**News Release**

**Clinton County Designated as an Area of High Transmission**

**Plattsburgh, September 1, 2021.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is urging area residents to resume universal masking precautions in indoor public settings on the heels of an area of high transmission designation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Throughout this pandemic CCHD has always aligned our guidance with that of New York State and the CDC,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “With a HIGH level of transmission in our county, we strongly recommend that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, follow the CDC Guidance and return to mask wearing in indoor public places. We recommend our residents mask up in crowded outdoor settings as well.”

Clinton County saw more than 200 new cases of COVID-19 in August. “Less than half (45%) of those cases were breakthrough cases (cases among those fully vaccinated),” noted Mr. Kanoza. “With our breakthrough cases, we have proof the vaccine is working. Only 5% of those breakthrough cases in August required hospitalization and there were no deaths among the breakthrough cases.”

Along with resuming masking precautions, CCHD is also strongly recommending residents avoid large gatherings. “A large number of our current cases can be connected through gatherings,” explained Mr. Kanoza. “For example, there were more than 20 cases among attendees of a wedding, and another cluster of almost 10 cases from a large extended family gathering.”

If residents have attended a large gathering they should monitor for symptoms and mask up for 14 days after the event to protect those around them. If they hear of any positive (or rumored positive) cases that attended the same event they should seek testing, regardless of symptoms or vaccination status. “We are asking our residents to be courteous and use common sense,” added Mr. Kanoza. “If you are engaging in these risky behaviors, take precautions so you are not bringing the virus back to your family, friends, and coworkers.”

In addition to wearing masks and avoiding gatherings, residents can protect themselves by washing their hands frequently, staying home and seeking medical care when sick, and getting vaccinated.

CCHD offers free vaccinations clinics every Thursday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at their office in Plattsburgh. Residents can schedule an appointment for their first, second, or third (if immunocompromised) dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine by calling 518-565-4848.

**About the Clinton County Health Department:**

“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”
The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at www.clintonhealth.org or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).

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