



---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 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-eight tests have been completed in Macon County, with two positive test results, twenty negative test results, and sixteen test results pending; and
- thirteen Macon County residents have been tested outside of Macon County, with twelve 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: State Needs Licensed Healthcare Workers to Help Fight COVID-19**

Yesterday, you may have received an alert on your cell phones urging licensed healthcare workers to join the fight against COVID-19. Those professionals who are available and willing to help in the fight against COVID-19 are being asked to visit [www.illinoishelps.net](http://www.illinoishelps.net) to register. Individuals that register at that website may be contacted to work in a hospital surge or alternative housing setting. There is a tab on the website to address frequently asked questions, such as “What if I allowed my licensure to expire or I am not licensed in Illinois?”, “What types of opportunities may I be asked to help with as medical personnel?”, etc. If you are not a medical professional, you can find other opportunities to help and serve at [www.Serve.Illinois.gov](http://www.Serve.Illinois.gov).

### **Governor Pritzker Extends Stay-at-Home Order**

On March 31, 2020, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker announced he was extending the Stay-at-Home Executive Order through April. This means that all mandates and guidelines that have previously applied will extend through April 30<sup>th</sup>. In his press conference yesterday, he stated the following: “Most critically, I have let the science guide our decisions. I’ve relied upon the top medical experts, scientists, public health researchers, epidemiologists, mathematicians and modelers, from the greatest institutions in the world like University of Illinois, Northwestern, University of Chicago, SIU, and others whose guidance on infection rates and potential mortalities and protective measures is second to none. It is based upon that advice that tomorrow, I will be signing an Executive Order to extend Illinois’ Disaster Proclamation, Stay at Home order, and suspension of on-site learning at schools through the end of the month of April. If we can end these orders earlier, I’ll be the first to tell you when we can start to make strides toward normal again. But that time is not today, and it’s not April 7<sup>th</sup>. Illinois has one of the strongest public health systems in the nation – but even so, we aren’t immune to this virus’ ability to push our existing capacity beyond its limits. We need to maintain our course and keep working to flatten the curve.”

Please continue to practice social distancing as a first line of defense against the contraction and spread of this illness in our community. Only leave your home for essential tasks, like gathering groceries and medications, attending necessary doctor’s appointments, and going to work at an essential job. Wash your hands thoroughly (tops of hands, in between fingers, under fingernails, and for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap) and often. If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then throw the tissue away and wash your hands. If a tissue is not available, sneeze or cough into the crease of your elbow. We can only overcome what we are facing if we do what is being asked of us *together*.

###

**For more information, please contact:**

Marisa Hosier  
Director of Health Promotion and Public Relations  
Macon County Health Department  
[mhosier@maconchd.org](mailto:mhosier@maconchd.org)