Koto Restaurant, Eclipse Gym, Hannaford and a taxi company have been notified. During the time when this person was symptomatic, several visits were made to Walmart as well. Unfortunately, the case-patient was unable to specify the exact times of day when he went to Walmart, but states he was there most days between 3/11 and 3/24 and that he used self-checkout. The Sheriff's Department is investigating financial transactions to further track the movements of this individual.

“This incident underscores the critical importance of staying home if ill, even if you have not been tested or do not believe you have COVID-19,” emphasized Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department. “It also represents the enormous challenge of containing a viral illness like COVID-19 without the full cooperation of the community.”

Being in the same location as someone with COVID-19 does not automatically put individuals at risk. The highest risk is associated with close and prolonged (less than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes) contact. Contact of shorter duration or interaction that is not close carries less risk. Having been in the same location without being near someone who is ill with COVID-19, poses a lower risk and is dependent on many factors. “We understand that this information may be of limited comfort for those who fear they might have been exposed” stated Ms. Streiff. “We ask that anyone who experiences symptoms that include cough, fever or shortness of breath, consider themselves likely to have COVID-19. Then, take appropriate steps based upon your symptoms.”

Most people who contract COVID-19 will experience only mild symptoms that can be managed at home. Confer with your healthcare provider and follow their advice for managing symptoms. Shortness of breath that becomes severe, chest pain, or a bluish color in the face or lips are serious symptoms that warrant a call to 9-1-1.

CCHD will continue to share information as it becomes available. To date the total number of lab-confirmed cases in Clinton County is 14 including one inmate at the Clinton Correctional facility. There is additionally one probable case with a lab result of indeterminate. There are numerous suspect cases who are symptomatic but unable to be tested at this time due to the shortage of test kits. Four of the lab confirmed cases have recovered. There have been 0 deaths to date.

- more -



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## News Release

Date: March 30, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 3-30-20 Update

There are now 16 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County, four of whom have recovered. One hundred fifty-five tests have returned negative results. In a media release issued today, the Unified Command for the COVID-19 Response in Clinton County identified two priority messages. One involves follow-up information to a Media Release issued on March 29, 2020. The other is a request for medical supplies.

Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) and Clinton County Sheriff Department representatives have identified dates when a symptomatic individual (referenced in a previous release) who later tested positive for COVID-19 was in the Plattsburgh Walmart; times of day have been verified by supporting documentation for several visits. “CCHD is providing this information because we said that we would,” stated Karen Derusha, a spokesperson for the Health Department. She emphasized however, “This one individual should not be the focus of your concern. At all times, when you are among other people, practice social distancing and hand hygiene to protect yourself. There may be others in the community who have COVID-19 including those with milder symptoms or those with symptoms have not yet progressed to a point that results in testing.”

“If you feel sick, stay home,” is the message CCHD continues to stress. “Anyone who has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath), as well as anyone who has other symptoms of illness that could be spread to someone else, should isolate themselves at home. Right now, we all need to be extra cautious about spreading all germs,” stated Ms. Derusha.

Residents can also help stem the spread of COVID-19 by checking their cupboards. The County is currently accepting donations of unopened medical supplies, such as N-95 masks, surgical masks, bleach wipes, hand sanitizer, and gloves. To donate, individuals or businesses may call United Way of the Adirondack Region at 518-563-0028. According to Eric Day, Director of the Clinton County Office of Emergency Services, “We thank United Way of the Adirondacks for managing these donations of supplies for first responders and essential workers and we appreciate your donations of unopened packages to help stretch our current supply.”



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The following information is provided as an update to a CCHD’s 3/29/20 media release. It includes dates and times for visits that the individual cited in the 3/29 release, made to the Plattsburgh Walmart while symptomatic for COVID-19, prior to receiving confirmatory test results. Being in the same location as someone with COVID-19 does not automatically put individuals at risk. The highest risk is associated with close and prolonged (less than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes) contact. Contact of shorter duration or interaction that is not close carries less risk. Having been in the same location without being near someone who is ill with COVID-19, poses a lower risk and is dependent on many factors. Most people who contract COVID-19 will experience only mild symptoms that can be managed at home. All residents should continue to monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath; no additional action is required by residents if they believe they were Plattsburgh Walmart during the dates and times listed below. If a resident believes they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, they should stay home and confer with their healthcare provider for advice on managing symptoms. Shortness of breath that becomes severe, chest pain, or a bluish color in the face or lips are serious symptoms that warrant a call to 9-1-1.

Date	Time
3/14/20	Mid-day - reported
3/15/20	Evening - confirmed
3/16/20	Mid-day - reported
3/18/20	Mid-day - reported
3/20/20	Mid-day - confirmed
3/23/30	Mid-day - reported

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## News Release

Date: March 31, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### New Cases of COVID-19 Confirmed as Others Recover

**Plattsburgh, March 31, 2020.** Several new laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 bring the total in Clinton County to 20. This figure represents the total number of positive test results since testing began. To date, 160 tests have come back negative. Five individuals have recovered. Recovered cases are included in the total case count. “CCHD continues to track the total number of individuals who have, or have had the virus,” noted Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for Clinton County Health Department. “Those who have recovered, will always be a part of the total count.” However, she cautioned that new criteria for identifying cases may be used in the days and weeks ahead. As we move forward without enough testing supplies, some cases will be identified through a subjective determination rather than a confirmatory test. These cases, identified through an assessment of symptoms, may be included in the number of positive cases reported. “If you begin seeing differences between the numbers that CCHD, CVPH or the NYS Department of Health are reporting, this may be the cause,” according to Ms. Streiff.

Health Department staff who are taking calls and monitoring social media report that the public has been asking for a definition of recovery. Ms. Streiff responded, “Recovery is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.” She added, “Individuals are expected to continue isolation for at least 3 days (72 hours) after recovery.”

Recovery times vary from person to person, as does the severity of symptoms. Due to the limited supply of testing supplies no follow-up tests are performed. At this time, it is not known if a person can contract COVID-19 a second time, however, individuals who have had the illness will likely have sufficient antibodies to ward off severe complications if they come down with COVID-19 a second time. There is still much that is unknown about this virus but as public health entities work to combat the effects of COVID-19 on the population, scientists and epidemiologists are studying and learning daily about the specific characteristics of the virus.

Questions about testing also abound. The North Country still lacks adequate numbers of test kits. Local leaders have been diligent in their efforts to acquire more kits and are working with political representatives to garner more supplies for the region. Individual provider offices are also seeking and having some success in finding test supplies. In the coming weeks, there will likely be additional testing happening in our community.

-more-



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Ms. Streiff noted, “This bears repeating. Assume that anyone you come in contact with could have COVID-19, whether they have been tested or not. Remain vigilant in practicing social distancing.” She further emphasized, “Just because someone is not positive for COVID-19 today does not mean they won’t be positive several days from now. Testing is not treatment. Maintaining social distance and practicing good hand hygiene are still our best defense.”

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## News Release

Date: April 1, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Case Update and Tips for Managing Symptoms at Home

**Plattsburgh, April 1, 2020.** As of this morning, Clinton County has 24 laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19, as well as one probable case. This figure represents the total number of positive test results since testing began. To date, 186 tests have come back negative. Five of the individuals testing positive have since recovered. Many other individuals are self-quarantining or self-isolating based on general recommendations for anyone who suspects they may have been exposed or are having symptoms, even if they have not been tested.

As the number of positive cases and individuals experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 continue to increase within our community, many residents have asked what to do when they or a family member experience symptoms. “In regard to questions about managing your health, we always recommend contacting your health care provider first for guidance. They know you and your medical history, and are best suited for addressing your concerns,” stated Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department. “If you experience a fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your health care provider. They may tell you to manage your care from home, as most people who get sick with COVID-19 will have only mild illness and should recover at home. For most people, symptoms last a few days and get better after a week.” Ms. Streiff indicates that, “The following tips may be helpful in managing symptoms at home or caring for a family member with symptoms.”

- Stay home from work, school, and away from other public places. If you must go out for medical care, avoid using any kind of public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.
- Monitor your symptoms carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your health care provider immediately.
- Get rest and stay hydrated.
- If you have a medical appointment, call your health care provider ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.
- For medical emergencies, call 9-1-1 and notify the dispatch personnel that you have or may have COVID-19.
- Cover your cough and sneezes.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available. If a separate bathroom is not available, clean the shared bathroom after every use. If you need to be around other people in or outside of the home, wear a facemask.

-more-



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- Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.
- Clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.
- If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include\*:
  - Trouble breathing
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion or inability to arouse
  - Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all-inclusive. Consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

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## News Release

Date: April 2, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### COVID-19 4-2-20 Case Update Residents Advised to Continue COVID-19 Prevention Strategies

**Plattsburgh, April 2, 2020.** The number of individuals with positive test results in Clinton County remains at 26 with one additional probable case. Testing for this person produced indeterminate results but symptoms have been consistent with COVID-19. Negative test results have been received for 194 individuals. Six people are now considered recovered. Four, including the probable, are hospitalized and three are in the hospital’s Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

Clinton County has seen a steady rise in the number of cases since March 16<sup>th</sup>, when the first COVID-19 case was identified here. Positive tests results have come back for individuals in almost all municipalities. “With the limited number of tests available, it is highly likely that every community harbors members who are sick with COVID-19; no one is exempt,” according to Karen Derusha, speaking on behalf of the Clinton County Health Department.

“By looking at data from other countries, as well as other parts of the U.S., we know what the trajectory of this virus’ spread looks like. Clinton County has not come anywhere near its peak,” stated Ms. Derusha. “We will see many more cases before the trend starts to head downward.” With this in mind, CCHD is reminding residents to follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other reliable sources, including in the use of masks. While there has been some discussion of a possible change in CDC recommendations, current guidance remains in place and can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>.

Masks protect others from the risk of getting infected. The COVID-19 virus can be spread before symptoms become noticeable, therefore, anyone may have the virus without knowing it. Wearing a mask when out in public protects others; likewise, others who wear masks help to protect you. “This is a good thing as long as people don’t develop a false sense of security, reminded Ms. Derusha. “Wearing a mask is not the best way to protect yourself, unless you are caring for an ill individual or you are in close contact with someone who is ill. Staying home and keeping at least 6 feet of distance between you and the next person, along with hand-washing are your best defenses.”

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## Media Alert

Date: April 2, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**Plattsburgh, April 3, 2020, A Facebook live media event will take place at 11:00 AM on Friday, April 3, 2020.** Updates will be provided on Clinton County’s readiness and current activities, including coordination between UVM-CVPH and other county entities. The status of the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on Clinton County, steps individuals should take for their own health, managing rumors, and how residents can help each other cope will also be included.

Speakers will be:

- Eric Day, Director, Clinton County Office of Emergency Services
- Wouter Rietsema, MD, CVPH Vice President of Population Health and Information Services, Infectious Disease Physician
- Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services Division, Clinton County Health Department
- Lieutenant Nicholas Leon, Clinton County Sheriff’s Office

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or if you would like to send questions ahead of time, please submit them by 10:30 AM, Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.

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## News Release

Date: April 4, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **4-4-20 COVID-19 Case Update Slow the Virus, Conserve Resources, Save Lives!**

**Plattsburgh, April 4, 2020.** As of Saturday morning, there are 30 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County, along with 1 probable case. Another 32 people in the community may have COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (suspect cases). Negative test results have been received for 202 individuals. Seven people are now considered recovered. Three are in the hospital’s Intensive Care Unit (ICU). While the numbers are still relatively low, they are doubling every four days and that’s troubling County officials.

“Each person who becomes infected with COVID-19, infects several more. They in turn each infect several others. The numbers grow exponentially,” stated Eric Day, Director of Clinton County’s Office of Emergency Services. Public health officials have been warning that we must flatten the curve, but what does that mean? John Kanoza, the County’s Public Health Director explained, “The number of cases will rise quickly or slowly depending on the actions we take as a community. If they rise very quickly, our local hospital and the health care system will not be able to keep up with the demand for beds, ventilators, and staff to treat patients. However, if we can slow the spread of this virus enough, then the resources we have available will be able to keep pace.”

COVID-19 is a new virus. Humans have no immunity and there is no vaccine. Many will get the virus eventually. That’s the bad news. The good news is that most people who get the virus will have only mild symptoms and will recover on their own. Unfortunately, this creates another problem. Mildly ill people often don’t feel sick enough to stay home. Some don’t feel sick at all. If people with mild symptoms and people who have the virus but have not yet developed symptoms move about in the community, they are likely to spread the virus to others. One of those others may be you or a member of your family.

“Staying home and maintaining distance between yourself and the people around you are critical steps you must take to protect yourself. They are also the steps you need to take to protect your children, your parents, your friends, your neighbors and your grandparents,” stated Mr. Kanoza. “This is serious but we have the power to save lives. Our goal as a community must be to sustain a manageable number of cases so that those who develop serious illness will have access to the medical care and resources they need to recover.”

Predictions have been made about how long the outbreak will last. Earlier forecasts had indicated that the peak, or the highest number of cases, might occur as early as mid-April. Realistically it will be much later into the spring before the peak, or the apex of the curve gives way to fewer cases. We may even see more than one apex. Maintaining social distancing strategies for several months won’t be easy but slowing the spread of COVID-19 can be the difference between life and death. Reducing the rate at which the virus is passed from community member to community member will help to ensure that resources will be available for all who need them.

