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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Shelby County Health Department

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT EMPHASIZES COVID-19 VACCINATION IN LIGHT OF NEW VARIANT CASES

*COVID-19 Vaccines Provide Up To 88% Protection Against Delta Variant*

SHELBY COUNTY, TN – Shelby County Health Department recommends COVID-19 vaccination for all Shelby County residents eligible for vaccination after receiving confirmed reports of 10 new cases of the COVID-19 Delta variant. As of June 13, 2021 the Shelby County Health Department has received confirmed reports of 10 residents sequenced with the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus. This includes a cluster of cases identified last Wednesday, June 9, 2021 and three newly confirmed cases on June 13, 2021.

Based on interviews, Health Department personnel have identified an additional 14 probable cases. Those include contacts to a case who have COVID-19 symptoms but who have not been tested or for whom we are waiting for test results. The cases reported with this variant since June 9, 2021 do not have travel histories outside the United States, but they are associated in some instances with travel elsewhere in the United States. That indicates that the Delta variant is present in Shelby County and may be spreading locally in the community. The number of confirmed Delta variant cases is expected to increase as more contacts of the confirmed cases are tested.

The Delta variant is estimated to be 50% easier to transmit from person to person than the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7), which is presently the dominant virus in Shelby County. Importantly, researchers believe the COVID-19 vaccines we are using provide up to 88% protection against infection with the Delta variant. In fact, of the 10 confirmed recent cases, only one had been fully vaccinated. The Health Department urges Shelby County residents to take the following actions:

- If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 disease (fever, headaches, body aches, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, or gastroenteritis) get tested.
- While waiting for test results, isolate at home.

- If you have COVID-19 disease, stay at home in isolation and follow all orders from the Health Department.
- If you are named as a contact to a confirmed case and you have not been vaccinated, you must quarantine for a minimum of 6 days and then test to see if you are also infected.
- If you have not been vaccinated, please get vaccinated as soon as possible. Vaccination sites and providers may be found at <https://www.shelby.community/>.
- Those without internet access may call 901-222-7468 (SHOT) for assistance.

**Shelby County Health Officer Dr. Bruce Randolph:** “The Delta variant is the most infectious and most easily transmitted version of COVID-19 yet discovered. The fact that we have detected it here in Shelby County serves to remind us all that the COVID-19 pandemic has not ended. If you are eligible to be vaccinated, but have not received a vaccine, please do so as soon as possible. COVID-19 vaccines are available at no cost to you and vaccination offers the best protection against the Delta variant and the other variants circulating in the community.”

The Health Department and the Joint Taskforce are working to get as many Shelby county residents vaccinated as soon as possible. This Saturday, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., a special Juneteenth vaccination event is planned for the Southwest Tennessee Community College Whitehaven vaccination site at 1234 Finley Road. No appointment is necessary.

Shelby County Government has stepped up community outreach by sending canvassing teams door-to-door in communities with low rates of vaccination in order to educate and alert residents of the availability of COVID-19 vaccination.

For more information about COVID-19 prevention and vaccination, please visit <https://www.shelby.community/>.

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