



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 16, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **State confirms first positive COVID-19 case in Cabarrus County**

Kannapolis, N.C. – The North Carolina State Lab for Public Health confirmed the first case of COVID-19 in a Cabarrus County resident. The case was first tested locally and reported to the community last week. It was then sent to the state lab for secondary testing—a required step in the confirmation process. The patient initially reported symptoms after returning home from international travel last week.

Patients confirmed positive are quarantined and monitored.

### **Local actions**

The patient’s household is following health official guidance and will remain under quarantine until cleared. Cabarrus Health Alliance (CHA) staff have identified close contacts of the patient who may be affected, and notified those who fall under the guidelines for additional monitoring and testing.

### **Local preparation**

For weeks, CHA has watched global and state trends. The agency activated its incident command structure several weeks ago and was prepared for response when the first case was identified.

“Hearing we have our first confirmed case does not change our message—proceed with caution, care and self-awareness,” said Cabarrus Health Alliance Interim Health Director Erin Shoe. “We appreciate that this patient heeded recommendations and sought testing when they met the criteria. It was the best action they could take.”

Shoe hopes those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 take the same steps.

### **Steps to take**

In order to be tested for COVID-19, a patient must meet certain criteria.

Call your primary care provider if you have symptoms, including cough or shortness of breath and fever. If you do not have a primary care provider, call the CHA Health Info Line at 704-920-1213 between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. After hours, call 866-462-3821.

Shoe encourages the community to continue following the guidance of trusted sources, like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and locally, the CHA.

“We are in the beginning stages of this event,” Shoe said. “Make decisions that are in the best interest of your family and your community. Act reasonably and responsibly. It’s going to take all of us working together to flatten the curve.”

## **Best practices**

### **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 your hands 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 following 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](http://www.cabarrushealth.org). You can also call the Health Information Line at 704-920-1213 or email [healthinfo@cabarrushealth.org](mailto: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](http://www.ncpoisoncontrol.org) and select "Chat."

###

Cabarrus Health Alliance: Melanie Grafals at 704-920-1294 or [melanie.grafals@cabarrushealth.org](mailto:melanie.grafals@cabarrushealth.org)