



**For Immediate Release  
January 10, 2022**

### **Omicron Variant Detected in Eaton County**

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) notified the Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) that the Omicron variant of COVID-19 has been identified in one Eaton County resident. This resident was tested on December 22, 2021, and we expect there are many more cases of Omicron present in our district at this time. Determining which variant is present in an individual requires genetic sequencing, which can often take a few weeks.

Omicron is a highly infectious variant of COVID-19 that is spreading across the country at an alarming rate. According to MDHHS, Omicron is currently the most prevalent variant in Michigan. However, most people who are fully vaccinated should be protected from severe infection, but we are expecting to see many serious cases in people who are unvaccinated, as well as milder breakthrough infections among people who are vaccinated. Everyone age 12 and older should get a booster shot of COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible when they are eligible, as people with boosters are better protected against the Omicron variant.

“We are urging our communities to take steps now to reduce the risk for themselves, their families and others in order to lessen the impact of Omicron on our health care system resources. This includes, getting boosted, wearing a mask, and staying home if you are sick.” said Colette Scrimger, Health Officer of BEDHD.

The following prevention strategies help reduce transmission of the COVID-19 virus, prevent severe disease, and can help limit variants like Omicron:

- Vaccination (5 years and older) and Booster doses for those eligible (12 years and older)
- Testing for COVID-19 if you have symptoms, 5 days after being exposed to someone with COVID-19, and before gatherings
- Mask wearing in public indoor spaces
- Social distancing from others
- Staying home if you are sick or have symptoms
- [Isolation](#) if you test positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms and notification to your close contacts if you test positive
- [Quarantine](#) if you have been exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19
- Follow [recommendations for traveling](#)

COVID-19 rapid antigen testing and PCR testing are available to individuals of any age, regardless of symptoms. Find a testing site [here](#).

Barry and Eaton Counties are currently at a high level of community transmission. Everyone should be wearing a well-fitting mask in indoor public setting in accordance with [MDHHS Public Health Advisory issued on 11/19/21](#) that is still in effect.

For more information, visit [www.barryeatonhealth.org/coronavirus](http://www.barryeatonhealth.org/coronavirus) or [www.michigan.gov/coronavirus](http://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus).

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