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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 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 the Macon County. Thus far, six tests have been completed for Macon County residents, with two negative test results and four pending test results. Testing is not widely available to the general public. Individuals must still meet the criteria outlined by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The criteria can be found on the Illinois Department of Public Health's website under COVID-19 Testing Decision Matrix.

### **What to Do if You Are Experiencing Symptoms**

Per the CDC, "Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure." *All community residents*, whether experiencing symptoms or not, should be taking preventative measures to assist with preventing the spread of illness. A negative test does not mean that someone will not eventually develop symptoms, so all people should be taking proactive measures.

If you experience symptoms, do not present at a hospital emergency room. 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 ahead at (217) 872-0953. 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: Community Resources**

Businesses, agencies, organizations and individuals are coming together and harmoniously working to address our local situation and the needs of our community members. We continue to gather information regarding new resources available to our community. Along with the primary care sites and respiratory screening clinics listed above, here is a list of some other resources that might be of benefit in the weeks and months to come.

The State of Illinois has released a new website dedicated to providing information surrounding the COVID-19 situation across the state. You can visit that site at [coronavirus.illinois.gov](https://coronavirus.illinois.gov).

Heritage Behavioral Health is providing crisis support to anyone experiencing increased anxiety and/or depression and anyone needing any additional support. Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week by calling (217) 362-6262.

Central Illinois residents experiencing stress and anxiety related to the COVID-19 pandemic or other issues in their lives can call a free, emotional-support hotline operated by Memorial Behavioral Health. The hotline, (217) 588-5509, operated by trained mental-health professionals, will operate from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week, for the foreseeable future.

Memorial Health System announced it has made its MemorialNow virtual-care service free to anyone in central Illinois. The normal \$40 fee-per-virtual visit will be waived for the foreseeable future. New users can download the free MemorialNow app from the Apple Store or Google Play Store or by visiting [MemorialNow.com](https://MemorialNow.com) and following written instructions. The service is open to any patient regardless of insurance status or whether the patient already uses a Memorial Health System doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant.

Memorial Health System has an online digital assistant to assess individuals for COVID-19 risk based on criteria from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The confidential digital assistant, named "AnneSarah," will assess individuals' risk and, if necessary, inform them on how to seek treatment. This online tool is another way to help the public determine their risk for COVID-19 while allowing them to stay safe in their own homes. To access the digital assistant, visit [ChooseMemorial.org/COVID19](https://ChooseMemorial.org/COVID19).

### **Community Volunteers Needed**

We have some immediate volunteer needs in our community. If you are healthy and not high-risk, please consider helping these organizations out:

**Catholic Charities Food Pantry** - volunteers needed to pack food boxes. Call (217) 428-6772 for more information.

**Northeast Community Fund** - volunteers needed every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Good Samaritan Inn** – 4 to 6 volunteers needed to pack food boxes each day 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email [director@goodsamaritaninn.org](mailto:director@goodsamaritaninn.org).

You can contact the **United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois** at (217) 422-8537 for more information regarding how you can help if you are able.

Through March 17, 2020, nearly 4,000 Red Cross blood drives have been canceled across the country due to coronavirus concerns, resulting in more than 100,000 fewer blood donations. Those who are willing and able to donate blood can donate at the American Red Cross, located at 2674 N. Main St. in Decatur, every Tuesday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. You can schedule an appointment at [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) or call 1-800-733-2767.

Decatur Memorial Hospital will also be hosting a community blood drive at the Decatur YMCA on Wednesday, March 25, 2020. The hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Those interested in donating can schedule an appointment at [bloodcenter.org](https://bloodcenter.org) or call 1-800-747-5401.

### **Information About Animals**

The Illinois Department of Agriculture has released information regarding COVID-19 as it relates to animals, pets, pet caregivers, and veterinarians. You can find more information, including links to credible resources on these topics, by visiting the Illinois Department of Agriculture's website at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Pages/default.aspx> and clicking on the "COVID-19 Animal Information Resource" at the top of the page.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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