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WINNEBAGO COUNTY AT LOW COVID-19 COMMUNITY LEVEL ACCORDING TO UPDATED CDC GUIDELINES

OSHKOSH, Wis. (March 1, 2022) – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced updated guidelines for assessing and monitoring COVID-19 in communities. According to local data and the CDC's new COVID-19 Community Level indicators, Winnebago County is currently at a Low COVID-19 Community Level.

CDC COVID-19 Community Levels are based on the number of new hospital admissions, average percent of staffed inpatient beds and total number of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people in the past 7 days. Low, Medium and High Community Levels determine which prevention measures are recommended for individuals and communities. Recommendations based on Community Level are as follows:

- **Low Community Level:** Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines; get tested if you have symptoms or were exposed to COVID-19.
- **Medium Community Level:** If you or someone you live with is at high risk for severe illness, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions; stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines; get tested if you have symptoms or were exposed to COVID-19.
- **High Community Level:** Wear a mask indoors in public; stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines; get tested if you have symptoms or were exposed to COVID-19; additional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe illness.

Masking is not included as a general community prevention measure at Low or Medium COVID-19 Community Levels. At all levels, people can wear a mask based on personal preference, informed by personal level of risk or risk to household members. In addition, people with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask. Healthcare systems, businesses and schools may implement additional prevention strategies regardless of Community Level. The Winnebago County Health Department may recommend a different Community Level or preventive strategies if other local data indicate that need.

"This positive news affirms we are recovering," said Doug Gieryn, Winnebago County Health Department Director/Health Officer. "As we move forward, let's not forget the tools we have that minimize the effects of COVID-19; get vaccinated and get tested if needed. Community Levels are fluid and spikes in transmission may still occur that could lead to additional preventative guidance."

Vaccination continues to be the most effective way to stop the spread of COVID-19 and prevent severe illness due to the virus. If you are looking for a COVID-19 vaccine, consider the following opportunities:

- Oshkosh Area Community Pantry, 2551 Jackson Street, Oshkosh
 - Mondays, 2 to 6 p.m.
- Fox Crossing Fire Department, 1326 Cold Spring Road, Neenah
 - Tuesdays, 3 to 5 p.m.
- Walk-In Wednesday, Sunnyview Expo Center, 500 E County Road Y, Oshkosh
 - Wednesday, 1 to 6 p.m. on March 2
 - New hours start on March 9 – Wednesdays, 3 to 6 p.m.
- Winnebago County Administration Building, 112 Otter Avenue, Oshkosh
 - Fridays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Find a complete list of local COVID-19 vaccine clinics at www.wcvaccine.org or call 920-232-3026.

The Winnebago County Health Department also continues to encourage folks to get tested when they have symptoms of COVID-19 or were exposed to the virus. The testing site at Sunnyview Expo Center operates Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Additional testing locations can be found at winnebagopublichealth.org.

The CDC will be updating Community Levels on a weekly basis. Find the current status at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county. For questions, please call the Winnebago County Health Department's COVID-19 hotline at 920-232-3026 or visit www.winnebagopublichealth.org.

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