



CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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County Executive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY OFFICIALS PROVIDE UPDATE ON COVID-19

No New Cases of COVID-19 in Chautauqua County Today



Pictured above, front row—PJ Wendel, Chautauqua County Executive, and Christine Schuyler, Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services Director; and back row—James Quattrone, Chautauqua County Sheriff, address the public during a press conference on April 24, 2020.

MAYVILLE, N.Y.: -- On April 24, Chautauqua County Officials provided an update on the novel Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) in Chautauqua County.

COVID-19 is an infection associated with fever and signs and symptoms of pneumonia or other respiratory illness. If spread in the population, COVID-19 could have significant public health consequences.

As of April 24, Chautauqua County has 29 confirmed cases of COVID-19, which includes 24 individuals who have fully recovered, 2 active positive cases, 3 individuals who has passed away, and 0 new positive tests reported today.

In addition, there are 72 individuals under quarantine/isolation orders by the Public Health Director and being monitored. Not all of those being monitored are confirmed to have COVID-19 but they either have shown symptoms, are awaiting results, or have risk factors.

The County also has 698 negative test results to date.

To help prevent the spread of disease, the public is reminded to:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, and wash them more frequently throughout the day;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Cover your coughs or sneezes;
- Avoid close contact with others by keeping a distance of six feet, especially around people who are sick;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces;
- Work from home if you can;
- If you are 60 years of age or older, have serious medical conditions such as heart disease or diabetes, or have a chronic medical condition (no matter what age), you are at high risk. Individuals who meet any of the above criteria should avoid groups of people including small family gatherings and stay in their homes as much as possible.
- If you are sick, stay home and avoid contact with others. Talk to your health care provider if you want to be tested for COVID-19. Talk to your health care provider **before** you visit a clinic or hospital emergency department.

- Only if your symptoms are severe or you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, call 911 and the 911 dispatcher will screen your call per established protocol.

With the infection rate of COVID-19 in Chautauqua County continuing to remain low, earlier this week Chautauqua County Executive PJ Wendel requested all businesses in the County look to the future and develop plans on how they will reopen after COVID-19.

“As we continue to reduce the infection rate in our County and abide by social distancing measures, I believe we need a plan for the future and to urge New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo to allow us to gradually reopen our County’s communities and economy,” said Wendel. “In a concerted effort with Senator Borrello and Assemblyman Goodell’s regional plan for reopening this is an effort to be proactive. I have sent letters to our businesses asking them to look at their operations and preemptively develop plans on how they would operate once the Governor decides we can reopen. These plans would include the implementation of necessary protocols to still protect businesses’ employees and customers from the spread of COVID-19.”

Wendel said that the County will be committed to:

- Assessing its community readiness based on local data and indicators;
- Developing industry specific plans for the step-by-step easing of community mitigation measures;
- Requiring compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s COVID-19 guidance for all businesses;
- Continuing to focus on safety for employees and customers including social distancing, the use of face coverings or other protective equipment as appropriate for the industry; cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces; and not working when ill;
- Continuing robust COVID-19 public health surveillance and response work through robust isolation and quarantine measures, contact tracing of cases, health education, and increasing mitigation measures as necessary;
- Focusing on low risk business sectors first, such as manufacturing, professionals, office staff; and
- Phasing in other business sections as the situation continues to improve.

“As we plan for the eventual reopening of our communities, I can assure you that we will continue our COVID-19 surveillance and response work,” said Christine Schuyler, County Director of Health and Human Services. “In the event that monitoring shows increased transmission of COVID-19 or a strain on our public health or healthcare systems at any step of loosening community mitigation measures, I will advise of the need to tighten mitigation measures as appropriate.”

Chautauqua County Sheriff James Quattrone also discussed the increase in drug overdoses and drug overdose deaths in Chautauqua County during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

In Chautauqua County, there were 45 overdoses, including 2 fatalities, during the month of March. As of April 22, 2020, 14 overdoses have been reported, including 4 fatalities, so far for the month of April. In 2019, the average number of overdoses in one month was 19.

“We continue to be concerned about the ongoing drug epidemic,” said Quattrone. “I urge residents to call 911 if they believe someone is showing the signs of an overdose as your quick actions could help save a life.”

Individuals should call 911 if a person shows any of the following signs of an overdose:

- is passed out and cannot be woken up;
- is not breathing, breathing very slowly, or making gurgling sounds; and
- has lips that are blue or grayish color.

“It is also important that individuals with a substance use disorder know that they are not alone,” said Quattrone. “Help and treatment, including medication-assisted treatment, are available and there are qualified professionals throughout our County who are ready to assist those struggling with addiction so they can take the first steps to a healthier future.”

Chautauqua County government and its partners encourage people who are using drugs, and their family members, to take advantage of local resources for harm reduction and recovery. People who use drugs and their families should obtain a naloxone (Narcan) kit if they do not have one on hand and should be prepared to call 911.

The following resources are available to assist those struggling with addiction:

- Visit combataddictionchq.com to learn about chemical dependency services available throughout the County.
- Chautauqua County Crisis Hotline, 1-800-724-0461, is available if you are experiencing a personal crisis or are in emotional distress.
- The Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County has many resources to assist individuals suffering substance use disorders and their families. They can help individuals with recovery, decreasing use, or using in a safer way by connecting people anywhere in the County with a Recovery Coach. For more information, call (716) 661-9044.
- Evergreen Health Services provides naloxone training, kits, and a Syringe Exchange Program. For more information, call (716) 541-0678.

Residents are also encouraged to continue to check for daily updates on COVID-19 in our county by visiting the COVID-19 page of the Chautauqua County website at chqgov.com,

Chautauqua County Health Department Facebook page at www.facebook.com/myhealthycounty/ , or Chautauqua County Government Facebook page at www.facebook.com/chautauquacountygovernment. Daily COVID-19 updates also are emailed directly to the “Monday Morning Memo” distribution list. Individuals can sign-up to receive these alerts by going to chqgov.com and under the County Executive’s page signing up under the Monday Morning Memo Newsletter tab.

Individuals can also hear the daily update of COVID-19 cases in Chautauqua County by calling the Chautauqua County Public Health COVID-19 Hotline at 866-604-6789 and selecting option 6.

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