



Jackson County Health Department

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Creating Healthy Communities

Jackson County Health Department Statement on Michigan Supreme Court COVID-19 Decision

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JACKSON COUNTY, MI – On Friday, October 2, 2020, the Michigan Supreme Court held that the Executive Orders issued after the initial 28 days under the Emergency Management Act and the Emergency Powers of the Governor Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic lack any basis under Michigan law. The Court's ruling held that Michigan law only allows these kind of orders from the Governor for the first 28 days of an emergency response.

The Court indicated that its decision "leaves open many avenues for the Governor and Legislature to work together" to address the challenges posed by the pandemic. Importantly, the Court's order does not affect the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) orders issued under the Public Health Code, Act 368, which require organizations to have many of the same health and safety protocols in place as required by the Governor's executive orders.

The Jackson County Health Department (JCHD) has already received a number of questions as to how this will affect our local community. Over the coming days we expect that the impact of the Court's ruling will become clear and that authority under the Public Health Code, Act 368, may result in orders which provide similar guidance and requirements that have been in place under the previously issued executive orders. These decisions will be made collaboratively at the state and local level.

If necessary, the JCHD will develop next steps to fill any gaps needed to protect public health. We will ensure compliance with the Court ruling and will work with legal advisors and State/regional public health partners. As of October 5 there have been 1,164 identified cases of COVID-19 in Jackson County. In the last week we have averaged 13.7 new cases a day. The average was 9.97 new cases a day in September. These are the highest averages recorded during the seven months of the response. For more information on Jackson statistics see <https://www.mijackson.org/2295/Coronavirus>

Current executive orders remain in effect. The Jackson County Health Department stresses the importance of consistency and keeping core COVID-19 mitigation strategies in place while more specific guidance is developed. At a minimum, these strategies include proper mask use, social distancing, frequent handwashing, and staying home if you are sick. JCHD will continue to provide updated information as it becomes available. Jackson County has worked to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 through the strategies that have been in place and we remain confident our community will continue those efforts and help keep each other safe.

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Working together to create and promote a healthy community through disease prevention and control, health education, environmental protection and emergency preparedness.

