



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 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, seventeen tests have been completed in Macon County, with nine negative test results and eight test results pending. Additionally, seven Macon County residents have been tested outside of Macon County, with seven negative test results. 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.

It is safe to assume that COVID-19 is in our community. 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 from the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur-Macon County to Local Food Establishment and Bar Owners

Good Afternoon Macon County Restaurant, Bar and Hotel Owners,
Governor JB Pritzker and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has launched the Hospitality Emergency Grant Program. This is a \$14 million grant program to support

working capital as well as job training, retraining, and technology to support shifts in operation. (Note: this is a GRANT, not a LOAN, which does not require you to take on debt.

Completed applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on April 1st (in a little less than one week). Winners will be chosen via lottery, so a grant is not guaranteed nor awarded on a first come, first served basis.

Eligible applicants include:

1. Bars and restaurants with a valid license to serve food or liquor and who generated revenues of less than \$1 million in 2019
2. Bars and restaurants that generated between \$500K and \$1M in revenue in 2019 are eligible for up to \$25,000
3. Bars and restaurants that generated less than \$500K in revenue in 2019 are eligible for up to \$10,000
4. Hotels with a valid license (hotels, motels, other lodging establishments) and who generated revenues of less than \$8 million in 2019
5. Hotels that generated less than \$8M in revenue in 2019 are eligible for up to \$50,000

What can grant funds be used for?

1. For bars and restaurants, based on the businesses needs identified in the grant application, funds can be used to support working capital (rent, payroll, and other accounts payable), job training (such as new practices related to take out, delivery and sanitation) and technology enabling new operations as well as other costs to implement that technology.
2. For hotels, funds can be used as working capital to support the retention of employees.

The grant application is live now. The application and full details on the grant can be found here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Pages/EmergencySBAInitiatives.aspx>

HSHS Medical Group Waiving Fee for Virtual Visits Relating to COVID-19

For the health of our community and patients, HSHS Medical Group is waiving the fee for virtual visits related to screening and evaluation of COVID-19. If you are concerned about your symptoms, visit [AnytimeCare.com](https://www.anytimecare.com) or call 1-844-391-4747 to start your medical visit.

“Help 4 Heroes Steps Up to Help Veterans Impacted by COVID-19”

Operation Hope Restored

The Veteran’s Assistance Commission of Macon County Inc. with use of their Help 4 Heroes Fund is stepping up to help Veterans within Macon County who have been impacted by COVID-19 financially. Our Help 4 Heroes non-profit charitable fund is pledging up to \$10,000 to support Veterans and their families that have been laid off or lost employment due to the impact of COVID-19. Honorably discharged Veterans are eligible for \$100 with an additional \$25 being paid per dependent, all funds will be distributed as gift cards for Veterans and their families to use for gas, groceries or other essentials they need during this tough time. Help 4 Heroes of Macon County is a local non-profit charity administered by the Veteran’s Assistance Commission of Macon County Inc. with just one goal...helping Veterans. Help 4 Heroes is sustained solely on donations from the community. Anyone looking for more information on Help 4 Heroes or for Veterans looking to receive support, please contact the Veteran’s Assistance Commission of Macon County, Inc. at (217) 424-1376.

Please Keep Sharing: The Urgent Need for Blood Donations Continues

A Message from the Central Illinois Community Blood Center: We are encouraging blood donations now and in the next 8 weeks to ensure adequate supplies during the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19). We are working to prevent shortages locally. We are monitoring credible health agencies for updates on COVID-19 and are responding accordingly. For blood drive sponsor groups that are considering cancelling drives, please work with us on potential options to re-direct donors. There is no known risk to the safety of the nation's blood supply except for lack of donations and there are no reports of spread of this respiratory virus by blood transfusion. Giving blood is critical to ensure an adequate supply to meet patient needs. Learn more about how you can help by donating blood, time, or money by visiting their website at <https://www.bloodcenter.org/>; emailing impact@mvrbc.org; or calling (800) 747-5401.

The American Red Cross is facing a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations during this coronavirus outbreak. Healthy individuals are needed to donate now to help patients counting on lifesaving blood. For an appointment, please visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Please also note that the American Red Cross Blood is hosting a blood drive every Tuesday from 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Decatur's American Red Cross Chapter on 2674 N. Main St. in Decatur, IL.

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For more information, please contact:

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