



HEALTH DISTRICT

Portage County Combined General Health District

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Joseph Diorio, MPH, MS, RS, Health Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sunday, March 22, 2020

PORTAGE COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT REPORTS FIRST PRESUMPTIVE POSITIVE CASE OF COVID-19 IN PORTAGE COUNTY

Portage County Combined General Health District (PCHD) has been notified of a “presumptive positive” test result for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) at Cleveland Clinic in a resident of Portage County. PCHD is working to identify the close contacts of this resident who would require testing or monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.

PCHD along with our hospital, healthcare providers and community partners have been actively preparing to respond to possible cases of COVID-19 in our community. “We are working closely with the Ohio Department of Health, following protocols and guidance in place, to identify close contacts of this individual who will be instructed to self-quarantine, and be monitored by public health for 14 days,” said Joseph Diorio, Health Commissioner. “Our focus right now is to support the care of this individual and protect the health of our residents.”

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 can cause mild to more severe respiratory illness. Symptoms include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Symptoms appear within 14 days of being exposed to an infectious person. According to the CDC, COVID-19 spreads primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Those at high risk for illness of COVID-19 are those over 60 with chronic illness or a weakened immune system.

PCHD is urging people in the community to follow these preventative measures to prevent further spread of this disease:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and cough or sneeze into a tissue or your sleeve when possible.
- Wash your hand with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing; use a hand sanitizer when soap or water is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home if you are ill except to visit your healthcare provider.
- Clean and disinfect all high-touch items and surfaces every day.
- Follow the social distancing directives of Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine.

Portage County Combined General Health District is an Equal Opportunity Employer

This is the only communication we are releasing at this time due to the time limitations of our staff. Additional information will be communicated through news releases, our website, and our social media outlets as it becomes available. We are asking our media to help us share our message to the public and respect our time as we are working to contain this virus.

For information about COVID-19, call the Ohio Department of Health call center at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH. The call center is open every day from 9:00am-8:00pm.

Additional information on COVID-19 can be found on the Portage County Health District website at www.portagehealth.net, the Ohio Department of Health website at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

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