

# MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



**Public Health**  
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**COUNTY OF ERIE**  
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## **Erie County launches online survey to determine most effective COVID-19 messaging and media to reach underserved populations**

Erie, PA – County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper and the Erie County Department of Health announce the launch of a new online survey designed to seek feedback from Erie County subgroups to help determine how to best communicate COVID-19-related health and safety messages to underserved populations.

“The goal of the study is to hone messaging and overcome potential communication barriers to better educate and inform underserved populations in the region about news and available resources surrounding COVID-19,” says Dahlkemper. The County announced earlier this month it has engaged public relations firm Stevens Strategic Communications to assist with widespread community outreach to underserved groups.

This research initiative is vital to enable all of Erie County to work together as a united front to battle COVID-19. The research methodology is being customized to meet language preferences, ability level and technological capabilities of respondents. In addition to the new online survey, the research team is utilizing standard mail surveys as well as geo-targeting and conducting interviews and focus groups by video conference, telephone or in-person, as appropriate.

The online COVID-19 messaging survey consists of 17 multiple choice and open-ended questions to collect information pertaining to respondents’ backgrounds, language preferences, access to technology and most used news sources. It aims to gauge the respondent’s familiarity with COVID-19 safety protocols and Erie County and the Erie County Department of Health. Collected survey data will be analyzed along with feedback obtained using alternate methodologies. Upon conclusion of the broad study, Erie County and the Erie County Department of Health will implement a media plan with messages that best resonate on a group-by-group basis.

“We are especially interested in making contact with rural residents, refugees, those with special needs and individuals whose primary language is not English,” Dahlkemper said. “We will strive to reach populations lacking digital connectivity in other ways.”

The survey is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ERIECOVID19STUDY>. All questions related to COVID-19 should be directed to Erie County Department of Health at 814-451-6700 or [ecdinfo@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:ecdinfo@eriecountypa.gov). Contact the COVID-19 Research Team at [mrodriguez@stevensstrategic.com](mailto:mrodriguez@stevensstrategic.com) if your group would like to be included in this study.

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