



September 30, 2021

The Barry-Eaton District Health Department Rescinds Two Emergency Orders

Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) Health Officer Colette Scrimger, MSW is rescinding EO 2020-1 and EO 2021-2, two local emergency public health orders that required face coverings and COVID-19 quarantine and isolation procedures for schools and other educational settings in Barry and Eaton counties. The rescission of these orders is due to boilerplate language included in the Fiscal 2022 state budget that purports to restrict funding to local health departments with COVID-19 local emergency orders in effect as of October 1, 2021.

These orders were issued pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code (MCL 333.2451 and 333.2453, R. 325.175(4), and MCL 333.2226(d)) which authorize public health officers to “take actions and make determinations necessary or appropriate to carry out the local health department’s functions to protect the public health and prevent disease.”

“We urge our local school districts and other educational settings to continue to implement universal masking policies and follow quarantine best practices. It’s critical to reducing the spread of COVID-19 within schools and our communities,” stated Colette Scrimger, Health Officer. She continued, “We will continue to evaluate the situation and will consider issuing orders in the future as the question of the constitutionality of Senate Bill 82 and House Bill 4400 becomes clearer and if community conditions necessitate such orders.”

It is important to note that schools can still adopt policies that require masking and follow recommended quarantine/isolation procedures. Scientific studies overwhelmingly demonstrate the effectiveness of face coverings to prevent COVID-19 transmission. Face coverings prevent asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic infected individuals who feel well and may be unaware of their infection from spreading respiratory droplets into the air allowing other people to become infected. Face coverings trap virus-containing droplets and aerosols that are spread when an infected individual coughs, sneezes, talks, or laughs. For all but a very small minority of individuals, wearing a mask does not pose risks to health. These findings are well-supported in the scientific literature, including in studies from CDC and WHO.

Both orders are rescinded as of 11:59PM on Thursday, September 30th, 2021.