- more -



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## News Release

Date: April 5, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **4-5-20 COVID-19 Case Update Leave the Family at Home When You Shop**

**Plattsburgh, April 5, 2020.** As of mid-day Sunday, 32 positive test results confirming COVID-19 had been received for residents of Clinton County. Additionally one case is considered probable but not listed as confirmed due to indeterminate test results. Other cases are also now being identified based on clinical assessment. There are over 30 of these suspect cases in the County. Cases that are identified as suspect for COVID-19, are treated as though they had received positive test results. All precautions including isolation and contact tracing apply. Negative test results have been received for 229 individuals. As of yesterday seven of the confirmed cases were listed as recovered.

Clinton County Health Department (CCHD), the County’s Office of Emergency Services and municipal leaders report that, over the past few days, they have received multiple phone calls and social media messages about people who are disregarding “stay at home” and social distancing guidance. Complaints of families out shopping together, parties, and children playing in groups have been received, to name a few. All of these activities contradict the direction that has been provided by public health professionals aimed at slowing community spread of COVID-19.

Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at CCHD stated, “These reports are highly disturbing; they keep me awake at night. We have the power to lower the impact that COVID-19 will have on our community. We have a chance to save lives, but only if we all act responsibly.”

Whether people who defy public health recommendations don’t understand or don’t believe is uncertain. After several weeks of being cooped up at home, a desire to have things return to normal could be at play too. Ms. Streiff conceded “In some cases, a parent may have no other option than to bring children when shopping or running other essential errands, but whenever possible residents should solo-shop. If there are two parents in the household, one should remain at home with the children. Groups of friends, and extended family also need to follow the recommendations. Only those who live in the same household, should be together.”

On a more positive note, many businesses have done an exemplary job of safely continuing to provide essential services while following recommendations for slowing the spread of COVID-19. Grocery stores are wiping down carts between uses, placing signage on the floor to space out customers and implementing specified hours for seniors and other vulnerable populations. Storewide announcements and posters are helping consumers follow new policies at retail locations that remain open to shoppers. Other businesses are only accepting call-in or on-line orders and bringing products out to cars. In many locations, customers have been observed intentionally allowing space between themselves and other shoppers, and avoiding aisles with other shoppers in them. COVID-19 has forced the global community to change normal routines and behaviors. Solo-shopping must be part of this new norm.

-more-



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## News Release

Date: April 6, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County to Start Reporting NYSDOH Numbers

**Plattsburgh, April 6, 2020.** The New York State Department of Health has updated its statewide tracking for COVID-19. Starting today, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD), as part of the County’s Unified COVID-19 Response, will report local stats related to COVID-19 in the same format as the State’s COVID-19 Tracker.

The NYSDOH COVID-19 Tracker now provides updated stats for the number of persons tested, number of persons tested positive, percent of positive results, number of persons tested today and number of new positives today for every county in New York State. The tracker can be accessed on the State’s website <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home> (look for the COVID-19 Tracker *VIEW* box near the bottom of the webpage).

The reformatted, interactive tracker makes it easy for health professionals and residents alike to view a county-by-county breakdown of testing and positive cases around New York State. When appropriate, CCHD will continue to report other significant information related to COVID-19 in Clinton County and from around the region, considering residents of Essex or Franklin Counties, or visitors to our area may also be receiving care in our county. The consistency in number reporting the tracker provides will prevent confusion in statistics reported.

Ms. Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services noted, “We want residents to have numbers that are consistent with those being reported by the NYSDOH and numbers that they can compare day-to-day. As of this morning, Clinton County has 35 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19, 9 laboratory confirmed recovered and 0 deaths.”

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## News Release

Date: April 7, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Dealing with Stress Associated with COVID-19

**Plattsburgh, April 7, 2020.** It’s the quintessential public health dilemma. How do we measure something that didn’t happen? Or in this case, how do we know that our handwashing, distancing tactics and other efforts are really slowing the spread of COVID-19? We are told that these behaviors are making a difference but, as the weeks stretch on, a sense of discouragement may add to our stress level.

Phone calls to Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) indicate that anxiety is high and that, for some, patience may be waning. Mandy Snay, Director of Health Planning and Promotion (HPP) for the Clinton County Health Department, along with a small team of other HPP staff have been responding to phone calls for several weeks. “Call volume is fairly consistent right now,” she stated. “We answer about 40-50 calls per day.” She and her team are in an ideal position to gauge the mood of the community and have noted that over the last few days, anxiety levels seem to be on the rise.

Richelle Gregory, Director of Clinton County Mental Health and Addiction Services is part of the County’s COVID-19 Unified Response. She understands how individuals and communities deal with adversity and has provided the following guidance.

- Prioritize relationships by connecting and empathizing. Talk to family and friends about how you are feeling and how they are feeling. Check in with each other by phone or online.
- Connect to your community. Look for ways to help. Donate to a charity. Reach out to family members or neighbors who may have a limited social network. Send cheerful cards to nursing home residents who may be missing contact with family during this time.
- Stay educated and informed, but get your information from reliable sources, and don’t overdose yourself by constantly following the news.
- Create a list of things that have worked for you during previous stressful or challenging times, including who you reached out to for support. This can be a quick reference when feeling overwhelmed.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help. It’s ok to feel bad momentarily but if your sadness, anger or anxiety are constant, it’s time to get some help.

Those in need of someone to talk to can call Clinton County Mental Health and Addiction Services at 518-565-4060. For other community resources residents can dial 2-1-1. Operators for 2-1-1 of the Adirondack Region can connect individuals to services which may help lessen the strain associated with stay-at-home requirements, limited financial resources, or transportation needs. CCHD will continue to respond to questions or provide links to other sources of information or services.

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CCHD is also reporting that as of Monday morning, Clinton County has 36 lab confirmed cases of COVID-19, 12 of whom have recovered, and no deaths.

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## News Release

Date: April 8, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **Are Your Neighbors in Need? Avoid Risks Associated with Distancing Requirements**

**Plattsburgh, April 8, 2020** Requirements for distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19 have separated us from friends, co-workers, neighbors and even extended family, at least physically. Technology and innovative communication solutions are helpful as people try to stay connected to one another. But, these don't work for everyone. Clinton County leaders are asking residents to check on neighbors, especially those who may not have a strong social network, are elderly, or in some other way may be more vulnerable to falling through the cracks during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Karen Derusha, Public Information Officer for the Clinton County Health Department, admitted “It may seem like a bit of a contradiction to ask residents to stay inside, but also check on your neighbors,” she noted. “But, there are safe ways to do this. If you don't have a phone number to call, it is appropriate to knock on a neighbors door, then step back 6 feet.” Asking how someone is feeling is appropriate, and you may also want to check to see if they have essential items that they need to stay healthy such as medications and food. If you are able, you can offer to pick these items up for them, the next time you go out for your own supplies. If they have needs that you are not able to help with, remind them that dialing 2-1-1 on their phone will connect them with an information service that covers our region to connect residents to organizations that can help.

Ms. Derusha also noted, “Many of our seniors are known to the Office for Aging and JCEO. These organizations have been reaching out to the seniors within their database. Drivers for the Senior Nutrition Program are making meal deliveries, leaving the meals at the door, and waiting until someone comes out to pick it up.”

Some indications that a neighbor might be in trouble include newspapers piling up at the door or lights that are on or off at the wrong time of day. If you are concerned, and can't make contact with someone who you suspect may be in danger, call 9-1-1.

CCHD is also reporting that as of Wednesday morning, 321 Clinton County residents have been tested for COVID-19, with 39 lab confirmed cases of COVID-19. Fifteen of these individuals have recovered, and 0 have died. Residents may access the NYS Department of Health COVID-19 Tracker at <https://on.ny.gov/2JLTaeZ>.

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# Clinton County Health Department

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## News Release

Date: April 9, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Meeting Community Needs while Slowing the Spread of COVID-19

**Plattsburgh, April 9, 2020.** Clinton County continues to meet the needs of residents while taking steps to minimize public gatherings and the transmission of COVID-19. County departments are engaged and working in partnership with public, not-for-profit and volunteer organizations to identify and address individual and community issues.

In order to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19, Clinton County Public Transit (CCPT) service was suspended as of March 22, 2020 and will remain so until further notice. Prior to the suspension of services, members of the transportation team for the County’s COVID-19 response began looking at alternative options for those with essential public transportation needs. Residents who need a ride to fill essential needs such as medical appointments, filling prescriptions or grocery shopping should dial 2-1-1 on their phone for information or referral for transportation through the United Way’s *Adirondack Region 2-1-1* system.

A supplementary measure aimed at minimizing public gatherings and non-essential travel was initiated this week. Clinton County Health Department issued an emergency order requiring all children's camps, campgrounds, cabin colonies, and seasonal temporary residences (that require a permit to operate under Part 7 of the New York State Sanitary Code) to remain closed and un-used. The order followed a similar New York State order closing all state campgrounds until further notice. The local order is currently in place until May 1, 2020 but will be extended if necessary. Violation of this Public Health Order (<http://www.clintonhealth.org/pdf/files/COVIDcampgroundOrder04082020.pdf>) may result in civil penalties or criminal prosecution.

Community members continue to voice concerns about individuals and businesses which do not appear to be complying with social distancing requirements, as well as retailers and manufacturers that continue to operate even though they may not fit the definition of an “essential” business. New York State has recently issued guidance for municipal codes officers about enforcing the Governor’s executive orders during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The information has been shared to all town supervisors. Town of Plattsburgh’s codes enforcement staff has contacted large retailers located within the Town to assess whether they are in compliance. Violations noted by individuals can be reported at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-pause> or by calling 1-833-789-0470. Information provided via this method will be passed on to law enforcement or the appropriate municipality.

In regard to social gatherings that do not comply with distancing requirements, up to this point, law enforcement officers have been warning residents. However, they have the ability to enforce the requirement. Residents may face fines and other penalties could result from failure to obey a lawful order.

-more-



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CCHD issued these numbers regarding the number of COVID-19 cases in Clinton County for Thursday April 9, 2020. There have been 346 tests performed resulting in 39 lab confirmed cases, 20 of whom have recovered. There have been no deaths. Please note that the CCHD number will always be one less than the number reported on the NYSDOH site due to an individual who was, but is no longer, a Clinton County resident.

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## Media Alert

Date: April 9, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**Plattsburgh, April 10, 2020, A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Friday, April 10, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County; law enforcement activities to deter group gatherings; new regulations in regard to campgrounds; and updates on isolation and quarantine orders. The following organizations will be represented.

- Clinton County Health Department
- Clinton County Sheriff’s Department
- UVHN-CVPH

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, if you would like to send questions ahead of time, please submit them by 10:00 AM, Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.

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## News Release

Date: April 11, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **4-11-20 COVID-19 Case Update Clinton County’s Unified Response to COVID-19**

**Plattsburgh, April 11, 2020.** “Today we mourn the death of a second Clinton County resident due to complications of the COVID-19 virus, stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County. This is an extremely difficult time for the family and friends of both individuals and a very sad time for our entire community. We have known from the start that COVID-19 can be deadly. It’s only human to hold on to hope that such a terrible consequence might pass us by, but today we know otherwise.”

On Friday, CVPH Medical Center reported the first COVID-19 death in Clinton County as that of an 80-year-old woman, who entered the hospital on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. On Saturday, a second COVID-19 patient passed away.

As the first news of a possible worldwide pandemic began to appear, Clinton County leadership and departments, our hospital and health care providers, school systems, businesses, not-for-profit organizations and other entities pulled out previously developed emergency plans, checked that they were up-to-date, and readied themselves for implementation. Now several months in, these organizations are continually working together under a Unified Command System to respond to new cases of the virus and to meet the needs of residents who are in isolation or quarantine, along with the needs of individuals who are staying at home to help slow the spread.

On Thursday night, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD), with the support of the Unified Command leadership for Clinton County’s response to COVID-19, employed an up-until-now unused strategy to control the spread of COVID-19 in an apartment building in the City of Plattsburgh. A building-wide legal quarantine was issued at the Russell Barnard Apartments on Flynn Avenue after the number of confirmed cases among residents rose to four along with an additional suspect case.

With the detection of this possible hot spot, CCHD notified the incident commanders of the County’s Incident Management Team and sought approval for plan of action. Critical partners, including City of Plattsburgh government, City police, City fire, County Sheriff, and EMS responders along with the building operator, Plattsburgh Housing Authority, were included in a coordinated effort to notify residents and assess immediate needs. Follow-up among partners and with building residents has been on-going. Eric Day, Director of Clinton County’s Office of Emergency Services noted, “Our goal in an incident such as this is to be nimble and responsive.”

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Clinton County Legislative Chairperson, Mark Henry commented, “Thursday’s actions illustrate the importance of the County’s emergency decision and planning process. Clinton County agencies are overseeing and coordinating the response to the quarantine order at the Russell Barnard building. The Clinton County Department of Social Services (DSS), and Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) are working with building operator Plattsburgh Housing Authority and partner organizations JCEO and United Way to ensure that affected residents will receive the critical support they need during this difficult time for them and their families.”

