



Lake County General Health District

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**NEWS RELEASE
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LAKE COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT**

LAKE COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT RECOMMENDS SENIOR CENTERS REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL 2021

Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) recommends Lake County senior centers remain closed until January 1, 2021. At that time, the decision will be reassessed. Continued closures will minimize risk, prevent morbidity and mortality, and allow the time necessary for centers to develop proper testing protocols and safety measures, train staff, and monitor the burden of COVID-19 on Lake County's most at-risk residents. Limited appointment-only services at senior centers may be approved on a case-by-cases basis.

In determining this recommendation, LCGHD considered a variety of factors including access to adequate COVID-19 testing for both staff and participants, senior center staff training needs, local hospital census, case status in both Lake and surrounding counties in accordance with the Ohio Public Health Advisory System, and seasonal flu immunizations and projections.

According to the CDC, the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases as people grow older, and includes people of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;
- People who have serious heart conditions;
- People who are immuno-compromised;
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher);
- People with diabetes;
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; and
- People with liver disease.

As people age, their immune systems change, making it more difficult for their body to fight off disease and infection, and because older adults are also more likely to have underlying health conditions, recovery can be more difficult. To date, sixty-three percent of Lake County residents hospitalized with COVID-19 were over 60 years of age. This age group also accounts for 63% of ICU admissions, and 96% of COVID-19 fatalities in Lake County.

LCGHD will work with senior center directors and staff to develop a plan for re-opening their facilities on January 1, 2021, including but not limited to testing, reporting, training, assessment, and other critical infrastructure to prevent COVID-19.

Questions regarding COVID-19 exposure can be addressed to Lake County General Health District at covid19@lcghd.org or (440)350-2188. Visit www.lcghd.org for the most updated COVID-19 information.

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