



HEALTH DISTRICT

Portage County Combined General Health District

705 Oakwood Street, 2nd Floor
Ravenna, Ohio 44266
www.portagehealth.net



Portage County Health District 330-296-9919
Fax 330-297-3597
Portage County WIC 330-297-9422
Columbiana County WIC 330-424-7293

Joseph Diorio, MPH, MS, RS, Health Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, March 30, 2020

PORTAGE COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT CONFIRMS ITS FIRST DEATH RELATED TO COVID-19

Portage County Combined General Health District (PCHD) regrets to report that it has received notification of Portage County's first death related to COVID-19. An older adult male passed away on Sunday, March 29, 2020 at a hospital due to complications of COVID-19. Any identifiable information will not be released about the patient to respect his family's privacy.

"Our condolences go out to the family and friends of the resident we've lost. While this is the first confirmed death of a Portage County resident with COVID-19, it is probable that we will experience more tragedy as a result of this virus," stated Joseph Diorio, Health Commissioner. "It is imperative that the entire Portage County community follow the Stay at Home Order from Dr. Amy Acton and be vigilant about practicing social-distancing and good hand hygiene to slow the spread of COVID-19".

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.

If a person is feeling symptoms to COVID-19, they should stay home and separate themselves from other household members. They should stay in home isolation until 3 things have happened:

- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- Have been fever-free, symptom-free for 72 hours (3 days) without the use of medication.
- Other symptoms have improved, such as a cough or shortness of breath.

If a person is in direct contact with an individual who tests positive for COVID-19, they should self-isolate for 14 days; separating themselves from the rest of the household.

For a person who is in contact, with a direct contact, of a positive COVID-19 person, they should continue to practice social distancing with abundance of caution, paying attention to not being in contact with the high-risk population. Unless they are showing/feeling symptoms to COVID-19, they do NOT need to self-isolate.

Portage County Combined General Health District is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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

- Follow the social distancing directives of Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine.
- 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.

This is the only communication we are releasing at this time due to the time limitations of our staff and respect for the patient and their family's privacy. 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>.

####