In regard to the two members of our community lost to COVID-19, Mr. Kanoza stated, “Even with our best efforts, we have learned that COVID-19 has its own plan. However, one strategy that has proven to be particularly effective in slowing the spread of this virus is staying at home and distancing ourselves from each other”. Over the last week Clinton County statistics indicate what might be a “flattening of the curve,” a phrase used to describe the slowing of new cases of the virus. According to Mr. Kanoza, “This shows that social distancing works. We implore all residents to remain steadfast and to continue these efforts for a bit longer.”

CCHD issued these numbers regarding the number of COVID-19 cases in Clinton County for Saturday April 11, 2020. There have been 363 tests performed resulting in 43 lab confirmed cases, 28 of whom have recovered. There have been 2 deaths.

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## News Release

Date: April 12, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### No New Cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County

**Plattsburgh, April 12, 2020.** As of Sunday morning, no new confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 were reported to Clinton County Health Department. Saturday’s case total, per the NYSDOH website was 43 and remained at 43 on Sunday. CCHD reports that 28 of the laboratory confirmed cases are now recovered.

Mr. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County, was pleased that at least one reporting period had passed with no new cases. “I look forward to the day when no new cases is the norm, rather than the exception,” he noted. Mr. Kanoza also reminded residents to continue to maintain their personal safety practices. “Stay home as much as possible. Go out only for essential errands. Wash your hands often and practice social distancing.” The Clinton County Health Department recommends wearing a mask or other face covering as an additional barrier during trips out for essential needs, but advises that a mask should never be used in place of distancing.

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## News Release

Date: April 13, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-13-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 13, 2020.** A third COVID-19 patient has died in Clinton County.

The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) today reported 47 lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 among residents of Clinton County. The number includes 43 cases, as of this morning, listed on the NYSDOH website. CCHD noted that 4 of the 47 individuals they are reporting were tested in Vermont. These four are not currently listed on the NYSDOH website (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>) and CCHD expects that they will become part of the Vermont case count.

“CCHD included information about the four residents tested in Vermont, to help clear up any confusion about numbers that were reported over the weekend,” according to Karen Derusha, Clinton County Health Department’s Public Information Officer. While these individuals are Clinton County residents, they are being counted in Vermont because that is where they were tested.

Ms. Derusha went on to explain, “The numbers can be difficult to follow. There are lab-confirmed cases, probable cases and suspect cases.” A lab-confirmed case is defined as someone who is tested and receives a positive result. A probable case describes an individual who is tested but for whom the result cannot be determined (lab-indeterminate). Suspect cases are those individuals identified by a healthcare provider to have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, but who have not been tested. Ms. Derusha went on to say, “The number of suspect cases may change if a person’s symptoms are later determined to be from another cause or if they are later tested.

Numbers, such as those reported on the NYSDOH website, as well as those reported locally, allow public health officials and community members follow trends. The data offers information about the impact that the virus is having over time and where progress in slowing the rate of transmission is being made. Clinton County officials are aware, however, that with limited capacity for testing and no antibody testing yet available, the picture is not complete. Ms. Derusha cautioned, “Numbers do not tell the whole story.”

Mark Henry, Chairperson of the Clinton County Legislature stated, “Our hearts are heavy with the news of another death due to COVID-19, especially in such a short amount of time. We remain steadfast in our resolve to protect as many residents as possible with the tools we have available to us. These include aggressive contact tracing; maintaining stay-at-home and social distancing requirements; asking individuals to wear masks when they must go out; and issuing isolation and quarantine orders when necessary to protect the public’s health.”

-more-



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For Monday, April 13, 2020, CCHD reports a total of 47 Clinton County residents with laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19.\* Twenty-nine (29) of the lab-confirmed cases have recovered. To date, 420 people have been tested. An additional 47 people have been reported to CCHD as potential suspect cases by health care providers, of those 41 met the criteria used to identify suspect cases. Twenty (20) of those individuals have also recovered. Clinton County has also had a total of 4 probable cases since testing began. One probable case is among the three individuals who have died.

\*includes four individuals tested in Vermont and not listed on the NYSDOH website.

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## News Release

Date: April 14, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-14-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 14, 2020.** As of Tuesday morning, Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reported 48 lab-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 among Clinton County residents; 29 of whom have recovered. In addition, CCHD also reports forty-one suspect cases; 25 of whom cases have now recovered. To date, 420 tests have been administered to Clinton County residents and three people have died as a result of COVID-19.

CCHD continues to receive and listen to requests for information regarding COVID-19 and its presence in our county. “We are receiving calls on just about everything related to COVID-19, but often people are looking for more detail on local cases and statistics” stated Mandy Snay, Director of Health Planning and Promotion, who leads a small team tasked with responding to questions that come in by phone or through the CCHD web-site.

Ms. Snay adds, “When asked, we often let callers know that our communities of concern right now are all of the communities in Clinton County, not just the ones with active cases.” Ms. Snay also notes, “Where people reside has less to do with their vulnerability to this virus than where they go and how well they protect themselves through social distancing.”

CCHD maintains as stringent a level of confidentiality to the individual as possible, that still protects the health of the public. In small communities, numbers, gender and age are all pieces of information that can inadvertently identify those whose personal health information should be protected, and releasing this type of information does not offer any additional public protection right now.

John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County reiterated, “knowing the location of active cases, does not improve health outcomes for anyone.” He emphasized, “the number of positive cases has been rising more slowly over the past week. We are seeing a “flattening of the curve” in our community. The steps we are taking such as staying home, maintaining distance from others when we go out, and frequent hand-washing are moving us in the right direction but must continue. We are all in this together.”

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## News Release

Date: April 15, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### New Face Covering Requirements

**Plattsburgh, April 15, 2020.** As of Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 8:00pm, New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Executive Order 202.16 requires face coverings to be worn by public and private employees interacting with the public during the COVID-19 outbreak. Executive Order 202.16, which can be accessed at <https://on.ny.gov/3bbXP5X>, states:

*For all essential businesses or entities, any employees who are present in the workplace shall be provided and shall wear face coverings when in direct contact with customers or members of the public. Businesses must provide, at their expense, such face coverings for their employees.*

Since this directive was announced on April 12, there have been many local discussions among both employers and employees around what this guidance means. In Clinton County, there are a number of local partners working together to help employers meet these expectations. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County, reminded both employers and employees that, “Face coverings don’t have to be surgical masks, N-95 respirators or face shields. These face coverings can include cloth coverings such as homemade sewn, quick cut, or bandana.” The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided simple, easy-to-follow instructions for making these types of face coverings, which can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/3epHg8A>. Mr. Kanoza also noted, “Employees are allowed to use their own face coverings; but, if they do not have one their employer must provide one to them, for free.”

Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services of Clinton County Health Department (CCHD), reminded residents that, “Cloth face coverings should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and be secured with ties or ear loops. They should include multiple layers of fabric, but users should still be able to breathe easily.” In addition, Ms. Streiff emphasized, “Cloth face coverings MUST be routinely washed.”

Another common question from residents has been what constitutes “direct interaction.” According to Interim Guidance provided by the NYSDOH, direct interaction with the public is determined by the employer, but, at a minimum, includes any employee who is routinely within close contact (i.e., 6 feet or less), with members of the public. This includes, but is not limited to, both customers and clients. Interim Guidance provided by the state in response to the Governor’s Executive Order may be found at <https://on.ny.gov/3cg8BrK>.

-more-



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If employers have questions about the Executive Order, they may contact the North Country Chamber of Commerce by email at [info@northcountrychamber.com](mailto:info@northcountrychamber.com). Employers are also encouraged to visit the Chamber's website, [www.northcountrychamber.com](http://www.northcountrychamber.com), for additional resources. Residents wishing to donate cloth face coverings may contact the United Way of the Adirondack Region at 518-563-0028 to set up an appointment for drop off.

As of Wednesday morning, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting 48 lab-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 among Clinton County residents; 31 of these individuals have recovered and 2 have died. CCHD also reports 3 probable cases (lab-indeterminate) of COVID-19; 2 of these individuals have recovered and 1 has died. Lastly, there are currently 41 suspect cases of COVID-19, of whom 25 have recovered. When considering current lab-confirmed, probable and suspect cases, CCHD reports 31 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. To date, 443 tests have been administered to Clinton County residents.

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## News Release

April 16, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Helps Businesses and Residents Comply with Executive Orders

During a Wednesday video briefing, Clinton County Office of Emergency Services Director, Eric Day, discussed how Clinton County law enforcement and municipal codes enforcement officers are helping area businesses comply with Governor Cuomo’s “New York State on PAUSE” executive order and how PAUSE complaints are being addressed locally. The full briefing can be viewed at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qcx9Oc2VS\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qcx9Oc2VS_Q).

PAUSE has been in effect since March 22, 2020. The plan prohibits non-essential gatherings and provides guidance for essential businesses in regard to employee safety including what constitutes an essential business, workforce reduction requirements and social distancing inside the workplace. Details of the plan are available at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-pause>. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) website contains a web-page dedicated to PAUSE (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-pause>), where individuals can file complaints.

Mr. Day stated, “The County’s Incident Management Team receives PAUSE complaints daily and works with codes enforcement officers in the city, towns or villages where the business is located to follow-up. Local law enforcement address issues in regard to personal gatherings.” To date, the County has received over 20 complaints. Mr. Day noted that all complaints are addressed, however he requested, “Please be as specific as possible. Although complaints can be made anonymously, vague information and lack of contact information make any complaint difficult to investigate.”

Another addition to the Governor’s Executive Order 202 that went into effect at 8:00 PM on Wednesday night, now requires workers at essential businesses to wear face coverings when in direct contact with customers or members of the public. According to Mr. Day, “The mask requirement has posed a challenge for employers who have had to quickly acquire masks or other face coverings and make them available for employees. We expect to see compliance but understand that some businesses, as well as their employees, are finding this difficult.” Employers who need information about where to obtain masks can reach out to the North Country Chamber of Commerce for information about sources.

-more-



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To further control the spread of COVID-19, Governor Cuomo has also declared that as of this Friday (April 17, 2020), individuals out in public and not able to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others, shall wear a face covering or mask. This order applies to virtually all who may be outside their home. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County cautions, “Wearing a mask does not replace social distancing. Rather, it adds an additional layer of protection for certain instances where circumstances keep individuals maintaining a six foot distance from each other.”

Guidance about mask use and simple steps for creating homemade masks can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

As of Thursday morning, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting 49 lab-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 among Clinton County residents; 34 of these individuals have recovered and 2 have died. CCHD also reports 3 probable cases (lab-indeterminate) of COVID-19; 2 of these individuals have recovered and 1 has died. There are currently 42 suspect cases of COVID-19, of whom 28 have recovered. When considering current lab-confirmed, probable and suspect cases, CCHD reports 29 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. To date, 451 tests have been administered to Clinton County residents.

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## Media Alert

Date: April 16, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Friday, April 17, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Mark Henry, Chairman, Clinton County Legislature**
- **Kathleen Camelo, M.D., Vice President, Clinton County Board of Health & Director of the Student Health, SUNY, Plattsburgh**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, if you would like to send questions ahead of time, please submit them by 10:00 AM, Friday, April 17th to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

**A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: April 17, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **Second Public Housing Building Quarantined**

**Plattsburgh, April 16, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department has issued quarantine orders for residents of a second Plattsburgh Housing Authority high-rise apartment building. The Lakeview Towers building is located at 34 Flynn Avenue in the City of Plattsburgh, next door to the Russell H. Barnard Apartments. Quarantine orders were issued for the Russell H. Barnard building on April 9, 2020.

Health Department and Sheriff Department representatives worked with Plattsburgh Housing Authority personnel to notify tenants in-person. Teams went door-to-door to explain the quarantine order and to let residents know that Clinton County Departments and community based organizations will be available to assist throughout the quarantine period.

John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County remarked, “This is yet another step that must be taken to protect our community from the health impacts of COVID-19. We appreciate the assistance and support provided by the Plattsburgh Housing Authority and the City of Plattsburgh, as well as the understanding and cooperation of the residents of the Lakeview Towers Apartments.”

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## News Release

Date: April 18, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-18-20COVID-19 Case Update

#### Requirements for Masks and Face Coverings Added to Preventive Measures

**Plattsburgh, April 18, 2020.** The number of new lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 rose more slowly in Clinton County this week than in previous weeks, though testing criteria remains the same. On Saturday morning, only one more case than the day before was reported. The number of lab-confirmed positive cases since testing began is now 52.

CCHD provided this detailed update of cases among Clinton County residents. The number of lab-confirmed positive cases to date is 52; of these, 37 have recovered. There are 44 suspect cases (individuals whose symptoms and history indicate COVID-19, but have not been tested), of these 34 have recovered. In addition, since testing began, 3 tests have produced indeterminate results for individuals with symptoms (probable cases). In Clinton County 486 tests have been performed. Three individuals (2 lab-confirmed and 1 probable case) have died.

Masked faces have become a common sight as two new additions to Governor Cuomo’s Executive Order 202 took effect this week. As of Wednesday night, workers at essential businesses that continue to operate are required to provide face coverings for employees who have contact with the public. Beginning Friday evening and until further notice, members of the public are expected to wear a cloth face-covering or mask when they are outside of their home and not able to maintain a distance of at least six feet between themselves and others.

