



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COUNTY OF OTTAWA  
OTTAWA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ORDER FINDING IMMINENT DANGER  
TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH  
AND

REQUIRING ‘STAYING IN PLACE’

**This Order is made pursuant to Section 2251 of the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2433 and MCL 333.2453.**

The State of Michigan and Ottawa County are both under states of emergency due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. COVID-19 poses an imminent danger to public health. The Public Health Officer of the Ottawa County Department of Public Health (OCDPH) has made the following determinations and issues this order pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code, including MCL §333.2235 and §333.2251:

Determinations:

1. The disease caused by a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death. There is currently no approved vaccine or antiviral treatment for this disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouth or nose of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet);
2. Control of the COVID-19 epidemic is necessary to protect the public health of the citizens of Ottawa County;
3. Grand Valley State University (“GVSU”) began moving students onto its Allendale, Michigan (Ottawa County) campus housing on August 23, 2020 and in class learning began shortly thereafter pursuant to stringent in class COVID-19 distancing, mitigation and testing protocols;
4. As of September 14, 2020, there were 2,934 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in all of Ottawa County;
5. Since opening, despite the extra efforts of the GVSU administration and faculty, there have been over 600 cases of COVID-19 confirmed cases among students at the GVSU Allendale campus (“Allendale GVSU Surge”);

6. The OCDPH has determined that the impact of the increased numbers of GVSU-related cases in Allendale may adversely impact other services in the County including the Ottawa County Court system, i.e., (20<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court, 58<sup>th</sup> District Court, Probate Court and Family Court) and the K-12 educational system;
7. There is currently evidence that activity at or near the Allendale campus is not compliant with the Governor's Executive Order allowing indoor gatherings of no more than 10 individuals, with face coverings and a sustained distance of 6 feet or more between persons;
8. COVID-19 cases among 18-24-year-old persons, thus far in Ottawa County, have not resulted in increased hospitalization or death rates, however, this population widely interacts with other demographics having a higher risk of severe illness. Interactions between asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic residents and the broader community greatly increases the risk of COVID-19 disease spread which may result in serious illness or death among more vulnerable populations;
9. The OCDPH has been conducting surveillance of COVID-19 cases associated with GVSU. Epidemiological data indicates:
  - a) Allendale and the main GVSU campus are located in the 49401 ZIP Code, which comprises 8.5% of Ottawa County's total population. At the end of the first week of August, 7% of Ottawa County COVID-19 cases were in 49401. By the end of the first week of September – one week after the start of classes at GVSU – 75% of Ottawa County's COVID-19 cases were in the 49401 ZIP code, an 970% disproportionate increase in cases.
  - b) Since August 23, 2020, there have been over 600 cases of COVID-19 in the student population living on or near the GVSU campus in Allendale Michigan.
  - c) Case rates per million have continued to rise, indicating disease spread among GVSU students and daily rates have far exceeded maximum indicator thresholds for risk to the community.
  - d) The majority of cases are among off-campus students and appear to be driven by congregate living and congregate gathering.
  - e) During OCDPH case investigation, many students report having no contacts or refuse to disclose contacts. Overall, Ottawa County COVID-19 cases report an average of 4 contacts.
  - f) Test positivity and COVID-19 case numbers are two key indicators to monitor the risk level of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ottawa County. Currently both positivity and new cases are experiencing a 14- day increasing trend.
10. The GVSU-associated surge in cases is overwhelming the ability of OCDPH to adequately address the COVID-19 pandemic and other critical public health mandates that are in place to protect the health and well-being of Ottawa County residents;
11. The GVSU Administration has been advised of these determinations and epidemiological findings and has partnered in the decision to take the actions described in the Order below;

**These determinations demonstrate an imminent public health threat to the citizens of Ottawa County therefore, I hereby order that the following actions be taken:**

1. Beginning September 17, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. and ending October 1, 2020 at 11:59 p.m., all GVSU students living in on-campus, near-campus or off-campus housing in Allendale, Michigan will be required to "stay in place" and remain in their current designated residence (students may not

return to their home address unless for an emergency). For the purposes of this order, “staying in place” means that no gatherings or group activities outside the listed exceptions below:

- a) Students will be allowed to attend in-person classes, including labs and physical education classes. Strict adherence to preventative measures is required.
  - b) Students will be allowed to leave their room/residence for the purpose of picking up food and other basic needs, attending medical appointments, picking up medication, attending religious practice activities or obtaining COVID-19 testing. Strict adherence to preventative measures is required.
  - c) Students will be allowed to attend work with the approval of the employer, if the work is essential and cannot be done remotely. Strict adherence to preventative measures is required.
  - d) Students who have clinical rotations, student teaching or other off-campus experiential learning assignments will be allowed to continue only with approval from the college dean and disclosure to the organization of placement and renewed approval by that organization. Strict adherence to preventative measures is required.
  - e) Students will be allowed to leave their room/residence for purposes of physical activity in groups of no more than two. Strict adherence to preventative measures is required.
  - f) Although strongly discouraged by OCPHD during the term of this order, if GVSU specifically authorizes, students who are associated with intercollegiate varsity sports may attend practices provided that a currently licensed physician is present during the entire process, actively supervises the team’s COVID 19 mitigation activities during the practice, and has the authority to suspend the practice if he or she believes COVID 19 mitigation practices require that result.
2. Students are required to respond to inquiries (texts, emails or calls) from the Ottawa County Department of Public Health and are required to fully disclose information relevant to case investigation and contact tracing. For a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, this required information includes the anonymous disclosure of the contact information for their close contacts.
  3. Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 (cases), or who are identified as a close contact to a case, are required to adhere to all public health isolation and quarantine restrictions as set forth by the OCPHD. The exceptions listed in this order (1.a-e) do not apply to students, staff or faculty that are under a public health order to quarantine or isolate.
  4. Strict preventative measures include adherence to the GVSU student code of conduct rules regarding COVID-19 prevention; maintaining a 6-foot distance between persons; and wearing a face covering at all times whenever outside your residence or when encountering others within congregate/shared living settings (apartments with more than 4 residents, common areas in dormitories, Greek housing etc.). In-person gathering with non-household members is strictly prohibited for the duration of this order. Under no circumstance are visitors permitted in on- or off-campus housing for the duration of this order.
  5. All GVSU students attending classes at the Allendale Campus will be required to wear a face covering at all times if in public both on and off campus.

6. If positivity rates increase or rates of infection among GVSU students and staff continue to be substantially above the rates of other Ottawa County residents, this Order may be extended beyond October 1, 2020 and more restrictive measures may be required; and

Failure to adhere to this Order may lead to misdemeanor charges, fines or judicial follow up and according to the GVSU Administration, will be subject to GVSU student sanctions up to and including expulsion.



---

Lisa Stefanovsky  
Administrative Health Officer  
Ottawa County Department of Public Health

Date: September 16, 2020