



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 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*:

- two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Macon County;
- thirty-four tests have been completed in Macon County, with two positive test results, fourteen negative test results and eighteen test results pending; and
- eleven Macon County residents have been tested outside of Macon County, with ten negative test results and one test result pending.

**Note: 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.*

Upon notification of these positive cases, the MCHD immediately started contact tracing following Illinois Department of Public Health protocol and guidance. Contacts have been notified and provided with appropriate direction. We now know 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: Even as Weather Warms, Social Distancing is Still A Must.

As we begin to feel the warmth of spring and notice sunshine in some of our days, we must still adhere to social distancing best practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community. This means that we must stay in our homes as much as possible while limiting/not allowing outside visitors to enter. Trips should be limited to gathering groceries, medications, or other necessary supplies and going to work if your workplace is deemed essential. Social gatherings such as barbecues, parties, and playing with friends should be postponed to a later date. While these measures might seem strict or cause sadness or disappointment, we must remember that they are temporary and critical to keep our community as safe and healthy as we possibly can while we face many uncertainties.

Crossing Healthcare Announces Adjustment to Clinic Hours

Crossing Healthcare has announced that it is adjusting its main clinic hours to aid in the community's response to COVID-19 while still supporting the needs of its current clients. The main clinic will now be in operation seven days per week from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Existing Crossing Healthcare patients and those needing to establish care with a provider can call (217) 877-9117 to schedule an appointment.

Do Not Forget: Hospitality Emergency Grant Program Deadline is Tomorrow.

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/EmergencySBAIntiatives.aspx>

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For more information, please contact:

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