**Notice of Press Conference in regards to COVID-19:**

During this press conference, updates will be provided regarding the response efforts to coronavirus, also known as COVID-19. Officials from organizations expected to speak weekly at the press conference are CG Public Health, City of Mason City and MercyOne North Iowa.

The press conference will take place weekly on Wednesdays at 3:30 pm. Join us on Facebook Live to continue to practice social distancing.

March 22, 2020

**Isolation Guidance for Iowans**

*Updated 03/22/2020*

COVID-19 is circulating in Iowa communities and many more Iowans are likely to become ill in the coming weeks. This guidance describes isolation recommendations for well Iowans with potential COVID-19 exposure and Iowans who are ill with fever or respiratory symptoms (like cough or difficulty breathing).

Isolation recommendations for **well Iowans with potential COVID-19 exposure**

Iowans should stay at home and isolate themselves from other people and animals in the home in the following situations. Isolation should be in place for 14 days after the last exposure.

* Traveled outside of Iowa for business or vacation in the last 14 days.
* Taken a cruise anywhere in the world in the last 14 days.
* Traveled internationally to a country with a level 3 travel warning in the last 14 days.
* Live with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19.

Isolation recommendations for Iowans **ill with fever or respiratory symptoms**(like cough or difficulty breathing)

Approximately 80% of Iowans infected with COVID-19, will experience only a mild to moderate illness. Most mildly ill Iowans do not need to go to their healthcare provider or be tested to confirm they have COVID-19. Sick Iowans must stay home and isolate themselves from others in their house.

Stay home and isolate from others in the house until:

* You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)

AND

* other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)

AND

* at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

If you think you may need healthcare, call first. Your provider can assess whether you need to be seen in the office or if you can recover at home. Also, there may be options for you to talk to a medical provider from home using technology.

Additional Closures Added to Governor Reynolds Proclamation

(Mason City) – Governor Kim Reynolds signed more additions to the Disaster Emergency Proclamation closing all hair salons, medical spas, barber shops, massage therapists, tattoo shops and swimming pools beginning this Sunday, at 10 p.m., The proclamation is in effect until March 31st. She has also suspended foreclosures on residential, commercial and agriculture properties.

There are now 90 positive cases of COVID-19 in Iowa. There are 2 cases in Cerro Gordo County, and 1 in Kossuth County. Contact tracing is completed to identify those who have come in close contact with someone who is infected with a virus. This helps those contacts get care if needed and prevent further transmission of the virus. This is currently happening with positive cases. The Iowa Department of Public Health has decided not to release information on times and locations where infected COVID-19 individuals have visited. Please see the following statement from the Iowa Department of Public Health.

“IDPH is not releasing details of locations, times, etc. because there is no public health action recommended that is different from what we are advising all Iowans to take. Since we know there is community spread, all Iowans should be practicing social distancing, staying home when ill, and monitoring their symptoms, regardless of community exposures.”

CG Public Health and MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center are working in partnership to ensure all persons who are tested receive results. “We have been working around the clock, 7 days a week, preparing for our response to positive cases with local partners such as MercyOne North Iowa, School Districts, Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management, Clear Lake and Mason City First Responders and more,” says Brian Hanft the Director of CG Public Health. “We are communicating daily, acquiring resources, planning childcare for essential services, reviewing hospital surge plans, providing guidance as we learn of new information, and completing contact tracing on infected individuals. It’s important to remember these additional steps are in place to help protect our community and limit the spread of COVID-19.”

Everyone can do their part to help respond to COVID-19 by staying home when you can, washing your hands frequently, staying home when sick, and cover coughs and sneezes with your upper arm or elbow.

For more guidance on isolation, even if you’re feeling fine, please visit <https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/7/3_22_20%20Isolation%20guidance%20for%20Iowans.pdf>.

A status report of monitoring and testing of COVID-19 in Iowa provided by IDPH can be found at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>. For more information about COVID-19, please visit CG Public Health’s website at cghealth.com. Follow CG Public Health on Facebook and Twitter (@CGPublicHealth).

  # # #