



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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State of Michigan and MSU Launch COVID-19 App Pilot for Campus and the Surrounding Community

Anonymous app alerts users to possible coronavirus exposure to slow spread

LANSING, MICH. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB) and Michigan State University (MSU) today launched a COVID-19 exposure notification app pilot program on MSU's campus and for the surrounding community. The app is a next step to help reduce the spread of the virus following increased testing and additional contact tracing efforts in Michigan.

MI COVID Alert is a voluntary, anonymous exposure notification smartphone app available at no cost. By submitting a non-identifying code provided by the public health department, app users with COVID-19 can confidentially alert students, faculty and staff, and others who may have also been exposed to the virus.

"MSU has an opportunity to lead the way for all of Michigan in using this easy-to-use app to avoid a second wave," said Robert Gordon, MDHHS director. "While masking and social distancing remain as critical as ever, MI COVID Alert is another way to help the MSU and Ingham County community contain COVID while leading their lives."

MSU students, faculty and staff as well as members of the local community are encouraged to download and use MI COVID Alert as part of exposure notifications in the latest iOS or Android update.

"Preventing the spread of the virus is of utmost importance, and early detection efforts are essential in our overall approach to battling the virus," said Michigan State University President Samuel Stanley Jr., M.D. "By downloading the app, Spartans are sending a clear message that we are committed to being part of the solution."

When a person tests positive for COVID-19, they receive a pin from the local health department or State of Michigan case investigators that allows them to share their test results anonymously on the app. MI COVID Alert uses low energy Bluetooth technology to detect nearby phones that also have the app. Michigan worked with Apple and Google to make MI COVID Alert compatible with similar apps in other states.

If a MI COVID Alert user has been in close contact with someone who submitted a positive COVID-19 test result, a push notification will be sent to their phone once the positive test result is entered into the system. A notification means the app user was possibly within six feet for at least 15 minutes of someone who tested positive and shared their result. The app works in conjunction with traditional contact tracing,

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mask-wearing, hand washing and social distancing, but is not a replacement for these precautions or participation in contact tracing. It is another, possibly faster way to know about possible exposure to COVID-19.

Whether someone experiences symptoms or remains asymptomatic, anyone exposed to COVID-19 should consider getting tested and quarantining and should watch for symptoms for 14 days from the date of possible exposure. On-campus testing centers are available for students, faculty and staff. Information is available on [MSU's COVID-19 testing page](#). Individuals in need of testing may also contact the Michigan COVID-19 hotline by calling 888-535-6136 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, or dialing 211 on their mobile phone to locate and schedule an appointment at a nearby, off-campus testing location.

The exposure notification feature included in recent iOS and Android operating system updates only works with a companion app like MI COVID Alert. The app is available in the [Apple](#) and [Google](#) app stores.

The State of Michigan will evaluate expansion of the app statewide based on results of the pilot program. Other states, including Virginia, Arizona, New York, Alabama and New Jersey, recently launched similar exposure notifications apps statewide. Additional states have apps in development.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](#) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](#).

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