The order does not specify any particular type of mask, but it must cover the nose and mouth. Health advocates warn that standard practices to minimize risk of transferring germs when using a mask should be the norm no matter what type of mask or face covering is used.

Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) stated, “Using a mask to prevent spreading illness to others is a different approach than we are used to. We usually use a mask to avoid breathing in something that we don’t want in our lungs. In this case, we are protecting each other by keeping any germs to ourselves. Just about any type of face-covering that fits well over the lower face can serve that purpose.”

-more-



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A wide variety of masks and face coverings were on display on Friday as residents prepared for the new order to take effect. Anything from painter's masks to bandanas and winter scarves were seen. Some sported surgical masks while others wore homemade cloth versions. All of these meet the intent of the Governor's Order.

Ms. Streiff offered this advice, "Whatever type of face covering you use, it is important to remember not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing it. Wash your hands before putting a mask on, and immediately after removing it. She also offered specific guidance, "Remove your mask by touching only the loops or straps. Lift the loop off one ear first, then the other. If you are using a non-washable mask, throw it away after use OR allow it to dry between uses. Place the mask in a paper bag to dry. Use a different paper bag each time."

Over the last few weeks, many residents have been producing homemade cloth masks for themselves, their families and for others in the community. With the new requirement, even more masks will be needed, and commercially produced masks are still rarely available at stores or through online purchase. Instructions on how to make both sew and no-sew face-coverings can be found at <https://bit.ly/2KgJEkk>.

All face-coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- be secured with ties or ear loops;
- include multiple layers of fabric;
- allow for breathing without restriction; and
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

"Laundering or allowing a mask to dry between uses are important safety measures," according to Ms. Streiff. She also noted that once a mask has been put on, it should remain on until it is no longer needed. Taking a mask on and off frequently increases your risk of infection from germs that may be on the outer surface of the mask."

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## News Release

Date: April 19, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-19-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 19, 2020.** Of the 505 tests for COVID-19 that have been conducted in Clinton County to date, Clinton County Health Department reports that 56 have come back positive for COVID-19. Of these lab-confirmed cases, 37 have recovered. Indeterminate results have been received for three individuals, 2 of whom have recovered from their symptoms. Additionally 44 suspect cases have been identified; 36 of whom have recovered. The number of deaths associated with COVID-19 in Clinton County remains at 3 (2 lab-confirmed and one probable).

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## News Release

Date: April 20, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-19-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 20, 2020.** As of this morning, Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting 56 lab-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19, 38 of whom have recovered and two have died. CCHD also reports that there are 43 individuals who have been identified as suspect cases, 36 of whom have recovered. The number of probable (lab-indeterminate) cases since testing began, remains at 3 with 2 recovered and 1 death. When all categories are considered (i.e., positive, suspect, probable, recovered and deaths) the total number of active cases is 23.

On Sunday, Governor Cuomo announced the start of a statewide antibody testing survey to be conducted by the New York State Department of Health in communities across the State. According to the Governor’s website, “The testing survey will sample 3,000 people statewide. The antibody testing is expected to help determine the percentage of the population that is now immune to the virus.” Limited details were reported to the Clinton County Health Department just prior to the State team’s arrival in Plattsburgh where sample testing was conducted at Price Chopper on Sunday and continued on Monday morning.

CCHD confirmed that their department is not conducting antibody testing and that the purpose of the testing being done by the State Health Department is to collect statistical data. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County stated, “The information collected by the State Department of Health through the antibody testing survey is intended help State officials make decisions about how and when it might be safe for some people to return to work. At this time, there is not an option for residents to be tested to learn their individual immunity status.”

A hand-out provided as testing was conducted discussed the antibody test and the results it can produce. According to this document, it is unknown whether a person who has a reactive result (positive) on the WC SARS-CoV-2 IgG test is immune to COVID-19. The hand-out specifically stated, “This won’t be known until people who have IgG levels are exposed again to SARS-CoV-2 and we can study whether any of them are infected again. It is also unknown how long the IgG antibodies last. It will take time to find these answers. In the meantime, this test is the best we can do to indicate any level of immunity.” The document and additional information can be found at <https://on.ny.gov/2KiZGtP>.

-more-



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## News Release

Date: April 21, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-21-20 COVID-19 Case Update Contact Tracing Vital to County’s Efforts to Control the Spread

**Plattsburgh, April 21, 2020.** Expansion of testing and contact tracing have been identified at both the state and national level as key to a safe reopening of businesses and other sectors of society. Each time the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) receives notification of a positive COVID-19 test result, contact tracing begins. Contact tracing includes interviewing an individual who is ill or has tested positive for COVID-19; determining where they have been and who they have been in contact with; and reaching out to those contacts. The same is done for individuals who meet the criteria of a suspect case, even without a positive test result. The contact tracing team for COVID-19 also connects individuals who must remain in isolation or quarantine with community resources to help them meet needs for food and other essential items.

“Contact tracing is a routine part of any communicable disease investigation”, according to Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department. “What’s different with COVID-19, is the scale. There are many more people to contact and more follow-up needed as people are advised to remain in isolation or quarantine as a result of exposure to the virus. More people are needed to accomplish the task.”

The County’s contact tracing team currently consists of 15 individuals and includes Health Department staff, Sheriff’s Department representatives and additional assistance from the Department of Social Services. “The size of the contact tracing team for any disease investigation depends on the number of people who are ill or suspected of being ill,” Ms. Streiff noted. “The well-established partnerships that exist among County Departments and other community organizations allowed the team to grow as needed.”

CCHD developed a “Just in Time” training (JITT) for new additions to the contact tracing team. JITT is a term used to describe training that quickly teaches the specific steps needed to carry out a task during an emergency or disaster. This training is another factor in the County’s ability to expand contact tracing as needed.

In the coming weeks, it is likely that more testing will become available in all areas of the state and nation. With this increased level of testing, a larger team will be needed to do contact tracing. Clinton County is anticipating the need to expand its capacity.

-more-



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COVID-19 case numbers in Clinton County for Tuesday, April 21, 2020 are as follows.

	Total	Recovered	Deaths
Lab-confirmed positive	56	40	2
Probable	3	2	1
Suspect	42	37	0
Active Cases	19		
Tested	527		

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## News Release

Date: April 22, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-22-20 COVID-19 Case County

**Plattsburgh, April 22, 2020.** On Wednesday morning, Clinton County Health Department reported no new positive cases of COVID-19 for the fourth day in a row. With fewer new lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19, Clinton County is beginning to identify benchmarks that may be used to determine when businesses, organizations and residents can resume certain activities.

Mark Henry, Chairman of the Clinton County Legislature, stated, “Careful planning is required. To safely begin resuming regular activity, Clinton County will employ a collaborative phased approach which balances existing executive orders and input from local municipalities, with a concentrated responsible effort to restart the local economy and get business open.. All of this must happen within the framework of good data driven public health policy and protocols to avoid a resurgence of COVID 19.”

Increased testing for COVID-19 and antibody testing have been central to State and National discussions about the re-opening of America. Over the last week Clinton County has seen a slight increase in the number of test kits on hand, resulting in an increase in the number of tests that can be performed. Testing will include individuals for whom a test is ordered by a physician providing the order meets priority 1 or 2 criteria for testing established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://bit.ly/2XTajeV>). Individuals who feel that they may have COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) or other symptoms of illness should contact their healthcare provider office.

Factors that may influence when a slow re-opening process can begin include the percent of new positive tests in comparison to total tests; the number of active cases; and data from the NYSDOH antibody testing survey, when it is released. The County will follow guidance available from State and Federal sources to make decisions about re-engaging the workforce, travel, social gatherings, and how to continue protecting vulnerable individuals. “It’s still too soon to say when re-opening will occur but we are encouraged to be at a point where it makes sense to start planning for a return to more normal operations,” added Mr. Henry.

-more-



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COVID-19 Case Update 4/22/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
Lab-confirmed positive	56	42	2
Probable	3	2	1
Suspect	42	38	0
Active Cases	16		
Tested	544		

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## Media Alert

Date: April 23, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Friday, April 24, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **Dr. Mark Davey, District Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer, Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES BOCES)**
- **Wouter Rietsema, MD, CVPH Vice President of Population Health and Information Services, Infectious Disease Physician**
- **Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services, Clinton County Health Department**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, if you would like to send questions ahead of time, please submit them by 10:00 AM, Friday, April 24th to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

**A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: April 23, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **4-23-20 COVID-19 Case Update Resident Feedback about Re-opening Mixed**

**Plattsburgh, April 23, 2020.** Discussion about when and how Clinton County might begin to re-open in the coming weeks has been met with mixed responses on the Clinton County Health Department’s Facebook page and in calls received by the Department. The County’s Office of Emergency Services has seen similar conflicting reactions on its Facebook page.

Numerous residents shared their feelings that allowing businesses to open and activities to resume too quickly, could place people at risk. John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health, shared this message, “We hear your concerns and will do everything possible to ensure the health of Clinton County residents.”

Mr. Kanoza pointed to steps that have been taken so far that will continue. Clinton County has employed aggressive contact tracing since the first case of COVID-19 appeared in the County. Contact tracing has been conducted for every positive case, as well as for suspect cases. Isolation and quarantine of individuals based upon contact has been used to keep the virus from spreading. “Contact tracing is a tool we will continue to rely on to protect our community,” stated Mr. Kanoza.

Concerns about the number of people tested have been expressed regularly by the public. County officials, the Health Department, CVPH and other health care providers have stated that they share this concern and they have continued to advocate for more tests in the North Country region. “Testing has been based on the availability of testing supplies,” Mr. Kanoza noted. “We will continue to vigorously pursue additional testing capacity.”

The Health Department also heard from many residents earlier in the week about antibody testing that took place on Sunday and Monday. The testing was part of a New York State Department of Health initiative to determine a baseline infection rate for COVID-19. While CCHD was not involved in this testing, they anticipate receiving information from the State Department of Health about the results. Preliminary data was revealed today in Governor Cuomo’s daily briefing. When CCHD receives local Clinton County data, it will be shared with the community.

While the purpose of the antibody test survey was to collect statistical data, CCHD is aware that residents who were tested have begun to receive individual results. CCHD cautions however, that it is unknown at this time how long immunity to the virus will last and whether reinfection is possible. “Every day we learn a bit more about COVID-19,” stated Mr. Kanoza. “Each new piece of information helps us map a direction and will be used further protect ourselves and each other.”

-more-



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Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 4/23/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
Lab-confirmed positive	57	42	3
Probable	3	2	1
Suspect	42	38	0
Active Cases	16		
Tested	548		

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## News Release

Date: April 25, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-25-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 25, 2020.** The Clinton County COVID-19 case update for April 25, 2020 is as follows:

Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 4/25/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	60	44	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	42	38	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	17		
<b>Tested</b>	573		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

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## News Release

Date: April 26, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-26-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 26, 2020.** The Clinton County COVID-19 case update for April 26, 2020 is as follows:

Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 4/26/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	62	44	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	42	38	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	19		
<b>Tested</b>	612		

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## News Release

Date: April 27, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-27-20 COVID-19 Case Update Additional Symptoms Associated with COVID-19 Identified

**Plattsburgh, April 27, 2020.**

As more is learned about COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has added to the list of symptoms associated with COVID-19. The CDC indicates that symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure and may be mild to severe.

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

According to Erin Streiff, Clinton County Health Department’s Director of Health Care Services, “These symptoms may indicate COVID-19, especially if they are new to you and not likely to be due to another cause such as seasonal allergies.” She emphasized, “If you experience these or other symptoms of illness, self-isolate and contact your health care provider.” Seek medical attention immediately if you or a member of your household experiences:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

Ms. Streiff also reported that the four new positive cases of COVID-19 identified over the weekend in Clinton County required very little contact tracing. She said “Each of these individuals had been practicing social distancing and were already complying with voluntary isolation. Each of them had extremely limited contact with others prior to their diagnosis, which meant they did not expose others, and fewer people needed to be subsequently quarantined. They did their part to reduce the potential for spreading COVID-19 in our community.”

-more-



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CCHD also reported the following case numbers for Monday, April 27, 2020.

<b>Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 4/27/20</b>			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	63	44	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	41	38	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	19		
<b>Tested</b>	640		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

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## News Release

Date: April 28, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 4-28-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, April 28, 2020.** Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) reports that as of today, there are 10 active cases of COVID-19 in the County. Of those who were tested and were positive for COVID-19, 51 have recovered. An additional 40 individuals who were considered suspect for having COVID-19 have recovered, along with two of the probable cases. In total, since testing began, 93 people have recovered, 10 continue to have symptoms ranging from severe to mild and four have died. Reports of testing in Clinton County provided by CCHD indicate that between the April 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 28<sup>th</sup>, 126 individuals have been tested. During the same time frame, 7 new cases have been reported.

“Recovery numbers are a good reminder that most of the people who contract COVID-19 will have a mild or non-life-threatening course of illness. That’s important to keep in mind,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to advise that older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions such as heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. However, the CDC has also noted that younger adults are also getting COVID-19, and some are requiring hospitalization, even intensive care. (<https://bit.ly/35beVyH>).

