



# KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## Omicron Variant Identified in Kalamazoo County

Kalamazoo, MI – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) notified the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department (KCHCS) that the Omicron variant has been identified in six Kalamazoo County residents.

“The confirmed presence of the Omicron variant in Kalamazoo County aligns with estimates that it has become the predominant COVID-19 variant in our region. We must vaccinate, boost, mask, and also test frequently,” said Dr. William Nettleton, Medical Director of KCHCS.

According to the CDC, the Omicron variant will likely spread more easily. How easily Omicron spreads, compared to the Delta variant, remains unknown. The CDC expects that anyone with the Omicron infection can spread the virus to others, even if they are vaccinated or do not have symptoms. Current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. Breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated, however, are likely to occur.

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

- Vaccination (5 years and older) and Booster doses for those eligible
- 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](#).

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**HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

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Today, the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department (KCSHCS) updated general population [Quarantine & Isolation Guidance](#) to align with the new guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is also supporting the new CDC guidance. Additional recommendations from the KCHCS are also included to further limit spread of COVID-19 in Kalamazoo County. The CDC has also updated isolation and quarantine guidance specifically for [healthcare workers](#). Kalamazoo County is 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.kalcounty.com/covid19](http://www.kalcounty.com/covid19) or [www.michigan.gov/coronavirus](http://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus).

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Kalamazoo County Government  
Health & Community Services Department