



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Presumptive coronavirus (COVID-19) case in Cabarrus County

Kannapolis, N.C. – Cabarrus Health Alliance (CHA), Cabarrus County’s public health authority, has identified the first presumptive case of COVID-19 in a Cabarrus County resident.

The North Carolina State Lab for Public Health is testing the case to confirm if it is a COVID-19 infection—a process that may take up to 48 hours. The individual self-reported symptoms after returning from international travel.

Local actions

The individual’s household is following health official guidance and will remain under a temporary monitored quarantine until cleared.

CHA staff is working closely with the individual to identify close contacts outside the home who may be affected. Authorities will work to give prompt notification to those who fall under the guidelines for additional monitoring and testing.

“This is a travel-related coronavirus case,” Cabarrus Health Alliance Interim Public Health Director Erin Shoe said. “We are completing a thorough investigation with this patient’s full cooperation to mitigate potential community spread.”

Local preparation

Tamara Staehler is the CHA’s communicable disease nurse supervisor. She and others on the CHA team sat with community partners and began planning for the local impact of COVID-19 weeks ago.

“We continue to stress the importance of good hand washing and staying home when ill,” Staehler said. “We feature a variety of resources on our website, cabarrushealth.org, designed to help various populations navigate the complexities of COVID-19 and discern fact from fiction. We encourage our community to follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including putting distance between yourself and other people and avoiding large public gatherings if you’re over 65 years old, sick, or have a weakened immune system.”

Preparation is important, as is the health and safety of our community.

How you can help:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom and before eating
- Be sure to wash after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol)
- Avoid contact with sick people; stay home when you are sick

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then discard the tissue
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Employers and businesses in Cabarrus County can help by:

- Reinforcing and follow best-practice cleaning standards in buildings
- Encouraging staff to stay home when sick
- Sharing news and information provided by CHA with employees

Local resources

Cabarrus County residents can turn to the CHA for ongoing information related to coronavirus and other public health concerns. CHA will provide updates through its website, www.cabarrushealth.org. You can also call the Health Information Line at 704-920-1213 or email healthinfo@cabarrushealth.org. Follow the CHA on Facebook and Twitter, @CabarrusHealth.

State resources

- From 5 p.m. to 8 a.m., individuals with questions or concerns related to COVID-19 can call 866-462-3821. Press 1 for English or to ask for a language interpreter. Spanish speakers should press 2. To submit questions to the state online, visit www.ncpoisoncontrol.org and select "Chat."

###

Cabarrus Health Alliance: Melanie Grafals at 954-701-8747 or melanie.grafals@cabarrushealth.org