



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 18, 2020**

**COVID-19 Joint Press Communication Update**

As of today's release, the Joint Crisis Communication Team (CCT) reports the following numbers:

**COVID-19 Macon County, Illinois**

Updated 4/18/2020

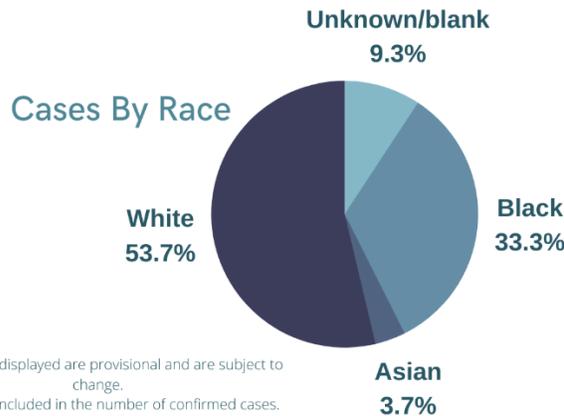
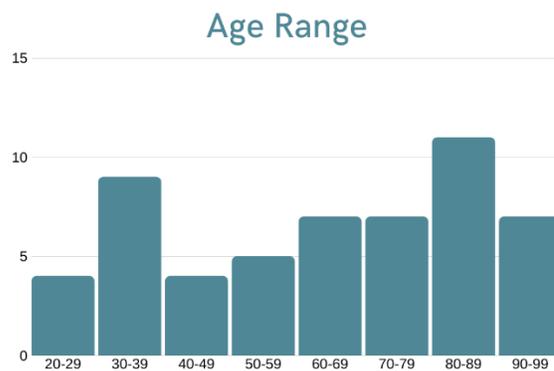
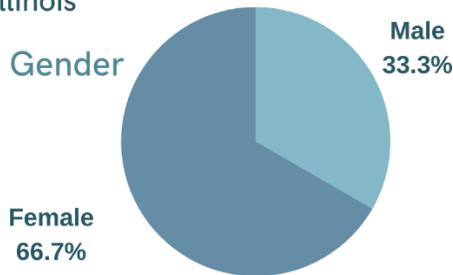
Confirmed Cases  
**54**

Released from Isolation  
**8**

Home Isolation  
**34**

Hospitalized  
**5**

Deaths  
**7**



All numbers displayed are provisional and are subject to change.  
Deaths are included in the number of confirmed cases.

Of these 54 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 37 are associated with congregate living facilities like long term care facilities. When cases are confirmed at any long-term care facility, IDPH guidance directs the long-term facility of steps to be taken with residents and the facility. IDPH guidance also directs the long-term care facility to communicate this information with the physician, local health department, regulatory agency, families, staff and residents. The MCHD has continued to be in ongoing communication with long-term care facilities.

As a reminder, 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 unless it is a true emergency. Call your primary care physician first. Individuals without a primary care physician can call:

- DMH Medical Group at (217) 876-2856
- HSHS Medical Group Patient Advocate at 844-520-8897
- Crossing Healthcare at (217) 877-9117
- SIU at (217) 872-3800

For COVID-19 screening, the following resources are available:

- Memorial Health System's respiratory screening clinic located at DMH Express Care East (4455 U.S. Route 36 East); open seven days a week, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Before coming to the respiratory clinic, individuals should call (217) 876-1200.
- Crossing Healthcare, 320 East Central Avenue in Decatur. Call (217) 877-9117 for an appointment.
- HSHS St. Mary's Hospital 24/7 COVID-19 Hotline at (217) 464-2966
- HSHS Medical Group offers free virtual assessments for COVID-19 at [www.anytimecare.com](http://www.anytimecare.com)

Anyone entering healthcare facilities should be prepared to be screened before entering.

### **Daily PSA: Pets and COVID-19**

#### **What to do if you own pets**

Until we learn more about how this virus affects animals, treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a potential infection.

- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.
- Keep cats indoors when possible to prevent them from interacting with other animals or people.
- Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet (2 meters) from other people and animals.
- Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.

There is a very small number of animals around the world reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 after having contact with a person with COVID-19. Talk to your veterinarian if your pet gets sick or if you have any concerns about your pet's health.

## **Protect pets if you are sick**

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed by a test), you should restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would around other people. Although there have been no reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 **limit contact with pets and other animals** until more information is known about the virus. This can help ensure both you and your animals stay healthy.

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including, petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food or bedding.
- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

If you are sick with COVID-19 and your pet becomes sick, **do not take your pet to the veterinary clinic yourself**. Call your veterinarian and let them know you have been sick with COVID-19. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other alternate plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

## **Stay healthy around animals**

In the United States, there is no evidence to suggest that any animals, including pets, livestock, or wildlife, might be a source of COVID-19 infection at this time. However, because all animals can carry germs that can make people sick, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals.

- Wash your hands after handling animals, their food, waste, or supplies.
- Practice good pet hygiene and clean up after pets properly.
- Talk to your veterinarian if you have questions about your pet's health.
- Be aware that children 5 years of age and younger, people with weakened immune systems, and people 65 years of age and older are more likely to get sick from germs some animals can carry.

For more information, visit CDC's Healthy Pets, Healthy People website.

**###**

### **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)