



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northeast Colorado Health Department Investigating a Positive COVID-19 Test Result in Morgan County

Sterling, Colo – March 18, 2020: Northeast Colorado Health Department (NCHD) has been notified of a positive COVID-19 test result in a Morgan County resident. This is the first positive COVID-19 test result in Morgan County but it is the second positive test result for northeast Colorado.

At this time the person is not hospitalized but in appropriate isolation and is recovering at home.

Our region is expected to be similar to other affected areas where additional cases have evolved rapidly once the virus is detected in a community. With that in mind, we advise residents to remain calm, stay informed, and continue to take simple preventive actions:

- Stay home if you're sick; keep your children home if they are sick.
- Practice good hygiene. Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water; in the absence of soap and water, use hand-sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

As with any communicable disease, this case investigation will take us some time. We will be contacting anyone who has had direct contact with the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. In order to protect the privacy of the individual, identifying information and medical records will not be released to the public.

“We are encouraging the public to practice the recommended social distancing guidance, staying at least 6 feet away from other people when out in public,” Director Trish McClain said. “Also, please refrain from gathering in large groups—it is us to each of us to protect our most vulnerable populations by not giving this virus a chance to spread through social contact. And check on your neighbors and those who may need some help during this time. Our elderly and those with compromised immune systems may need a hand in getting groceries or other necessities so they can stay safe at home.”

We understand that there may be some fear and confusion around COVID-19. However, we want to remind our communities that NCHD, Colorado Plains Medical Center, East Morgan County Hospital, Morgan County Emergency Manager and other partnering agencies have been preparing for such an incident as this and that have identified resources ready to respond as the situation develops. We will continue to monitor each case, continue to assess suspected cases, identify people who may have been exposed, and determine the need for isolation, quarantine, or other restrictions of movement.

Other reliable, up-to-date information is available at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/> or by calling CO HELP at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911 or email them at COHELP@RMPDC.org, for answers in English, Spanish (Español), Mandarin (普通话), and more.

The Northeast Colorado Health Department and partnering health organizations will provide regular updates.

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