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For Immediate Release

Athens County seeing fewer COVID-19 cases.

Recent efforts to reduce spread of disease are making an impact in reduction of COVID-19 cases in Athens County. The health department is grateful for the cooperation and diligence of residents and businesses who are following guidance from the Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Health and local leaders to wear facial coverings in public. In early July, Athens County’s COVID-19 cases increased as groups gathered to celebrate the Fourth of July and participate in other social events. We want to express our appreciation for the cooperation of those who experienced isolation and quarantine during our surge in mid-July.

There are three directives that have recently been implemented that require the wearing of facial coverings. The City of Athens recently passed an ordinance requiring facial coverings in public. The Ohio Public Health Advisory System identified Athens County as a “red” alert level 3 which requires facial coverings. Last week Lance Himes, Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Health, signed an order that requires all Ohioans (with a few exceptions) to wear facial coverings in public. Everyone in Ohio should wear a facial covering in public unless they meet one of several criteria for exemption.

In addition to facial covering, physical distancing of at least 6 feet is strongly recommended. We recognize that it is challenging to wear a facial covering, to distance from others, to limit travel, and adjust our lives to an invisible virus. There is no easy way to endure a pandemic. Many sacrifices are being made and individual choices can influence the spread of the disease.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) call center is open for specific questions about COVID-19, 1-833-4 ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). ODH updates the states numbers every day at 2pm. For Athens-specific questions regarding COVID-19, contact the Athens City-County Health Department at 740-592-4431 or visit the website www.athenspublichealth.org, Facebook page, and twitter @acchd_oh. Other information can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention page, www.cdc.gov, and the ODH Coronavirus page, www.coronavirus.ohio.gov. USE. TRUSTED. SOURCES. The potential for misinformation and rumors during times of high-profile global events/public health threats is high. Verify information before sharing.

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