

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Thomas Jefferson Health District Confirms a Positive Case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

(Charlottesville, VA.) – The Virginia Department of Health’s Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD) announced that a community member has tested positive for 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This case marks the first case in the Thomas Jefferson Health District.

“The situation with COVID-19 outbreak is rapidly changing, so it is not surprising that we are identifying a case in our area,” said Thomas Jefferson Health District Director Dr. Denise Bonds. Public health officials will work to isolate the patient and to investigate all people who had close contact with the patient. Contacts will be asked to stay home away from others for 14 days.

The positive case is an individual in their late 50s and a resident in the City of Charlottesville. The case appears to be travel-related. The patient was tested for the novel coronavirus by a commercial lab.

Most patients with COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms. However, in a small proportion of patients, COVID-19 can lead to more severe illness, including death, particularly among those who are older or those who have chronic medical conditions. Symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Symptoms appear within 14 days of being exposed to an infectious person. COVID-19 spreads primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

To lower the risk of respiratory germ spread, including COVID-19, the Virginia Department of Health encourages the following effective behaviors:

- **Individuals should stay home, if possible, to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**
- **Local government, businesses, community organizations, and faith-based institutions should reschedule or cancel meetings or gatherings, involving more than 50 people until further notice.**
- **Community members over age 60, with chronic medical conditions, or with compromised immune systems should avoid gatherings of more than 50 people all together.**
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer only if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid contact with sick people.

This is a rapidly changing situation, and information is being shared as it becomes available on the following websites: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus or www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/. Please consult www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus for the latest number of COVID-19 cases in Virginia.

The Thomas Jefferson Health District has also activated a public information line, 434-972-6261, for questions from community members about the novel coronavirus situation.

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