

DAILY NEWS

Since 1854 — News from Montcalm County and Ionia County, Michigan

Local health department offers flu shots

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*By The Daily News Staff
on November 22, 2025*

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan District Health Department

0:00 / 0:00

It is recommended that anyone 6 months of age and older get vaccinated, particularly people who are at a high risk for flu complications. This includes people 65 years and older, young children, and people with chronic conditions such as asthma or heart disease. Individuals who care for or live with these high-risk populations also should get vaccinated.

The 2024-2025 flu season was intense, with high levels of activity and hospitalizations across the country. Somewhere between 47-82 million people fell ill, causing an estimated 27,000-30,000 deaths.





The flu vaccine is updated for the 2025-2026 season and is now available at many workplaces, hospitals, clinics, pharmacies and other locations.

The best way to reduce your risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get a flu vaccine every year.

Call (989) 831-5237, option 5, then option 2 or visit mmdhd.org/immunizations to schedule your flu shot with the Mid-Michigan District Health Department in Montcalm County.

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Three local organizations are coming together this holiday season to provide a free Thanksgiving meal to anyone who may be...



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The Ionia Public Schools Board of Education honored several talented student artists during Monday evening's meeting. Student artists Audrey Stein, Mila...



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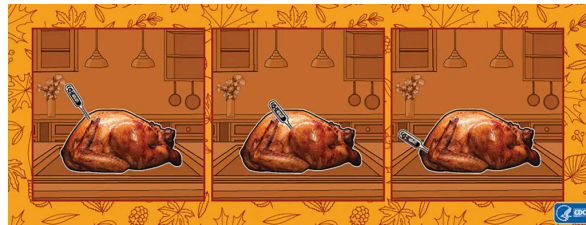
Since 1854 — News from Montcalm County and Ionia County, Michigan

Health dept. shares turkey tips

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By The Daily News Staff
on November 26, 2025

0:00 / 0:00



Make sure your turkey reaches a safe internal temperature of 165°F. Use a food thermometer to check in three places, avoiding bone: (1) thickest part of the breast, (2) where body and thigh join, aiming toward thigh, and (3) where body and wing join, aiming toward wing. — Submitted graphic | Mid Michigan District Health Department

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan District Health Department

One of my favorite things about Thanksgiving is the turkey. I prefer it over ham, and (depending on the day) sometimes even chicken! It is important to note, however, turkey and its juice can be contaminated with germs that can make you and your family sick.



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Raw turkey can have Salmonella, Clostridium perfringens, Campylobacter and other germs. Whether you're cooking a whole bird or a part of it, such as the breast, you should take special care to prevent food poisoning.

Store turkey properly

Frozen raw turkey should be stored in the freezer until you are ready to thaw it. Make sure your freezer is at 0°F or below. Don't store a turkey in a place where you can't closely monitor the temperature, such as in a car trunk, a basement, the back porch, or in snow.

Thaw turkey safely

Use one of these methods to thaw your turkey:

- Thaw your turkey in the refrigerator. Keep your turkey in its original wrapping and place it in a container before putting it in the refrigerator. The container will prevent the turkey juice from dripping on other food. Allow about 24 hours of thawing for each 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. A turkey thawed in the refrigerator can remain in the refrigerator once it's been thawed for 1 to 2 days before cooking.
- Thaw your turkey in cold water. Be sure your turkey is in a leakproof plastic bag before you place it in the sink. The bag will prevent the turkey juice from spreading in the kitchen. The bag also will prevent the turkey from absorbing water, which could make your cooked turkey runny. Make sure to completely cover your turkey with cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Allow about 30 minutes of thawing for each pound of turkey. A turkey thawed in cold water must be cooked immediately after thawing.

- Thaw your turkey in the microwave. Follow the microwave manufacturer's instructions for thawing your turkey. A turkey thawed in the microwave must be cooked immediately after thawing.
- Never thaw your turkey by leaving it out on the counter. A turkey must thaw at a safe temperature. When a turkey stays out at room temperature for more than 2 hours, its temperature becomes unsafe even if the center is still frozen. Germs can grow rapidly in the "danger zone" between 40°F and 140°F.

Handle turkey correctly

Raw turkey and its juice can contaminate anything they touch. Be sure to handle your turkey correctly to prevent harmful germs from spreading to other food or your family and friends.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling turkey.

Use one cutting board for raw turkey and a separate cutting board for produce, bread, and other foods that won't be cooked.

Never place cooked food or fresh produce on a plate, cutting board, or other surface that held raw turkey.

Wash cutting boards, utensils, dishes, and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing raw turkey and before you prepare the next item.

Cook turkey thoroughly

To roast a turkey in your oven, set the oven temperature to at least 325°F. Place the completely thawed turkey in a roasting pan that is 2 to 2-1/2 inches deep. Cooking times depend on the weight of the turkey and whether it is stuffed.

