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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Universal Testing Implemented at Congregate Housing Facilities

Individuals residing in congregate housing such as long-term care facilities, assisted living, nursing home, homeless shelters, jails, sober living, or transitional housing are considered to be part of a particularly vulnerable population requiring special precautions. The Toledo-Lucas County Health Department and the Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board are working collaboratively to ensure the safety of the homeless population.

People living and working in this type of housing may have challenges with social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Shared housing guests often gather together closely for social, leisure, and recreational activities, shared dining, and/or use of shared equipment, such as kitchen appliances, laundry facilities, stairwells, and elevators.

The Health Department communicates directly with these facilities to ensure safety and cleaning guidance from ODH and the CDC are utilized and implemented. A few examples include:

- Social distancing and other mitigation strategies
- Screening of all residents, employees, and visitors entering the setting for COVID-19 symptoms and risk factors
- Identified quarantine and isolation space within facility
- Universal-masking policy requiring all staff/guests to wear a mask
- Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces
- COVID-19 prevention supplies readily available
- Everyday preventive actions

Beginning this week, the Health Department along with Neighborhood Health Association, are taking the next step and enacting universal testing in communal living facilities. Universal testing has been identified as a best practice by the CDC and as testing supplies have become more readily available, congregate housing may now engage in the testing capacity.

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