“As we move forward it will be important to have plans in place to protect the most vulnerable among us. We also need to keep in mind that COVID-19 can affect anyone at any age. Residents will be asked to continue to monitor their own health and communicate symptoms to their health care providers. Businesses and organizations are being asked to have policies in place that ensure worker safety. Contact tracing will continue and community support for compliance with quarantine and isolation guidance will be needed,” stated Mr. Kanoza.

In a video briefing released today, Eric Day, Director of the Clinton County Office of Emergency Services (OES) reported that his department has supplied health care providers, emergency medical service providers and nursing homes with personal protective equipment (PPE). Cloth masks have been distributed to nursing home and congregate-living residents, as well as to essential businesses. Earlier releases of information from the County have indicated increased testing capacity and an effective contact tracing system. Sufficient PPE and testing are among the criteria outlined by Governor Cuomo as necessary to begin resuming a more normal level of activity. Mr. Day also used the video opportunity to remind residents of the value of community efforts including physical distancing and wearing masks. Mr. Day noted, “As things begin to open up, we can’t back down. We can’t lower our guard.” The video may be accessed at <https://youtu.be/EKFRILxGj2Q>.

-more-



“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”

CCHD reported the following case numbers for Tuesday, April 28, 2020.

<b>Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 4/28/20</b>			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	63	51	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	41	40	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	10		
<b>Tested</b>	670		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

**About the Clinton County Health Department:**

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## News Release

Date: April 30, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **4-30-20 COVID-19 Case Updates Adding Outdoor Recreation Back Into Daily Routines**

**Plattsburgh, April 30, 2020.** With several days of warm weather behind us, and the promise of more to come, residents have already begun to spend more time outdoors. As they do this, Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department advises, “Take a little time to consider how you will maintain a safe distance (about 6 feet) from others as you resume outdoor leisure activities.”

According to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, adults need a mix of activities to stay healthy, including at least:

- 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week
- 2 days of muscle-strengthening activity a week

The Guidelines recommend that kids and teens ages 6 to 17 get 60 minutes of activity every day. Preschool-aged children (ages 3 through 5 years) should be physically active throughout the day. Caregivers should encourage preschool-aged children to be active when they play, aiming for 3 hours a day.

“Physical activity is important to an individual’s overall health and well-being” stated Ms. Streiff. “Maintaining distance between ourselves and others should be easier outdoors than indoors, but some pre-planning may help. Look for places to walk or play where there aren’t lots of other people and select times of day for outdoor recreation that might be less common, like early morning,” Ms. Streiff noted.

Here are some other tips for social distancing and safe outdoor activity:

- Be aware of who else is nearby and whether they appear to be maintaining distance from others.
- Be flexible about where you walk. If a trail or walking path is crowded, choose another place to get your steps in.
- Wearing masks or face coverings may be difficult for young children. A better solution may be to find play areas away from others.
- Re-imagine what time outdoors with friends and neighbors might look like. Socializing can still take place as long as distancing is maintained.

Additional tips for distancing and outdoor activities can be found at <https://health.gov/news/202004/staying-active-while-social-distancing-questions-and-answers>

-more-



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The Clinton County Health Department reported the following numbers in regard to COVID-19 cases in Clinton County for Thursday April 30, 2020.

<b>Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 4/30/20</b>			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	64	52	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	41	41	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	9		
<b>Tested</b>	708		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

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## Media Alert

Date: April 30, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Friday, May 1, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Keith Collins, MD, CVPH Infectious Disease Specialist**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, if you would like to send questions ahead of time, please submit them by 10:00 AM, Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

**A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: May 2, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 5-2-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, May 2, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) reported the following numbers in regard to COVID-19 cases in Clinton County for Saturday, May 2, 2020. CCHD has reported a declining number of suspect cases over the last several days. As testing criteria has expanded, some individuals previously listed as suspect, have been tested and moved to the lab-confirmed positive column or have received negative test results.

Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 5/2/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	67	53	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	37	37	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	11		
<b>Tested</b>	796		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

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## News Release

Date: May 3, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### 5-3-20 COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, May 3, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) reported the following numbers in regard to COVID-19 cases in Clinton County for Sunday May 3, 2020.

Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 5/3/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	71	53	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	37	37	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	15		
<b>Tested</b>	831		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

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## News Release

Date: May 4, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### CCHD Release Update Regarding COVID-19 Information

**Plattsburgh, May 4, 2020.** Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) reported the following changes to the Department’s information release practices to begin on Tuesday May 5, 2020.

- CCHD will continue to issue media releases as situational changes occur or new information becomes available; however, releases may not be distributed on a daily basis.
- Clinton County COVID-19 case updates (numbers) will be published daily on CCHD’s Facebook (@clintonhealth) and Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD) accounts.
- CCHD will continue to host a weekly virtual media conference.
- Video updates (previously provided Monday - Thursday) will be produced as needed.
- CCHD’s COVID-19 webpage ([www.clintonhealth.org/communicabledisease](http://www.clintonhealth.org/communicabledisease)) will be updated by 5/11/20 to include additional guidance documents for general public and special populations groups.

CCHD reported the following numbers in regard to COVID-19 cases in Clinton County for Monday May 4, 2020.

Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 5/4/20			
	Total	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	71	53	3
<b>Probable*</b>	3	2	1
<b>Suspect**</b>	37	37	0
<b>Active Cases</b>	15		
<b>Tested</b>	864		

\*Probable = Individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

\*\*Suspect = Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider).

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## News Release

Date: May 5, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **CCHD to Change COVID-19 Reporting Categories to Match State Guidance**

**Plattsburgh, May 5, 2020.** The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has notified local health departments that the reporting requirement related to cases of COVID-19 has been updated to capture two distinct classifications.

Prior to this notification, Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) along with other local health units had been using three categories to describe the status of COVID-19 cases. “Lab-confirmed positive” is used when an individual who has been tested for COVID-19 receives a positive result indicating that they have the virus. The term “suspect” had been used to define individuals suspected of having COVID-19 based on clinical assessment (by a medical provider), and for whom a test was not performed. The term “probable” previously described individuals tested for COVID-19 with inconclusive test results.

Beginning today, CCHD will follow updated NYSDOH guidance and use two designations only. Cases will be listed as lab-confirmed positive (tested with a positive result) or probable. Individuals who were previously listed as suspect will now be included in probable cases, as will those who were tested but for whom results were indeterminate.

A probable case is defined as:

- meeting clinical criteria **AND** epidemiologic evidence with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for COVID-19; or
- meeting presumptive laboratory evidence **AND** either clinical criteria **OR** epidemiologic evidence; or
- meeting vital records criteria with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for COVID-19.

Clinical criteria refers to the symptoms associated with COVID-19 and epidemiological evidence is based on whether an individual was, or may have been, exposed to the virus.

Ms. Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department noted, “Federal agencies such as the CDC, along with state and local health departments use very specific language in order to accurately track how diseases spread and how they affect people. The case definitions can be confusing. Our goal is to report easily understandable numbers to the public. From this point forward, cases will be referred to as lab-confirmed positive or probable.”

-more-



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People who are tested and who receive a positive test result will always be part of the lab-confirmed positive case count, even after they have recovered. However, Ms. Streiff also noted “A probable case, may move from the probable category to the positive category if they are tested and found to be positive, or they may be tested and receive a negative result, which would take them off the probable list. A detailed explanation of the COVID-19 case definition that New York counties will begin using today can be found at <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/conditions/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/case-definition/2020/> .

The Clinton County Health Department reported the following case numbers for May 5, 2020.

<b>Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update 5/5/20</b>			
	Cases	Recovered	Deaths
<b>Lab-confirmed positive</b>	73	56	3
<b>Probable*</b>	39	38	1
<b>Total</b>	112	94	4
<b>Active Cases 14</b>		<b>Tested 885</b>	

\*Probable cases:

- meet clinical criteria **AND** epidemiologic evidence with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for COVID-19; or
- meet presumptive laboratory evidence **AND** either clinical criteria **OR** epidemiologic evidence; or
- meet vital records criteria with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for COVID-19.

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## Media Alert

Date: May 7, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Friday, May 8, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Wouter Rietsema, MD, CVPH Vice President of Population Health and Information Services, Infectious Disease Physician**
- **Lola Miller, Manager, Health, Safety & Environment, Nova Bus Plattsburgh**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference.

**A closed-caption recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: May 11, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### New Information Available on Phased Reopening Strategy

**Plattsburgh, May 11, 2020.** New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo has outlined benchmarks that must be in place before counties can begin a phased reopening process. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County, stated today, “Clinton County officials are taking all necessary steps to be ready when the Governor’s office gives the OK to move forward.”

Reopening of businesses will occur in 4 phases. The first phase can only begin if a region has met the criteria below. Each phase will last a minimum of 2 weeks and may be halted if new cases case counts, hospitalizations or other factors cause a region to no longer meet the State’s criteria. Phase 1 businesses include:

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale Trade
- Select Retail for curbside pick-up only
- Agriculture
- Forestry and Fishing

Detailed information about reopening is now available from New York State in a publication called *NY Forward* (<https://forward.ny.gov/>). This comprehensive document includes a section on the phased reopening of businesses. “It answers many of the questions CCHD has been receiving from the public and from our business community,” stated Mr. Kanoza.

New York will re-open businesses on a regional basis as each region meets the criteria necessary to protect public health. Guidelines for reopening depend on meeting 7 metrics that fall into 4 categories:

- The infection rate is sufficiently low;
- The health care system has the capacity to absorb a potential resurgence in new cases;
- Diagnostic testing capacity is sufficiently high to detect and isolate new cases; and
- Robust contact-tracing capacity is in place to help prevent the spread of the virus.

The North Country Region currently meets 6 of 7 criteria. According to Mr. Kanoza, “Public Health partners in each county in our region (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence) reviewed these benchmarks and each has assessed their individual County capacity to meet them. For most of us, testing is the hold-up.”

-more-



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As of this afternoon, the Governor’s website added information which listed the North Country Region as close to meeting the testing metric (<https://forward.ny.gov/regional-monitoring-dashboard>). According to this site, the North Country Region has no new hospitalizations, 54% of beds available, 60% of ICU beds available, and 400 new tests are being performed per day (goal of 419).

“Several days ago, the North Country was among several regions in the State deemed to have an insufficient number of contact tracers but the State has put a plan in place to help,” Mr. Kanoza noted. “Contact tracing will be an on-going need for months to come and even though CCHD currently has enough man-power to do this work, there may come a time when help is needed. We are appreciative of the State’s efforts in this area,” stated Mr. Kanoza.

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## Media Alert \*\*Schedule Change\*\*

Date: May 12, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference Moves to Wednesday

A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, May 13, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- Gary Douglas, North Country Chamber of Commerce
- Erin Streiff, Clinton County Health Department, Director of Health Care Services
- CVPH (tentative)

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, May 13th to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

**A closed-caption recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: May 14, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### North Country Set to Begin Phase 1 of Reopening

**Plattsburgh, May 14, 2020.** According to the New York State Regional Monitoring Dashboard (<https://forward.ny.gov/regional-monitoring-dashboard>) the North Country region now meets all seven criteria needed to begin a phased reopening.

Broadly, Phase 1 consists of:

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale Trade
- Select Retail for Curbside Pickup Only
- Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing

John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health cautioned, “Only those entities outlined by Governor Cuomo are eligible to reopen in Phase 1. Prior to opening, all businesses are required to designate a safety officer and develop a safety plan.” A business safety plan template is available at <https://forward.ny.gov/industries-reopening-phase>. In addition, a detailed listing and description of Phase 1 businesses, opening requirements, planning resources, posters and other guidance is available at [www.northcountrychamber.com](http://www.northcountrychamber.com).

Mr. Kanoza also advised residents, “If you are returning to work, follow the safety plan developed by your employer and continue to follow the steps that have gotten us to this point. All residents must remain vigilant and continue to take preventive measures.”

Everyone should:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

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## News Release

Date: May 16, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Health Department Concerned about Rise in Cases due to Lack of Social Distancing

**Plattsburgh, May 16, 2020.** Nine new lab-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County are associated with several recent parties in Plattsburgh. All nine are isolating in their homes. None are currently hospitalized. Contact tracing as of Friday evening had identified 27 individuals as close contacts. These people are now in quarantine.

This rise in cases is very disturbing because it was preventable,” stated John Kanoza, the County’s Director of Public Health.

When asked about the impact this might have on reopening, Mr. Kanoza pointed out that the metrics, set forth by Governor Cuomo are based on hospitalizations. He noted, “Because these individuals are infected but not hospitalized, they will not immediately affect the County’s reopening. However, any spread of COVID-19 may lead to serious illness in some people. I am concerned for the health of all who may have been exposed and concerned that new cases could result in new hospitalizations.”

CCHD’s contact tracing team is continuing to identify and quarantine contacts. The team will need to monitor each of the new cases and their contacts along with approximately 46 other individuals already in isolation or quarantine.

Mr. Kanoza stated, “People are tired of staying home and distancing. I get that. But, this virus will not go away just because we are tired. We need to maintain the health practices that got us to the point where we are able to slowly begin to reopen our County.” He reiterated, “We must stay home when possible, maintain distance between ourselves and others when we go out, wear a face covering when distancing is not possible and wash our hands often. These strategies have worked so far. We must continue.”

