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**KENT COUNTY BACK TO WORK SAFELY PROGRAM CONTINUES TO HELP BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES  
OPERATE SAFELY**

*Area business and hospital leaders look to expand on program's successful launch*

**KENT COUNTY- (Aug. 14, 2020)** – A unique public-private collaboration continues to provide important, real-time employee health-screening data from hundreds of locations around Kent County. Friday morning, leaders of the Kent County: Back To Work Safely program provided an update on the effort to more than 100 local business leaders.

Kent County: Back To Work Safely launched in May and uses an online Qualtrics survey and on-site temperature checks at employers around Kent County to gather data, which is aggregated by the Michigan State University College Of Human Medicine and shared with the Kent County Health Department. The information is used to identify and monitor possible hot spots of the COVID-19 virus.

“This collaboration is a model that is working and should continue to be seen as a best practice for all to follow,” said Doug DeVos, Co-Chairman, Amway. “The incredible response by local health and business leaders has allowed local workers to safely return to work and has paved the path for more businesses to safely re-open.”

Norman Beauchamp, MD, Executive Director of the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine shared specifics on how the program is working. Beauchamp said In July:

- Around 130 Kent County employers provided data from more than 160 work sites
- Around 183,000 employee screenings took place
- Approximately 335 employees were sent home because they failed the screening (0.18%). This figure includes 213 who reported symptoms, 120 who had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and 5 who were sent home due to travel

Beauchamp added that in addition to sharing the aggregated data with the Kent County Health Department, MSU is now going to begin providing the data to the University of Michigan so that Kent County's information can be added to the MI Safe Start Dashboard map.

“This program is succeeding and we are asking businesses that are already screening to keep doing so and encouraging those who are not yet taking part to sign up,” said Adam London, Ph.D., Administrative Health Officer, of the Kent County Health Department. “Increased participation will reduce the chance of a sick person coming into work, which will help stop the spread of COVID-19.”

All employers in Kent County, regardless of size, are encouraged to register for the free program at [www.kentcountybacktowork.com](http://www.kentcountybacktowork.com). At that site, employers can order a thermometer to use for the screening and will also receive an email link for the Qualtrics survey within 24 to 48 hours. The Kent County Health Department micro-site also provides a how-to guide for employers, plus background information, CDC guidelines for workplace staging and best practices being used throughout multiple industries. The site is updated routinely with any CDC or state changes.

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