



281 LaClair Street,  
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TTY Relay 711

February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Upcoming Changes in Public Health Role**

To our fellow Coos County Citizens:

It has been just over two years since the discovery of a novel virus we have come to know as COVID-19. The impacts of the virus have touched every corner of the planet, impacted billions of lives and changed life as we know it. As the local Public Health Department (Coos Health and Wellness), we were tasked with managing the pandemic within the borders of our beloved county. At the onset of this monumental undertaking there was so much we didn't know about COVID-19; regardless, we approached this task with one goal in mind: protect human life. We quickly put together teams of professionals, assigned roles, led task forces/committees, held town-halls, educated the public, led the vaccination effort and deployed thousands of tests to every corner of the county. We built new partnerships with organizations, developed new skills, and battled immense stress to achieve our goal. As expected, not everyone agreed with our role, message, or strategy. As Americans we come from all different walks in life, experiences and beliefs. At the end of the day, we had responsibility to our community to answer the call with the knowledge and resources available.

Starting in March, the Public Health Department is going to be shifting from a lead role to a community support role. Most of us have either had the virus or have had the vaccine that helps protect against the most severe impacts of COVID, we all know the basic safety protocols and the risk. Therefore, it is time for YOU to take the lead with your life and your family. We will continue to post information and spread awareness. We will continue to assist high risk facilities so we can continue our mission of protecting the most vulnerable. COVID is here to stay, and it will continue to mutate and disrupt our lives, but the hope is our immune systems have encountered the virus/vaccine enough to reduce the severe impacts and more treatments are coming in the near future to assist those that do experience severe symptoms.

We live in a new world and we must adapt. Likely, moving forward we will see a large peak in the spread of the virus in the winter and a smaller peak in the summer as immunity comes and goes with the rise and fall of new variants.

Moving forward, here are some recommendations to protect yourself, your loved ones and your co-workers:

1. Get vaccinated and keep up to date with your boosters. Even if new variants arise this will help keep your immune system ready to fight and prevent severe illness.
2. Keep at-home tests ready in your cabinet, but regardless be mindful about not going to work if you do not feel well.
3. For employers, consider moving workers to remote work if/when possible. Re-evaluate PTO/Sick leave policies that reduce risk of workers feeling obligated to come to work.

*Promotes and provides innovative quality health  
services, prevention, and education  
for our communities*



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4. If you were recently positive with COVID, please wear a mask around others 5 days after recovery as a precaution.
5. Continue to educate yourself on the most up to date information. Follow Coos Health & Wellness for new guidance and all other information we share to prevent disease and injuries.
6. Understand your risk and use precautions moving forward. Wear a mask when you feel the need to, continue to wash your hands, and stay away from others when they are not feeling well.
7. Eat healthy, get exercise and manage your stress, not just to fight COVID, but to keep yourself healthy enough to live a long life.

***Anthony Arton***

*Public Health Director*

***Coos Health & Wellness***

***Together, inspiring healthier communities***

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