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# Clinton County Health Department

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## Media Alert

Date: May 19, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, May 20, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **David Favro, Clinton County Sheriff**
- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Wouter Reitsma, MD, CVPH Vice President of Population Health and Information Services, Infectious Disease Physician**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, May 20th to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

**A closed-caption recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: May 22, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **CCHD Offers Memorial Day Weekend Guidance Hold off on Yard Sales and Follow Safety Precautions for Recreational Activities**

**Plattsburgh, May 22, 2020.** Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) has received numerous calls this week inquiring if yard sales are allowed under the phase one guidelines for reopening. According to John Kanoza, Director of Public Health, they are not. “Hold off for a few months,” was the advice he offered at a recent virtual media conference. He also noted, “*NY on PAUSE* remains in effect until May 28, 2020.” Under *PAUSE*, non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reason (e.g. parties, celebrations or other social events) should be canceled or postponed. For more information about *New York on PAUSE*, visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-pause>. Residents may also use this site or call 1-833-789-0470 to report any non-essential gatherings or any non-essential businesses entities operating in violation of the *PAUSE* order.

CCHD also issued guidance this week regarding safe recreation during the COVID-19 outbreak. In a memo addressed to municipal and school district authorities, CCHD shared information from the New York State Department of Health, NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The advisory stated “CCHD believes that with proper precautions, Clinton County residents may participate in low risk recreation activities.” At the same time, the release noted that CCHD also “supports the continued closure of any parks or recreational areas by municipal or school district authorities that could further the spread of COVID-19.”

“This memo is meant to provide guidance that municipalities and school districts can use to make decisions. Ultimately it will be up to each locale and school district to determine if and when their parks and playgrounds will open,” stated Mr. Kanoza.

When using parks and recreational spaces that are opened to the public, residents are advised to take the following precautions.

- Read and follow all posted guidance at the park or space you are visiting.
- Stay at least six feet from others at all times. Maintain distance from others while in places people tend to congregate, such as parking lots, trailheads, and scenic overlooks. Do not visit areas where you cannot stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times.
- Visit in small groups limited to immediate household members and avoid gathering with others outside your household.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Bring hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to use if soap and water are not available.

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- Visit parks that are close to your home. Traveling long distances to visit a park may contribute to the spread of COVID-19.
- Avoid playground equipment like slides and swings, outdoor exercise equipment, and other frequently touched surfaces. Refrain from games and activities that require close contact, such as basketball, football, or soccer. Do not share equipment, such as bicycles, helmets, balls, or Frisbees.
- If you are sick with COVID-19, were recently exposed (within 14 days) to someone with COVID-19, or just don't feel well, do not visit public areas including parks or recreational facilities.

CCHD also included a chart to help residents assess the potential risk that may be associated with various recreational activities. In all recreation opportunities, participants must follow posted guidelines for social distancing, maximum occupancy, face coverings, etc. Facilities/parks will reopen on a park-by-park basis. Please check with the park in advance to see what opportunities are available.

<b>Low, Mid, and High Level Risk Recreation Activities</b>	
<b>Low Level Risk</b>	<b>Individual Sports</b> (i.e., golf, disc golf, foot golf, pickle ball, tennis, paddling activities, and archery)
	<b>Solitary Recreation Activities</b> (i.e., running, walking, hiking, biking, roller skating or blading, bird watching, and geocaching)
	<b>Boating</b> (Refer to <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/349.html">www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/349.html</a> for further guidance.)
	<b>Fishing</b> (Refer to <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html">www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html</a> for further guidance.)
	<b>Dog Parks</b>
<b>Mid Level Risk</b>	<b>Courts and Sports Fields</b> (for individual, family, or same-household use only.)
	<b>Doubles/Partner Sports</b> (i.e., doubles tennis or pickle ball)
<b>High Level Risk</b>	<b>Playgrounds or Exercise Equipment</b>
	<b>Swimming Areas/Beaches</b>
	<b>Organized Events/Gatherings</b> (i.e., picnics, barbeques, races, horse shows, and competitions)
	<b>Group Activities</b> (i.e., day-camps, arts & crafts programs, and group classes)
	<b>Indoor Activities</b>
	<b>Team Sports</b> (i.e., basketball, baseball, softball, football, rugby, soccer, hockey, lacrosse, and volleyball)
<b>Equipment Rentals</b>	

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## Media Alert

Date: May 26, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, May 27, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **Mark Henry, Clinton County Legislature, Chairman**
- **Erin Streiff, Clinton County Health Department, Director of Health Care Services**
- **Wouter Reitsma, MD, CVPH Vice President of Population Health and Information Services, Infectious Disease Physician**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, May 27th to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

A closed-caption recording will be made available on CCHD’s YouTube Channel (<https://bit.ly/2X3fo3f>) after the event.

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## Media Alert

Date: June 2, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, June 3, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Erin Streiff, Clinton County Health Department, Director of Health Care Services**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

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## Media Alert

Date: June 9, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, June 10, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Mark Henry, Clinton County Legislature, Chairman**
- **Dr. Mark Davey, District Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer, Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES BOCES)**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

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## News Release

Date: June 15, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Tick bite prevention

**Plattsburgh, June 15, 2020.** A mask or face covering may not be the only protective clothing needed if you plan to spend time outdoors. Residents have been reporting tick encounters over the last few weeks and Clinton County Health Department wants to reiterate the importance of protecting yourself and your family from Lyme disease and other tickborne diseases.

“Start by avoiding ticks,” stated Jennifer Trudeau, Principal Public Health Educator at the Clinton County Health Department. “When possible, stay away from places where ticks are normally found. If you are hiking, stay toward the center of the path and avoid dense woods and bushy areas.”

Other prevention measures include:

- Use an EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) approved insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or 2-undecanone.
- Cover your skin as much as possible. Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Treat clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents) with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Never apply permethrin directly to skin.
- Cover baby carriers and strollers with mosquito netting.

“Even with your best prevention efforts, you may still bring ticks home with you. However, your chances of getting sick are usually reduced if the tick is removed promptly, generally within 36 hours of when it attaches. Make daily tick checks routine for everyone in your family—including pets,” stated Mrs. Trudeau. She cautioned, “Pets that spend time outdoors can bring ticks indoors, putting you at risk, even if you haven’t spent time outdoors yourself.” Daily tick checks should include key areas ticks like to hide, such as under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and on the hairline and scalp. Taking a shower as soon as possible after spending time outdoors can also help to wash away unattached ticks.

For additional information, including tick removal and symptoms of tick-related illnesses, visit CCHD’s Summer Safety Guide at [http://www.clintonhealth.org/news\\_letters/SummerSafetyGuide2020.pdf](http://www.clintonhealth.org/news_letters/SummerSafetyGuide2020.pdf).

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## Media Alert

Date: June 16, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

**A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, June 17, 2020.** Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Mark Henry, Clinton County Legislature Chairman**
- **Michael Cashman, Town of Plattsburgh Supervisor, Local Government Liaison**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

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## News Release

Date: June 16, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **CCHD Asks Travelers to Maintain Practices that Limit Spread of COVID-19**

**Plattsburgh, June 16, 2020.** So far, the phased reopening of the North Country region has not caused a significant rise in new COVID-19 cases or hospitalizations. In fact, at this time, Clinton County has no active cases of COVID-19. The Clinton County Health Department wants to keep this trend going, especially as people resume activities and begin traveling to and from the area.

“Whenever people travel from one locale to another, a fourteen day period of self-quarantine is advised,” stated John Kanoza, Public Health Director for Clinton County. “We hope that people returning to Clinton County, or coming for a visit, will take this precaution to help protect the health of our residents.”

Travel tips to limit the spread of COVID-19:

- When traveling to (or returning from) another area, CCHD advises travelers to voluntarily self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival.
- During travel, wear a face covering or mask at all times when distancing of at least 6 feet between you and others is not possible.
- When you arrive at your destination, continue to follow the same guidance for distancing and use of face coverings that you have been following here.
- Those visiting or returning to Clinton County are expected to comply with rules established here, even if they are stricter than the area you just left.
- At all times, practice frequent handwashing. Use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Don't travel if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have been exposed to someone known or suspected to have the virus.
- If family or friends are planning to visit, have an honest conversation with them about whether or not they may have been exposed to COVID-19 before letting them come. If they cannot confidently say that they have not been exposed to the virus, ask them to postpone their trip.

In his remarks on Sunday, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo pointed to the rise in cases that other states are experiencing. He said, “The reason we (New York State) made the progress was because we followed the facts even though it was hard. Don't disregard the facts: 22 states are seeing increases.”

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Clinton County Health Department

Page 2

June 15, 2020

Clinton County and neighboring counties have seen a slower spread of COVID-19 than other regions of nation and the state. The North Country region was among the first to begin reopening and has maintained a decline in the rate of new cases. Protective practices such as wearing a face covering, practicing social distancing, and good hand hygiene have been cited by Health Department and local officials as key factors in the region's success. "We must continue these practices and we expect all visitors to our area to do the same," stated Mr. Kanoza. "Following this guidance will help us all stay healthy and safe and will allow us to continue to open businesses and services that support our economy and our well-being."

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## News Release

Date: June 19, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **Rising Temperatures and Concern for Heat-related Illness**

**PLATTSBURGH, NY, June 19, 2020.** Temperatures are forecasted to reach up into the high 80s with high humidity today and this weekend. With this in mind, local health officials are urging residents to protect themselves from heat-related illnesses. One particular concern noted by Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) relates to COVID-19. In order to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19, many businesses and service providers have implemented appointment based systems. People are asked to make an appointment, call upon arrival and wait in their car before going in.

“While this practice protects against the spread of COVID-19, with rising temperatures it may also increase the risk for heat-related illness,” stated Mark Lafountain, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at CCHD. “Residents are reminded to NEVER leave a child, adult or animal alone inside a vehicle on a warm day. If you need to wait in your vehicle prior to an appointment, options may include finding a shady place to park and using air conditioning to stay cool.” Residents are encouraged to learn to recognize the signs of heat-related illness, which can range in severity, from heat cramps to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Symptoms of heat-related illness can include:

- Muscle pains or spasms in the stomach, arms or legs (heat cramps);
- Heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, fainting, nausea, or vomiting (heat exhaustion); and
- Extremely high body temperature (above 103°F, taken orally); red, hot and dry skin with no sweat; rapid, strong pulse; or dizziness, confusion or unconsciousness (heat stroke).

Residents are encouraged to contact their medical provider or seek help if they believe they are experiencing symptoms of heat-related illness. Mr. Lafountain cautioned, “To prevent illness, residents should stay alert to the weather and take precautions, such as staying well hydrated.”

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Additional recommendations include:

- Dress in lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing to help keep cool.
- Drink plenty of fluids before you are thirsty, regardless of how active you are. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks, as they will cause you to lose more body fluid. As you sweat, you will need to replenish the fluids your body loses.
- Stay out of the sun as much as possible. People and pets should limit outdoor activities to the times of the day that are typically cooler (i.e., early morning or evening). Rest often in shady areas.
- Stay in air-conditioned areas as much as possible.
- Never leave children or pets inside a parked car, even briefly. Even with the windows cracked, a car will quickly heat up to dangerous temperatures.
- Keeping social distancing in mind, check on your neighbors, friends and family members, especially the elderly and those without air conditioning. Certain populations are at increased risk for heat-related illness, including: older adults (65+); infants and children; those who are ill, have chronic medical conditions, or are overweight; athletes; those without air conditioning; and outdoor workers.

For additional heat and summer safety information, visit CCHD's Summer Safety Guide at [http://www.clintonhealth.org/news\\_letters/SummerSafetyGuide2020.pdf](http://www.clintonhealth.org/news_letters/SummerSafetyGuide2020.pdf).

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## Media Alert

Date: June 23, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

A Facebook live media event will take place at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, June 24, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- Erin Streiff, Clinton County Health Department, Director of Health Care Services
- Garry Douglas, North Country Chamber of Commerce, President/CEO

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted through Facebook during the livestream. Or, submit questions ahead of time by 10:00 AM, Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup> to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be included in individual speaker remarks, or answered in the Q&A section of the conference.

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# Clinton County Health Department

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## News Release

Date: July 8, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **CCHD cautions residents to remain vigilant in the fight against COVID-19**

**Plattsburgh, July 8, 2020.** As cases of COVID-19 surge across the country, local health officials are urging residents in Clinton County to remain vigilant. While active cases of COVID-19 have remained low in the region over the past month, other states have seen a significant increase in cases and hospitalizations for COVID-19. As of 8:00 am Wednesday, July 8, there were five active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) reports that two of the five most recent cases were known contacts of each other; the other three cases were not connected. In addition, none of the most recent cases were associated with travel—all were acquired locally.

“Our concern is that residents will see our low numbers and let their guard down,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health at the Clinton County Health Department. “We are doing well, because of our efforts, but we are not immune. The risk of COVID-19 is not gone. What’s happening around the country should serve as a reminder that we need to remain vigilant and continue to proceed cautiously.” He noted the Department’s strong contact tracing team, the commitment from local businesses to establish and implement safety plans, and the hard work of residents to follow social distancing and face covering recommendations, as key factors to the region’s success.

