

November 19, 2020



Fellow Chilmarkers,

The Board of Health shares the following statement with you.

We may be in the final stretch of this pandemic, with promising vaccines on the horizon; but, as the alarming jump in COVID-19 infections across the Island shows, we are not out of the woods. While there is understandable COVID fatigue, if we want to keep working and our schools open, we all need to double-down on the known safety measures.

- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth whenever you're in public and indoors if you're gathering with people outside of your immediate household. Avoid crowded places and maintain at least six feet of physical distance from others.
- Get tested! TestMV is open Monday through Fridays at the high school for asymptomatic individuals. Children as young as five years old can be tested with parental or guardian consent. For more information go to ihimv.org.
- If you or someone who lives with you is sick, please stay home. If you believe you have symptoms of the virus, call your doctor or the call center at the Martha's Vineyard Hospital (508-684-4500).
- Please answer your phone. It's possible a contact tracer and/or a Board of Health member may need to reach you because you or someone close to you have tested positive. You will learn how to keep yourself and your family safe: please return those calls immediately! Contact tracing is completely confidential and a key tool in preventing community spread.

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If unavailable, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing vehicles with people beyond your immediate household. If such travel is necessary, always wear masks and open the windows.
- Keep your “pod” or “bubble” to your immediate household. Most of us expanded our circles over the summer and fall when we could comfortably socialize outside. With that option dwindling and the increased number of infections, we need to keep our circle confined to our immediate family or household members. Save that expanded Thanksgiving or holiday dinner party for next year.
- If possible, postpone travel plans, including those for the holidays. Traveling can involve navigating crowded spaces as well as going to areas of extremely high transmission. If you do travel or have family members traveling to visit you here, please follow the state quarantine and testing guidelines. More information can be found at:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html> and
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>

This recent surge in numbers reminds us that we all must be vigilant and follow public health guidelines, including mandatory mask wearing and isolation or quarantine if we've been infected or come in contact with someone who has tested positive.

Let's resolve to get back to basics to protect our families and our community.

We can do this together.

