Allegheny County Announces First COVID-19 Death

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department today confirmed the first death in the county from COVID-19. The person was an adult in their late 60s who had been hospitalized. In the past day, the number of positive cases in Allegheny County has grown to 31 with four individuals hospitalized. Statewide, there are 371 cases in 28 counties.

"Our thoughts, prayers and sympathy go out to the family and friends of this individual," said County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. "This is a serious health issue, but the steps being taken in our community over the past week have been helping. We need to remain focused on 'flattening the curve' and making sure that all of our resources are being focused on preparing to help those who are most in need."

An email address has been set up for individuals, businesses and organizations to use to offer donations of goods to the county in light of the COVID-19 response. Fitzgerald noted that there is a critical need to identify where personal protective equipment is available, including N95 masks, gloves and gowns. Additional announcements will be made in the coming days regarding any additional requests. That e-mail address is COVID19Donations@alleghenycounty.us.

Dr. Debra Bogen, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department, also expressed her condolences to the family whose loved one passed way from COVID-19. In addition to the death and positive case numbers previously reported today, the number of cases are expected to continue increasing, in part because of the increased testing capacity across our region.

"The most important thing residents can do to help stop the spread is to stay at home and practice social distancing. We know that it may not feel like this is working, but we know that there is a lag before we see that impact – so stay on target," said Dr. Debra Bogen, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department. "We understand you're worried and concerned. Check out the CDC's new 'self-checker' on its website which allows individuals to answer a few questions about symptoms, and then offers advice. Most importantly, the tool also provides information on how to care for yourself at home. Stay home if you're sick. We cannot stress this enough."

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever, cough and shortness of breath, please stay at home and contact your primary-care provider to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19. If you do not have a primary care provider and are not sure if you need tested, please contact the COVID-19 24/7 Hotline at 1-888-856-2774. Individuals with questions or concerns about COVID-19 may also contact the hotline and language services are available.

If you need to seek immediate medical care, please call 9-1-1 for assistance and so the division may coordinate with health care facilities to allow staff at these locations to prepare for your arrival.

The following proactive hygiene measures are strongly encouraged to help stop the virus from spreading in our community:

- Washing your hands often
- Cover coughs and sneezes

- Don't touch eyes, nose or mouth
- Clean surfaces frequently
- Avoid people who are sick
- Stay home

Allegheny County will continue to communicate with the public as more information is gathered. For the latest information on COVID-19, visit www.alleghenycounty.us/coronavirus. ACHD provides a daily update at 11 a.m. via Allegheny Alerts and additional notifications as information becomes available. Users can create an account and subscribe to COVID-19 alerts at www.alleghenycounty.us/alerts. The Health Department continues to share information on its social media accounts as well – on Facebook at @AlleghenyCountyHealth and on Twitter at @HealthAllegheny.

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