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MEDIA RELEASE

Information Advisory Warning Update

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St. Clair County Health Department Advising on COVID-19 Recommendations

There are currently two confirmed COVID-19 cases in Michigan. Testing continues and more cases are likely to be reported. To date, there are no confirmed cases in St. Clair County. The situation locally may change quickly. Health Department officials are relying on our community to work together to slow the potential spread of illness and refer to official sources of reliable information.

Prevention strategies are critical in reducing the spread of illness. Examples include, proper handwashing, staying away from others when sick and maintaining “social distancing.” Whenever possible in community settings or meetings, practice maintaining extra distance between people, up to 6 feet.

Dr. Annette Mercatante, Medical Health Officer emphasized; “The Health Department is recommending event organizers, agencies and others to reevaluate hosting large events, meetings, or gatherings to help limit the spread of illness. The slower the virus is able to spread, the less impact and burden it will have on our community”. Recommendations may change, including mandatory closures/cancellations. When or if this changes, the Health Department will issue a statement. Dr. Mercatante continued, “We are also strongly recommending vulnerable populations, age 60 and over, and individuals with existing medical conditions (Heart disease, pulmonary lung disease, diabetes, cancer, etc.) to avoid social gatherings or unnecessary travel.”

Individuals with related symptoms should call their health care provider first; do not walk-in to any

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medical office or facility without calling ahead. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, or difficulty breathing. Remember these symptoms may also be caused by other viruses, such as flu. Additionally, COVID-19 testing is not recommended for those who are not sick.

The Health Department continues to coordinate with federal, state, and local officials, as well as institutions, schools, and community organizations, to be ready for additional actions and communications should we have local cases.

Continue prevention strategies:

- **Clean your hands often**
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for **at least 20 seconds** especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- **Stay home when you are sick**, except to get medical care. Call ahead before going to your healthcare provider.
- **Cover your cough or sneeze** with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Immediately wash your hands.
- **Clean and disinfect**
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If you are not sick, you do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

Information will be updated at the situation changes. Follow accurate sources;

www.michigan.gov/coronavirus ; www.cdc.gov/COVID19 ; www.scchealth.co or follow us on social media @scchdmi. A local COVID-19 informational hotline is also available at (810) 966-4163.

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