In general, as residents begin to interact with more people, and for longer periods of time, the risk for spread of COVID-19 increases. Spending time with others who aren’t social distancing or wearing face coverings increases your risk. “Just because you feel fine does not mean that you cannot spread COVID-19. Recent studies show that individuals can spread COVID-19 to others without ever experiencing symptoms themselves (“asymptomatic”), and that even those who eventually develop symptoms can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms (“pre-symptomatic”),” cautioned Mr. Kanoza. “Cloth face coverings may help to slow the spread from people who have the virus and are unaware. Wearing a face covering shows respect, it shows that you care about your community.”

-more-



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Face coverings should:

- Be worn any time individuals are not able to maintain six feet of distance from others (outside of their household members).
- Fit snugly and cover the nose and mouth.
- Be changed frequently and laundered when they are soiled or wet.
- Not be worn by children younger than 2 years of age; anyone who has trouble breathing; or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

In addition, face coverings should not replace other protective measures.

- Do not touch the cloth covering or face.
- Continue to be vigilant with thorough and frequent hand washing with soap and water, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer of 60%+ alcohol.
- Practice respiratory etiquette and cover your coughs or sneezes.
- Practice physical distancing – even when wearing masks.

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## Media Alert

Date: July 24, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Potential COVID-19 Exposure Notification

**Plattsburgh, July 24, 2020.** Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) has confirmed that three individuals who attended a large gathering in Altona, NY have tested positive for COVID-19. The party took place on the **evening of Friday, July 17, 2020 on Memory Lane Way in Altona, NY.**

“Anyone who attended this party has potentially been exposed to COVID-19,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County, NY. “We are urging parents to talk to their children to see if they attended this party, as it is reported that many individuals who attended the party were in their late teens to early 20s.”

Health officials are asking anyone who attended this party to contact the Clinton County Health Department at **518-565-4840**. If calling after hours (after 5:00pm and on weekends), individuals should call **518-565-3270**. Anyone who attended this party should self-quarantine at home and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. Those symptoms include fever (100.4°F), cough, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and/or difficulty breathing. If you develop symptoms, call your healthcare provider for further guidance. Additional information on self-quarantining may be found at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html).

“Residents must remain vigilant and continue to do their part to limit the spread of COVID-19. We have been fortunate to have low numbers of active cases over the past couple of months, but the risk of COVID-19 is not gone,” cautioned Mr. Kanoza. Residents can protect themselves and others by continuing to practice physical distancing (maintaining 6 feet of space between themselves and others), wearing face coverings when out in public, and frequent hand washing.

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## News Release

Date: July 27, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
For Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department Honored for Excellence in Public Health

Local Health Department Program is One of 36 Nationwide to Receive  
NACCHO’s “Promising Practice Award” in 2020

**Plattsburgh (July 27, 2020)-** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) was recently honored with the 2020 Promising Practice Award by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The award celebrates local health departments for developing programs that demonstrate exciting approaches and strategies to local public health issues that are on track to becoming Model Practices, NACCHO’s highest recognition for replicable and exemplary programs. The *Leading Local Health Care Transformation: A Collective Impact Initiative* was one of 36 local health department programs to receive NACCHO’s Promising Practice Award.

The submitted practice partnered the CCHD with the Adirondacks Accountable Care Organization (ACO) to work collaboratively with local primary care providers on practice level quality improvement projects and a coordinated community-based patient education campaign. The project aimed to improve practice performance while simultaneously increasing patient awareness and the practice of preventive health behaviors.

“Public health sometimes struggles to identify how to best help the community acclimate to health care system changes, but helping care providers meet health system performance goals for quality of care makes a lot of sense,” stated Mandy Snay, Director of Health Planning and Promotion at CCHD. “In this case, we were able to use our skills in facilitating systems changes and for disseminating health messages to help the Adirondacks ACO, local provider offices, and patients.”

Promising Practices are exciting approaches and strategies to local public health issues that are on track to being designated as a NACCHO Model Practice. Model Practices are awarded to local health departments across the country for implementing programs that demonstrate exemplary and replicable outcomes in response to an identified public health need. “This award is evidence of our commitment to developing responsive and innovative public health programs that improve the health of local residents,” Ms. Snay noted.

-more-



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Clinton County Health Department

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July 27, 2020

*Leading Local Health Care Transformation: A Collective Impact Initiative* is now part of an online, searchable database of successful public health practices in areas that range from immunization and maternal and child health, to infectious diseases and emergency preparedness. The NACCHO Model Practice database allows local health departments, public health partners, and other important stakeholders to learn about the good work being done by local health departments across the country. The database also provides users an opportunity to learn from best practices and what resources are needed to implement comparable programs in other jurisdictions that produce results.

Read more about these award-winning programs at <https://application.naccho.org/Public/Applications/Search>.

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## Media Alert

Date: July 30, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Q&A Session

A Facebook Live question and answer (Q&A) session will take place at 12:00 pm on Friday, July 31, 2020 on the Clinton County Health Department’s Facebook page (@clintonhealth). Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at Clinton County Health Department, will provide a brief update on the current status of COVID-19 in our community and will answer questions from residents and media.

Questions can be submitted to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com) by 10:00 am, Friday, July 31, 2020.

A closed-caption recording will be made available on CCHD’s YouTube Channel (<https://bit.ly/2X3fo3f>) after the event.

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## News Release

Date: August 13, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### North Country Set to Welcome Students Back

**Plattsburgh, August 13, 2020.** As North Country residents return to work and school, local health officials are urging community members to continue to be respectful and responsible. While active cases of COVID-19 have remained low in the region over the past month, many residents have expressed concerns of potential rising numbers as students return to local schools and colleges. As of 8:00 am Thursday, August 13, there were two active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County.

“It is important to remember that school faculty, staff, and many students are members of our community. They reside in our community year-round just like us and have a vested interest in the health and safety of their neighbors,” stated Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD). “Local colleges and school districts have done extensive work and planning to ensure the safest possible return for students and staff, as well as to mitigate any impact their return may have on our community.”

SUNY Plattsburgh has already begun the process of registering and housing students who will undergo a precautionary quarantine prior to the start of classes. They have also been working on measures to ensure the health and safety of their campus community, including upgrading air filters and implementing classroom social distancing occupancy. In addition, all college sponsored events, both on and off campus, must adhere to a social distancing and face covering policy. Student conduct processes can be leveraged to ensure compliance with such policies. To learn more about the college’s Fall 2020 Restart Plan, residents can visit [www.plattsburgh.edu/covid-19](http://www.plattsburgh.edu/covid-19).

Local school districts have received the go-ahead to resume instruction this fall and are also working diligently to prepare. CCHD staff members have been working closely with District Superintendents throughout this process. “Many parents are struggling with the decision to send their children back to campus. At this time our local schools are hard at work to ensure the best possible learning environment while prioritizing student safety. We encourage parents to engage in dialog with their district leaders by attending scheduled reopening forums,” stated Ms. Streiff.

Students or staff members who have been deemed close contacts of a lab-confirmed positive case will be contacted by the local health department and will undergo precautionary or mandatory quarantine protocols. Close contact is defined by NYS Department of Health as a “person who has been in close contact (6 ft.) for longer than ten minutes with someone who is positive for COVID-19.” The New York State Department of Health will be issuing additional guidance as the school year progresses, and we will expect updates to recommendations as we move forward.

-more-



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“The most effective way to keep our community safe is to continue the practices we have been emphasizing from the start. Maintaining a 6 foot separation from others, wearing face coverings, avoiding gatherings, washing hands often, and frequently disinfecting commonly touched surfaces can help stop the spread of this virus in our community,” added Ms. Streiff.

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## News Release

Date: August 21, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, August 21, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting the death of a Clinton County resident due to COVID-19. This case is linked to the recent Essex Center outbreak and was reported by the Essex County Health Department on the evening of Thursday, August 20, 2020. This is the fifth death due to COVID-19 in Clinton County. As of 8:00 am Friday, August 21, 2020, the Department reports 4 active cases of COVID-19, and a total of 263 cases of COVID-19 since early March 2020 (145 lab-confirmed positive and 118 probable).

“We would like to express our heartfelt condolences to this individual’s family and friends, as well as to our neighbors in Essex County who are also grieving the loss of their loved ones,” stated John Kanoza, Director of the Clinton County Health Department. “Contact tracing, isolation and quarantine remain essential in mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Our Department has been heavily involved in these activities since the start of the pandemic, but we urge residents to do their part by continuing to act responsibly. Avoid large gatherings, wear a face covering, maintain a physical distance of 6 feet from others, and wash your hands frequently. As this instance has reminded us, older adults are at increased risk from COVID-19, and we urge our residents to take every possible precaution to protect our fellow community members who are more susceptible to the virus,” noted Mr. Kanoza.

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## News Release

Date: September 4, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Re-opening of Schools in the North Country

**Plattsburgh, September 4, 2020.** As the beginning of the new school year approaches, anxiety about the re-opening of schools is evident and expected. While active cases of COVID-19 have remained relatively low in Clinton County throughout the phased reopening, many residents have expressed concerns about potential outbreaks in schools when in-person education resumes. As of 8:00 am Friday, September 4, there were three active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. However, as recent outbreaks in neighboring counties and across the country have shown, the risk for increased cases of illness persists.

“Re-opening schools and universities is critical for the educational and social development of students of all ages. It is also necessary to re-open these institutions for many parents who need to return to work. At the same time, we want to ensure that schools open in a manner that prioritizes the health and safety of students, teachers, school staff, their families, and the community at large. *These are not mutually exclusive goals,*” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “Our goal is to reduce, to the greatest extent possible, transmission of disease to students, teachers, and staff in the school setting which will help prevent infection in the wider community. This means taking steps to mitigate spread once in-person learning is reinstated.”

Local colleges and school districts have done extensive work and planning to ensure the safest possible return for students and staff. Schools and universities have systems in place to ensure that mask-wearing, hand washing, physical distancing, and sanitation guidelines are consistently followed by staff, students, and their families on school grounds. While oversight of schools and approval of re-opening plans occur at the state-level, local health officials have been in close communications with both Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES) and individual school districts, providing guidance where appropriate to ensure as safe of a re-opening as possible.

“One of the strongest assets to our county is the collaboration that occurs within our community,” noted Mr. Kanoza. “Our Clinton County Incident Management Team--comprised of representatives from CCHD, Clinton County Sheriff’s Office, Clinton County Office of Emergency Services, and county and local elected officials—communicates regularly with other key community partners, such as CVES, individual school districts, SUNY Plattsburgh, Clinton Community College, and New York State representatives. Should a positive case of COVID-19 occur within a school, we will use the established local system for contact tracing that has been successful in mitigating risk and controlling spread of the virus in our community for many months now.”

-more-



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Contact tracing, the practice of informing people when they've been exposed to a contagious disease, is essential to slowing the spread of COVID-19. Students or staff members who have been deemed close contacts of a lab-confirmed positive case will be contacted by the local health department and will undergo precautionary or mandatory quarantine protocols.

“The most effective way to keep our community safe is to continue the practices we have been emphasizing from the start. Maintaining a 6 foot separation from others, wearing face coverings, avoiding gatherings, washing hands often, and frequently disinfecting commonly touched surfaces can help stop the spread of this virus in our community,” added Mr. Kanoza.

For tips on preparing students to return to school, visit <https://bit.ly/2DrpSmj> and <https://bit.ly/2Z2wP4K>.

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## News Release

Date: October 1, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department Rabies Vaccination Clinic

On **October 15, 2020**, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is hosting a free Rabies Vaccination Clinic for dogs, cats, and ferrets. The New York State law requires pets to have their first rabies vaccination by 4 months of age. Pets may be vaccinated as early as 3 months of age.

The event will be held **October 15, 2020** from **6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at the **Peru Volunteer Fire Department building** located at **753 Bear Swamp Road, Peru, NY**. Interested residents should bring their pets on a leash or in a secure carrier. Pets that have received a previous rabies vaccination are eligible to receive a three-year certificate. Please bring your pet’s most recent rabies vaccination records (previous certificate); otherwise, a one-year certificate will be provided.

**Due to COVID-19, the rabies vaccination clinics have been modified.** All participants must:

- Pre-register for the event at <https://apps.health.ny.gov/doh2/applinks/cdmspr/2/counties?OpID=1900140>. For assistance registering, please call 518-565-4870.
- Wear a mask and maintain six feet of separation at all times between individuals that are not from the same household.
- Remain in your car until your appointment time.
- Stay home (do not enter the facility) if you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that can affect all mammals, including humans and pets. Rabies is most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating your pets. As a precaution, never pick up wildlife, including stray animals, and wear thick protective gloves if you must handle these animals. If you are bitten (teeth breaking the skin) by an animal, including domestic animals, seek medical attention and notify the Clinton County Health Department.

“This is a great opportunity to save your pet’s life and prevent the spread of rabies.” states Amanda Finckel, Senior Sanitarian for the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety. “Don’t miss this opportunity.” Donations are accepted and appreciated. Planning for two additional Rabies Vaccination Clinics is ongoing; dates for these clinics have not been finalized, but will be held at the Rouses Point Volunteer Fire Department and the City of Plattsburgh Public Works.

