

News Release

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
Donna Skoda – Summit County Health Commissioner



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Executive and Health Commissioner Extend Stay at Home Advisory

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—On January 29, 2021, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and Summit County Health Commissioner Donna Skoda extended their Stay At Home Health Advisory, originally issued on November 19, 2020. The advisory now extends to February 28, 2021.

“For months, Summit County residents have made sacrifices to protect the health and safety of our families, friends, coworkers and neighbors, and there is no doubt these sacrifices have saved lives,” said Executive Shapiro. “We are all looking forward to the day we can get back to our normal lives and routines, but with just 1% of Ohio’s population fully vaccinated, we must continue to exercise caution and minimize our risk.”

The advisory urges all residents to stay at home to the greatest extent possible due to limited vaccine availability and the emergence of new, more contagious COVID-19 strains discovered in Ohio and the United States. Residents should only leave home to go to work or school, or for essential needs such as seeking medical care, going to the grocery store or pharmacy, picking up food, or receiving deliveries.

“Continuing to stay home as much as possible is the best way to keep COVID-19 cases in a downward trend. We saw what happened when we let our guard down this past fall—cases and hospitalizations surged,” said Commissioner Skoda. “We have to all do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community—wear a mask and limit activity outside your home—until everyone who wants a vaccine can get one.”

Much like an advisory issued upon an impending weather event, this advisory is based on best practices identified by experts. While not a legally enforceable order, the advisory was issued in hopes of protecting the greatest number of residents in the community. The orders of the Governor and the State Health Director remain in place in Summit County.

Earlier this week, Summit County Public Health and Summit County Emergency Management Agency hosted a COVID-19 Vaccine Q & A. Commissioner Skoda and EMA Director Thomas Smoot answered a number of questions about vaccine appointments, availability and expectation for the future. A recording is available at <https://co.summitoh.net/pages/Jan-28-2021-SCPH-and-EMA-Vaccine-Q-A.html>.

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COVID-19 Stay at Home Health Advisory

Issued: November 19 2020

Ends: December 16, 2020

Extended to: February 28, 2021

WHEREAS, Summit County is experiencing a rapid increase in the number of SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) cases, and

WHEREAS the number of hospitalizations locally and within our region has continued to increase, and

WHEREAS, positivity rates for our state have risen from 3% to 12% and NE Ohio hospital systems are reporting positivity rates even higher than this, and

WHEREAS, additional guidance, advisement, warning and intervention is warranted to mitigate case growth and preserve hospital capacity, and

WHEREAS, it is more important than ever to follow guidance from local, state, and federal officials on how to stop and slow the spread of the COVID-19 disease, and

WHEREAS, taking the steps listed below is critical to preventing the spread of the virus, protecting the lives of you and your loved ones, and preserving our acute and other healthcare services and capacity,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ADVISED by the Executive of the County of Summit, State of Ohio, and the Commissioner of Health, Summit County Public Health, that:

Section 1. Stay-at-Home Advisory

Beginning on Thursday, November 19, 2020, the Summit County Executive and the Commissioner of Health for the County of Summit advises all residents to stay at home to the greatest extent possible due to the rapid rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the county. Residents are advised to only leave home to go to work or school, or for essential needs such as seeking medical care, going to the grocery store or pharmacy, picking up food, or receiving deliveries.

Additionally, residents are strongly advised to:

- a) Wear a mask and observe social distancing in the presence of others
- b) Avoid traveling in and out of the state
- c) Forgo having guests in their homes during the upcoming holiday season
- d) Use online communication platforms wherever possible

This advisory shall remain in place through December 16, 2020 unless an additional advisory is issued prior.

Section 2. Adherence to All Current Orders

All orders set forth by Governor R. Michael DeWine, the Ohio Department of Health, County, and Municipal governments shall continue to be enforced and adhered to by all residents.

Section 3. Advisory on Indoor and Outdoor Meetings and Social Events

Residents are advised to limit meetings and social events to 10 individuals, from the issue date of this advisory. The advice applies to both indoor and outdoor events, birthday parties, and other events that may occur at a banquet hall, event venue or other similar space. Furthermore, houses of worship are recommended to continue to implement all virus transmission prevention protocols and are advised to limit the number of individuals in attendance to ensure safe distancing at all regular services. A meeting or social event that is outside of normal operations is advised to have no more than 10 individuals. All gatherings should provide space for adequate social distancing and shall require the wearing of masks.

Section 4. Private Gatherings

Residents are strongly advised to not have any indoor gatherings with guests in their homes unless they require services from essential workers (e.g. plumbing, heating, electrical repairpersons) and should wear a mask and observe social distancing if such services are necessary.

Section 5. Response to Illness and Exposure – Isolation and Quarantine

Residents that are exhibiting any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 should shelter in their place of residence. They should not go to their workplace or congregated setting and should only leave their place of residence to seek necessary clinical care, or for essential life sustaining needs, such as obtaining medicine or food.

COVID-19 symptoms include, but are not limited to, new onset of fever, cough, shortness of breath, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, body aches, or unusual fatigue.

Residents diagnosed with COVID-19 by a laboratory test of their medical provider must isolate for 10 days from the date of their symptom onset, or from the date of test collection (until you are not experiencing symptoms). In the home, sick or infected individuals should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area, and use a separate bathroom, if available.

Residents that have been identified as a contact to an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 should quarantine for one full incubation period (14 days) from the date of last contact. Individuals in quarantine should stay home, separate from others, monitor their health, and follow all instructions from their local health department.

Residents who are either confirmed positive or a close contact should not wait to hear from the health department and immediately follow the guidance as described. Information about isolation and quarantine can be found on the website of the health departments.

Section 6: Employers and Schools

Employers are strongly encouraged to identify and accommodate as many employees as possible to work from home during this time. All businesses and local governments are advised to transition as many transactions and functions as possible to online. Public and private K-12 schools are advised to

maintain awareness of case numbers both within their district buildings and the general community. Shifts to learning modality could become necessary.