Take care of leftovers

Refrigerate leftovers at 40°F or colder within 2 hours of cooking to prevent food poisoning. Refrigerate leftovers that have been exposed to temperatures higher than 90°F, like in a hot car, within 1 hour.

If you are refrigerating a big cut of meat, such as a turkey or roast, cut it into smaller pieces so they cool quickly. You do not need to wait until food is cool to store it in the refrigerator or freezer.

Eat cooked turkey and dishes made with it, such as soup or a casserole, within 3 to 4 days. Freeze leftovers to store them for longer.

Reheat all leftovers to at least 165°F before serving or eating.

DAILY NEWS

Since 1854 — News from Montcalm County and Ionia County, Michigan

Montcalm County awards \$469,000+ toward addiction recovery services

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By *Elisabeth Waldon*
on November 28, 2025

7:36 / 10:12



Montcalm County Opioid Task Force Committee members, from left, James Dimitriou, Kate Behrenwald and Liz Braddock, asked the Montcalm County Board of Commissioners on Monday to approve \$267,000 worth of opioid settlement funding plus another \$202,145 of county marijuana funds to go toward local addiction recovery services and programs. Commissioners unanimously approved the request.

— DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

STANTON — Local addiction recovery services and programs will receive \$469,145 in funding from Montcalm County government in the coming year, including \$267,000 in opioid settlement funding plus another \$202,145 in county marijuana funds.

The Board of Commissioners on Monday voted 6-0, with Commissioner Nate Alexander absent, to approve the annual list of recommendations from the county's Opioid Task Force Committee.

The opioid funding stems back to 2018 when county commissioners voted to adopt a resolution approving three law firms representing dozens of Michigan counties in a multi-district lawsuit settlement against opioid manufacturers. In 2021, commissioners approved a resolution outlining the terms of the settlement, which is being distributed over multiple years.

Montcalm County has now awarded a total of \$865,457 in opioid funding over the last three years at the task force's recommendation, plus another \$368,392 in marijuana tax revenue. (See accompanying info box below for more details.)

"This year was definitely indicative of the funding stream changes that have happened, so we definitely saw more people trying to continue the same work that's been done in the county or trying to expand the work that is being done to be able to meet the need that we have," said Kate Behrenwald, who works as a physician assistant for Corewell Health Addiction Medicine.

Commissioners approved the following requests to be funded with \$267,000 of opioid settlement money:

- \$75,000 to the Montcalm Care Network for a full-time social work jail liaison (this program would otherwise be eliminated due to cuts to a prior funding source).
- \$68,511 to Sheridan Community Hospital for outpatient medication-assisted treatment and therapy sessions for uninsured or under-insured residents.
- \$50,000 to Randy's House in Greenville for continuing support of a peer recovery coach.
- \$34,000 to Outreach 419 in Fenwick toward the salaries of peer recovery coaches and program costs. ("This is an increase in funding that we allocated last year but they've shown to be very good stewards of the funding that they did receive," Behrenwald said. "They significantly expanded what they were offering for people and it seems to be generating a lot of support for the recovery community.")
- \$22,758 to Corewell Health for continuing support of a peer recovery coach.
- \$15,016 to the Montcalm County Jail for continuing support of its buprenorphine program for qualified inmates.
- \$1,500 to the Montcalm Prevention Collaborative for supplies for Safe Prom and Vape Amnesty boxes.

Commissioners also approved the following requests to be funded with \$202,145 of marijuana tax revenue:

- \$41,545 to Have Mercy in Greenville for continued funding of their Step Up programming.
- \$40,000 to Montcalm County Circuit Court's Adult Recovery Court for continued support of a peer recovery coach.
- \$26,000 to Outreach 419 toward the salaries of peer recovery coaches and program costs.
- \$15,000 to Randy's House for recovery housing scholarships for Montcalm County residents.

REQUESTS NOT GRANTED

The Opioid Task Force received some requests that they did not recommend for approval, including:

- \$48,750 from Montcalm County District Court for an Adult Recovery Court.



Montcalm County Board of Commissioners Vice Chairman Adam Petersen asks a question about financial requests for local addiction recovery services and programs as Montcalm County Clerk Kristen Millard takes minutes at left during Monday's meeting. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

- \$47,600 from Continuous Miracle, an addiction recovery radio program on WGLM 106.3 in Greenville.
- \$40,000 from Redemption Farms, a Howard City-based nonprofit operated by Sandra Cooper, who has a vision for opening a Montcalm County facility for entire families to reside while being treated for recovery from addiction.

Board of Commissioners Vice Chairman Adam Petersen questioned how the committee reached its recommendations, asking, "Why did you leave some off? Redemption Farms asked for \$40,000. They got zero dollars."

"When we reviewed it, they didn't have a budget, no work plan and they didn't indicate how much money was going toward staffing," responded Liz Braddock, the health officer for the Mid-Michigan District Health Department. "It didn't quite meet the criteria of how the money should be distributed."