For future Rabies Vaccination Clinic dates, visit [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org), or find CCHD on Facebook @clintonhealth. For additional information on rabies, visit [www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html).

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## News Release

Date: October 6, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Health Officials Concerned as Local COVID-19 Cases Increase

**Plattsburgh, October 6, 2020.** Local health officials are urging residents to not become complacent in the fight against Covid-19. As many businesses and schools in our region have reopened, many residents are resuming more “normal” daily activities. Health officials fear that this return to “normalcy” has given many residents the impression that the risk of Covid-19 has decreased. As a result, many residents are increasing their social circles and becoming more lax in their mask wearing, social distancing, and handwashing efforts.

“Covid-19 is in our community. As much as we all want this to be over, the risk of Covid is still present,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “Already this week we have seen nine new lab-confirmed cases of Covid-19, bringing our current total number of active cases to twelve. What has been particularly evident with our most recent cases is the lack of apparent connection between cases. These cases are not associated with one specific gathering, event or location but dispersed throughout our community.”

Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. “While we routinely provide case updates for Clinton County that reflect cases identified through testing, there are certainly many more individuals throughout our community with COVID-19, including both those without symptoms (asymptomatic) and those attributing symptoms to a different ailment,” added Mr. Kanoza.

While some have looked to the relatively low number of deaths associated with COVID-19 in Clinton County to minimize the severity of the virus, Mr. Kanoza cautions residents to reconsider. “One death due to COVID-19 is one too many. These are people, our friends and neighbors, with families who are suffering unnecessarily—these deaths could have been prevented. In addition, researchers are only just beginning to learn about the long-term health complications that COVID-19 causes.”

Recent hospitalizations also have health officials concerned. “We have seen a significant uptick in hospitalizations from Covid in the last two weeks. Aside for our concern for the hospitalized patients, we know that hospitalizations are just the tip of the iceberg of cases in the community. We had a very mild summer and I am afraid we have been lulled into some complacency around masking and social distancing and avoiding high risk situations. Please, wear your masks and do the things we all need to do to be safe,” urged Wouter Rietsema, Vice President for Population Health and Information Services and Infectious Disease Physician at the University of Vermont Health Network- Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH). “Two weeks ago we [CVPH] had one patient admitted with COVID-19, and now we have seven,” noted Dr. Rietsema.

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Health officials reiterated that the most effective way to keep our community safe is to continue the practices that have been emphasized from the start. “We must continue to physically distance (6 feet) ourselves from others, wear masks, wash our hands frequently, avoid crowds, and stay home when we’re sick. Our desire for this pandemic to be over does not make it so. It is up to each and every one of us to continue doing our part to keep those at greatest risk in our community safe,” added Mr. Kanoza.

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## News Release

Date: October 20, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, October 20, 2020.** As of Tuesday morning, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting 35 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. According to health officials, of those 35 cases, 18 are associated with a SUNY Plattsburgh cluster, 11 are associated with Clinton Correctional Facility, and 6 are other community residents.

“The upward trend in cases we are seeing is definitely concerning,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “When you consider our entire population, numbers are still relatively low, but this is one of the largest spikes in cases we have seen, to date. Our concern is that numbers will continue to increase, resulting in an unsustainable burden to our medical system and potential shutdowns. We don’t want to see that happen, and we continue to work diligently in our mitigation efforts. But we can’t do this alone—we need your help.”

The Incident Command System (ICS) structure, central to all emergency responses, has been in place for the County’s COVID response since March 2020. The ICS is a best practice in emergency response, maximizing cooperation and coordination of many different agencies to provide the best community response. “The ICS provides an opportunity for us to share skills and resources, addressing issues and needs that arise as efficiently and effectively as possible. This is a structure that can be expanded or demobilized as needed. In light of our recent increase in cases and in anticipation of increased need, we’re expanding,” noted Mr. Kanoza. Clinton County’s ICS includes multiple County Departments, such as Public Health, Emergency Services, and Law Enforcement. In addition, the ICS team works closely with other community partners. “Our team has been in near constant communications with SUNY Plattsburgh over the past week, as well as NYS Department of Health, as we work together to keep our entire community as healthy and safe as possible.”

So, how can residents help? “We need residents partnering with us in this response. The small choices—to wear a mask, to keep your distance from others, to wash your hands (*again*), those are the things that can make a big difference in minimizing spread of this disease. These actions don’t eliminate all risk, but they do work in minimizing risk,” urged Mr. Kanoza.

Residents are encouraged to: wear a mask, physically distance themselves from others (6 feet), wash their hands often, avoid crowds and large gatherings, stay home when sick, and get a flu shot.

-more-



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## News Release

Date: November 5, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clarification on School Mask Breaks in Clinton County

**Plattsburgh, November 5, 2020.** Last week, Governor Cuomo granted county and city government officials the ability to impose mask mandates on local school districts. The new order resulted from a need for county officials to have greater ability to enforce school mask-wearing practices, especially in areas where infection rates are high.

The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) continues to support consistent and appropriate mask wearing in schools for students, teachers and staff. CCHD recognizes the practice as a key preventive strategy that reduces the risk of a person who is sick from spreading the virus to others. CCHD also recognizes there are situations that make the use of a cloth face covering challenging or dangerous and continues to encourage schools administrators and educators to work together to develop individual plans for those situations; CCHD is available for consult as needed. Masks should not be placed on children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious or sleeping, and anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

To date, the reopening plans of all local school districts address mask wearing throughout the school day for students, staff and teachers, currently necessitating no further action on the part of CCHD in relation to the new mandate. “We are proud of our local districts who went the extra mile in requiring face coverings at all times before it was a mandate. Many schools across the state did not and it has contributed to the spread of COVID-19 in the community,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County.

While the new mandate did not specifically address the issue, it has re-sparked questions about mask breaks in schools. CCHD continues to recommend the thoughtful implementation of mask breaks that aligns with guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). In relation to mask breaks, the NYSDOH’s *Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency*, states that for schools requiring face coverings be worn by all individuals at all times, students should be allowed to remove their face covering “for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance.”



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Clinton County Health Department  
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Any removal of masks in group settings increases the risk of virus spread. CCHD has shared a number of suggestions to local school administrators to minimize that risk, including assuring students are seated during breaks, taking those breaks outdoors when possible, and having the breaks overseen by classroom leadership. Mr. Kanoza adds, “We accept there will be times when students and staff will need to remove their masks for short times. We want to help make all of those breaks as safe as possible.” Based upon a review of the re-opening plans of all local schools, CCHD is not identifying any adjustments that need to be made at this time, but has communicated an intent to act on the new mandate to all local districts, if non-compliance with their plans is evident.

Additional guidance and considerations for safe and effective mask wearing in K-12 schools is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html>.

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## Media Alert

Date: November 18, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

A Facebook live media event will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 19, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, P.E., P.G., Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Mark C. Davey, Ed.D., District Superintendent/ Chief Executive Officer, Champlain Valley Educational Services**
- **Kathleen Camelo, M.D., Vice President, Clinton County Board of Health & Director of the Student Health & Counseling Center, SUNY Plattsburgh**
- **Mark Henry, Chairman, Clinton County Legislature**
- **David Favro, Clinton County Sheriff**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted in advance to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

**A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: November 20, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Celebrating Holidays Safely

**Plattsburgh, November 20, 2020.** Cases of COVID-19 have increased significantly in our community over the past few weeks, leaving local health officials concerned about the upcoming holidays. According to the Clinton County Health Department, Clinton County has seen an additional 155 lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 over the past two weeks. As of today, November 20, 2020, the Department reports 102 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County.

“The holidays are generally a time for celebration, when extended family and friends come together. We understand the value of this time, especially in a year that has been a difficult for so many. As much as we want to, this is not the year to bring the whole family together for Thanksgiving and other celebrations,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “We are encouraging all residents to keep their celebrations small and to stay local this Thanksgiving.”

“The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year is to celebrate with people in your household. While this is our recommendation, we realize that some will choose to celebrate with people outside of their immediate household,” noted Mr. Kanoza. “For those choosing to spend time with people that they don’t live with, we urge you to take steps to decrease risk to yourself and your family.”

Residents are encouraged to take steps to make their celebrations safer, including:

- Be outside as much as possible.
- If indoors, wear a mask at all times that it is possible to do so.
- Open windows to increase ventilation if you can.
- Keep 6 feet or more of distance from others.
- Wash your hands often.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items between use.
- Limit the amount of time you spend at indoor gatherings.
- Hosts and guests should have conversations ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together.

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“In addition to attending a gathering, traveling in and of itself increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home, with your immediate family is the best way to protect yourself and others,” said Mr. Kanoza. “People you care about can give you COVID-19. And you can give it to them. Show your thanks, love and respect for your family members’ health and safety by staying small and local this year.”

For up-to-date New York State COVID Travel Advisory quarantine regulations, visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>.

Additional guidance to make Thanksgiving celebrations safer may be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/thanksgiving.html>.

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## News Release

Date: December 11, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **\*Update\***

#### **Notice to the Public – Potential Exposure to COVID-19**

**Plattsburgh, December 11, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is asking any residents who were at Miller’s Barber Shop in Chazy, New York **between Tuesday, December 1st and Thursday, December 10th** to be aware of potential exposure to COVID-19. Please call CCHD at 518-565-4840 if you were present at that location on any of the aforementioned dates.

As of today, December 11, 2020, the Department reports 92 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. CCHD urges all residents to wear a face mask, keep at least 6 feet between themselves and others, wash hands often, avoid crowds and gatherings, and stay home if sick.

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## Media Alert

Date: December 15, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Facebook Live COVID-19 Media Conference

A Facebook live media event will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2020. Updates will be provided on the status of the COVID-19 virus’s impact on Clinton County.

Speakers will include:

- **John Kanoza, P.E., P.G., Clinton County Director of Public Health**
- **Mark C. Davey, Ed.D., District Superintendent/ Chief Executive Officer, Champlain Valley Educational Services**
- **Wouter Rietsema, MD, Vice President for Population Health and Information Services/ Infectious Disease Physician, University of Vermont Health Network- Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH)**

Keeping in mind the health and safety of all community members, this will be a closed event. Questions can be submitted in advance to [health@clintoncountygov.com](mailto:health@clintoncountygov.com). Please note that responses to questions submitted ahead of time may be added into individual speaker remarks, or responded to separately in the Q&A section of the conference, along with questions from the public.

**A recording will be made available on YouTube after the event.**

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## News Release

Date: December 21, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, December 21, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) has received notification of a COVID-19 related death of a Clinton County resident. This death brings the total number of COVID-19 related deaths in Clinton County to six. CCHD reports 118 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County.

“Our deepest sympathies go out to all loved ones impacted by this death,” said John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “Each time we receive a report of a COVID-related death, it is a stark and painful reminder of just how destructive this virus can be, not only to the individuals that pass away, but to all of those connected to them.”

“With the holiday season upon us, we continue to urge residents to take necessary preventive steps to protect themselves, their loved ones, and our community—especially those community members that are most vulnerable. Your individual actions matter,” stated Mr. Kanoza.

Residents are encouraged to:

- Wear a mask that goes over your nose AND mouth.
- Watch your distance (keep 6 feet between yourself and others).
- Avoid crowds and gatherings.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Reduce contact with people that don't live in your household as much as possible.

“We must remain vigilant. We have seen that spread of COVID-19 is largely occurring between friends and family members. For the most part, residents are taking appropriate precautions when they are out in public, such as wearing masks and physically distancing, but then they're getting together with friends and family members who don't live in their home, and not taking precautions during these interactions,” noted Mr. Kanoza. Individuals can begin to spread COVID to others 48 hours before they experience symptoms, and some people spread COVID to others without ever showing symptoms themselves.

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## News Release

Date: December 30, 2020  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County COVID-19 Case Update

**Plattsburgh, December 30, 2020.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) has received notification of a COVID-19 related death of a Clinton County resident. This death brings the total number of COVID-19 related deaths in Clinton County to eight. CCHD reports 192 active cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County.

“Our sincere condolences go out to this individual’s family and all loved ones impacted by this loss,” said John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “We continue to urge residents to take necessary preventive steps to protect themselves, their loved ones, and our community—especially those community members that are most vulnerable. Your individual actions matter,” urged Mr. Kanoza. This would include avoiding New Year’s celebrations. “Stay home and celebrate with the family members you live with,” added Mr. Kanoza.

Residents are encouraged to:

- Wear a mask that goes over your nose AND mouth.
- Watch your distance (keep 6 feet between yourself and others).
- Avoid crowds and gatherings.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Reduce contact with people that don’t live in your household as much as possible.

“We must remain vigilant. We saw cases increase significantly after Thanksgiving, largely as a result of spread between friends and family members. Cases have continued to increase, and we fear that January will be even worse. For the most part, residents are taking appropriate precautions when they are out in public, such as wearing masks and physically distancing, but then they’re getting together with friends and family members who don’t live in their home, and not taking precautions during these interactions,” noted Mr. Kanoza. Individuals can begin to spread COVID to others 48 hours before they experience symptoms, and some people spread COVID to others without ever showing symptoms themselves.

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