

**From:** [pattytothepines@gmail.com](mailto:pattytothepines@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Clerk](#)  
**Cc:** [Chet Janik](#)  
**Subject:** Special Meeting Tonight on the Public Health Order by the Benzie Leelanau District Health Department  
**Date:** Thursday, September 9, 2021 4:32:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Please enter my comments into the record for the Special Meeting tonight. Thank you.

Dear Leelanau County Commissions and Mr. Janik,

I am writing regarding the “special” meeting tonight to discuss the recent Public Health Order given by the Benzie Leelanau District Health Department Health Officer and Medical Director for universal masking in K-12 schools in Leelanau County. I encourage all of you to please support this important step to keep our school children, teachers, and staff safe, so they can remain in school, in person.

This Public Health Order was thoughtfully and thoroughly considered because of the rise of positive cases (reported ones) of COVID in our County and region. Leelanau County is now in a “high” transmission category for community spread of COVID and with the latest Delta variant, it is now affecting children. Hospital admissions for COVID are on a rapid rise and Munson Healthcare has moved to the Orange pandemic response stage (please see below).

We should listen to the Public Health experts who are the people our communities look to for guidance related to COVID or any other health threat to our community. The guidance for addressing a COVID response is based on the latest information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC ), the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and our local Public Health Department to keep all of us safe from any level of COVID sickness. We continue to be in a pandemic, and yes, it has been a long fight just like over 100 years ago with the Spanish flu that lasted two years. Please, let’s all do our part to care about our neighbors not just ourselves and keep everyone safe. And, to work to get to the end of this pandemic.

Please support OUR Health Department! They are watching out for the health of all of us in Leelanau County through research, knowledge, and care. Vaccination, masking, hand washing, and social distancing remain our best tools for stopping the spread of this deadly virus.

Sincerely,

Patty O’Donnell  
Bingham Township

## Munson Healthcare Moves from Yellow to Orange Pandemic Response Stage

Effective immediately, Munson Healthcare will be elevating our pandemic response stage from Yellow to Orange. This decision was approved by System Clinical Incident Command (SCIC), System COVID Operations Incident Command (SCOIC), and the MHC Executive Team.

Our leadership teams continue to make essential decisions in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. Higher positivity rates in the community, an increase in COVID-19 hospitalization rates throughout MHC hospitals, and COVID-19 variants all contributed to this decision.

Below outlines what you need to know as we move back to Orange:

### Visitors

- Our [Visitation Policy](#) remains at one visitor per patient in a facility at a time with the same exceptions in place for NICU, pediatric, and end-of-life patients.
- MHC cafeterias will remain open to staff/public/visitors for the purchase of food/beverages, but **the seating area will ONLY be available for Healthcare Team use** (as long as social distancing can be maintained). [Click here](#) for a new sign to support this change.
- All waiting rooms will close immediately. Visitors should be asked to wait outside or in their cars. [Click here](#) for a new sign to support this change.

### Healthcare Team

- MHC's current remote work policy will extend **through January 1, 2022**.
- Meetings should be conducted virtually with onsite meetings only happening by exception.
- MHC will be moving towards reinitiating pre-procedure testing for COVID-19 for **all** patients. More information will follow on when and how this will be implemented.
- Operational leaders will continually evaluate services, including surgeries and procedures, and make necessary adjustments to support patient-care needs.

Please review the "[What Does Orange Stage Mean](#)" document on the Intranet for complete details.

We continue to urge every member of the Healthcare Team to get vaccinated and stay the course — wear masks, practice social distancing, perform good hand hygiene, and be diligent about self-screening.

## Pandemic Response Plan Stages

