



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 24, 2020

COVID-19 Joint Press Communication Update

The Crisis Communication Team would like to report that, at the time of this press release, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Macon County. Thus far, ten tests have been completed in Macon County, with eight negative test results and two test results pending. Additionally, four Macon County residents have been tested outside of Macon County, with two negative test results and two test results pending. There is also a possibility that a provider has submitted and/or will submit a test to a private lab and the MCHD may not be notified, therefore unable to track that submission. If a private lab test is confirmed positive, the MCHD would be notified at that time. It remains true that Macon County will inform the press and public as soon as possible at the time of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a Macon County resident.

Because testing is not widely available to the general public, it is ***imperative*** that community members, whether feeling ill or well, implement social distancing best practices to limit the spread and contraction of COVID-19. This means staying home and away from as many people as possible as often as possible.

If you experience symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, do not present at a hospital emergency room or doctor's office immediately unless it is a true emergency. Please first call your primary care physician. If you do not have a primary care physician in place at this time, you may call DMH Medical Group at (217) 876-2856, Crossing Healthcare at (217) 877-9117 or SIU at (217) 872-3800. HSHS Medical Group Family Medicine Forsyth is operating a regional respiratory hub. Their hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Saturday 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call your primary care provider if you have any questions. Memorial Health System is operating a respiratory screening clinic at its DMH Express Care East location to screen people for the COVID-19 virus. The clinic at 4455 U.S. Route 36 East will operate seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. People coming to the respiratory clinic should call (217) 876-1200 before they arrive. Patients and visitors to healthcare facilities should be prepared to be screened before entering.

Daily PSA: A Message Regarding "RUOK" from the Decatur-Macon County Senior Center

Due to the situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic in which everyone is encouraged to stay safe at home, the Decatur-Macon County Senior Center wishes to remind the community of their program called RUOK (Are You O.K.). With the program, the Macon County Senior Center will call every homebound senior citizen registered with the program. Calls to check on seniors' wellbeing will begin at 8:30 a.m. each day and take place five days per week, Monday through Friday. This program

has been in place for years but is now even more important. The Macon County Senior Center says there is no charge for this service which is open to anyone 55+ years of age and older in Decatur and Macon County. To sign up, call the Macon County Senior Center at (217) 429-1239. If there is no answer, leave a message and someone from the Center will return your call.

The Census is Coming. Yes, it Affects YOU.

What do COVID-19 and the Census have in common? They both rely on YOU. Being prepared for pandemics and disasters in Decatur, Macon County and central Illinois relies heavily on funding received through the Census. If EVERYONE turned in their Census in 2010, our region would have more of the resources today to fight COVID-19 more effectively. According to census.gov, "The Census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for you and your community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on Census data."

What can you do? Respond the 2020 Census online at <https://my2020census.gov/>; by phone at 844-330-2020; or by mail TODAY.

Please Keep Sharing: Agencies Continuing to Need Volunteers

A message from the United Way and the agencies seeking volunteers: "Agencies need volunteers under 59. We ask all volunteers 60 and over to take a break and stay well because we are going to need you when this all ends!"

To volunteer at the Good Samaritan Inn: Please contact Francie at (217) 429-1455 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Volunteers will help with meal preparation only. Good Samaritan staff will hand meals to patrons in order to minimize volunteer contact. If you don't get an answer, please try back, or simply drop by to see if help is needed. You can also schedule your volunteer time by emailing Francie at Volunteercoordinator.goodsam@gmail.com. Due to the shift in meal delivery, The Good Samaritan Inn is operating on reduced staff and hours. Your patience is truly appreciated.

To volunteer at Northeast Community Fund: Northeast asks that you go to their website, northeastcommunityfund.org and register through their volunteer portal. Once signed up, volunteers can schedule themselves online for one or two 2.5 hour shifts (9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays). Please select "food pantry" when self-scheduling.

For United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois: Please use the Get Connected: Volunteer in Mid-Illinois portal at https://volunteermidillinois.galaxydigital.com/agency/detail/?agency_id=111106.

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For more information, please contact:

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