



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stark County Health Departments Issue Guidance as Stark County Moves to Purple

(Stark County, OH) Today, Stark County has been elevated to Public Emergency Level 4- Purple of the Ohio Public Health Advisory System. Counties ranked Public Emergency Level 4 demonstrate severe exposure and spread of COVID-19 within their communities. The health departments of the county ask residents to do all that they can to slow the spread of the virus. In order to protect our families, friends and neighbors, including our vulnerable populations and those with underlying health issues, as well as reduce the risk level, compliance with the new guidance and mandates is crucial.

The Stark County COVID-19 Response Team, comprised of the four health departments of Stark County, elected officials, hospital representatives, and community members, is tasked with fighting the virus through their respective organizations and collaborating with one another regarding community-wide response. The Response Team has issued a document titled, "Helping Our Community Navigate Level 4 – Purple According to the Ohio Public Health Advisory System" for the community to utilize. Area businesses will be able to download posters and social media posts to educate their customers or employees. These documents are available on the RestartStark website at [Coronavirus.StarkCountyOhio.gov](https://www.restartstark.com/coronavirus). Complaints can also be filed through the RestartStark website and will be followed up by the health department of jurisdiction. Lastly, there will be a Community Awareness Message issued to the community through the websites and social media sites of each health department. Each health department will continue to provide updates on the change in risk level.

The Ohio COVID-19 Risk Level Guidelines for the Public provides guidelines for each of the risk levels. In addition to the guidelines for Risk Levels 1, 2, and 3, Risk Level 4 includes:

- Only leave home for supplies and services. Follow all current health orders.

Masks and face coverings, social distancing, frequent hand washing and staying home when sick are four simple steps that, when practiced with consistency, will slow the spread of COVID-19. As we navigate through this new risk level, we stress the importance of working together and practicing these four steps to keep everyone safe.

The members of the COVID-19 Response Team include the following organizations: Alliance City Health Department, Aultman Hospital, City of Canton, Cathedral of Life Church, City of Canal Fulton, Canton City Health Department, City of Louisville, City of North Canton, Emergency Management Agency, Educational Services Center, Massillon City Health Department, Mercy Medical Center, Stark County Commissioners, Stark County Economic Development Board, Stark County Health Department, Stark County Prosecutor, Stark County Sherriff's Office and Stark County Township Association.

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