"I do believe recovery is important," said Petersen as he voted in favor of the committee's recommendations, but he added, "Giving money to Corewell Health is a little rough for me because they get quite a bit already."

MARIJUANA REVENUE PLANS

Petersen asked Controller-Administrator Brenda Taeter how much was in the county's marijuana tax revenue fund, to which she responded more than \$461,000 (meaning the county can easily accommodate the \$202,145 worth of marijuana money requests).

"Another item that we have talked about in our committee meetings ... of that \$465,000 we got in February of our marijuana money, you'll see we didn't give District Court anything for their ask for their Adult Recovery Court," Taeter noted. "One of the reasons we ruled it out was the majority of the money they were requesting, \$30,000, was for drug testing and we thought that was an exorbitant amount of money for drug testing when other applications were not requesting anywhere near that for drug testing."

“But to that point, the committee would like you to commit part of the marijuana money to things like that every year ... to a specific cause or expense and then allow the opioid committee to spend the rest of it on proposals,” Taeter said.

Taeter said she thinks agencies such as Circuit Court, District Court and Community Corrections could all be funded with marijuana money going forward, should commissioners choose to allocate the marijuana money that way, meaning those agencies wouldn’t have to request opioid settlement funding.

Commissioners seemed in agreement with this idea and Taeter said she would bring them a marijuana money allocation proposal in the near future with some actual numbers.

A closer look ...

Here’s how the Montcalm County Board of Commissioners and the county’s Opioid Task Force have awarded opioid (and marijuana) revenue to local agencies over the last three years:

2023: Commissioners voted to approve the task force’s recommendation of \$201,668 as the county’s first round of opioid settlement funding as follows: \$68,500 to Corewell Health to expand telehealth services; \$68,511.29 to Sheridan Care to expand a medication-assisted treatment program; \$43,000 to Randy’s House in Greenville; \$14,000 to the Mid-Michigan District Health Department in Stanton to provide first aid/Narcan kits to communities via distribution through eight public libraries; and \$7,667.76 to the Montcalm Alano Club in Greenville to pay overhead costs.

2024: Commissioners voted to approve the task force’s total recommendation of \$396,789, including \$230,542 in opioid settlement funding as follows: \$68,511 to Sheridan Community Hospital to expand current services and for a part-time recovery coach program; \$50,000 to Randy’s House in Greenville for a part-time recovery coach and a recovery housing scholarship program; \$36,342 to Corewell Health for the continuation of a recovery coach program; \$20,000 to Sober Events/Outreach 419 in Fenwick for a recovery resource program; \$16,500 to the Montcalm Alano Club for operational expenses to expand their programs; \$20,000 to the Montcalm County Jail for suboxone and sublocade medication for a new inmate program treating opioid use disorder; \$10,000 to the Montcalm Prevention Collaborative for gas station videos as part of an education and marketing program; \$7,889 to the Mid-Michigan District Health Department for a school education program called Too Good; and \$1,300 to the Mid-Michigan District Health Department to continue normalizing the use of Naloxone. Commissioners also approved awarding the task force’s recommendation of allocating \$166,247 in marijuana tax revenue as follows: \$50,000 to Montcalm County Circuit Court Adult Recovery Court for a full-time recovery coach program; \$42,988 to Have Mercy in Greenville for partial funding for a step-up program; \$36,419 to Sober Events/Outreach 419 for a recovery resource center program; \$20,200 to the Montcalm Prevention Collaborative for gas station videos as part of an education and marketing program; and \$16,640 to the Montcalm Alano Club for a part-time director to expand programs.

2025: Commissioners voted to approve the task force's total recommendation of \$469,145, including \$267,000 in opioid settlement funding as follows: \$75,000 to the Montcalm Care Network for a full-time social work jail liaison; \$68,511 to Sheridan Community Hospital for outpatient medication-assisted treatment and therapy sessions for uninsured or under-insured residents; \$50,000 to Randy's House in Greenville for continuing support of a peer recovery coach; \$34,000 to Outreach 419 in Fenwick toward the salaries of peer recovery coaches and program costs; \$22,758 to Corewell Health for continuing support of a peer recovery coach; \$15,016 to the Montcalm County Jail for continuing support of its buprenorphine program for qualified inmates; and \$1,500 to the Montcalm Prevention Collaborative for supplies for Safe Prom and Vape Amnesty boxes. Commissioners also approved awarding the task force's recommendation of allocating \$202,145 in marijuana tax revenue as follows: \$41,545 to Have Mercy in Greenville for continued funding of their Step Up programming; \$40,000 to Montcalm County Circuit Court's Adult Recovery Court for continued support of a peer recovery coach; \$26,000 to Outreach 419 toward the salaries of peer recovery coaches and program costs and \$15,000 to Randy's House for recovery housing scholarships for Montcalm County residents.

GRAND TOTAL: Montcalm County has now awarded \$865,457 in opioid settlement funding over the last three years at the task force's recommendation plus another \$368,392 in marijuana tax revenue