



*"Health begins where you live, learn, work, and play."*

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**For Immediate Release**

**Leadville/Lake County**

**(Leadville, Colo, March 14, 2020) -- COVID-19 Update**

Lake County currently does not have any positive COVID-19 cases. We are testing people at both Rocky Mountain Family Practice and St. Vincent hospital according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) parameters.

We have been communicating with the public through our Facebook page, Lake County COVID-19. We are encouraging people to go to St. Vincent Hospital's website and check out their COVID-19 page. We realize that platform is not reaching everyone, so we are going to address concerns that have been expressed so far.

Lake County Public Health Agency along with the City and County have formulated a Response Plan that provides threshold and triggers for closures. Considering we are small community our trigger for partial closures of government facilities is one positive case. That could change as this event is evolving day by day. We have meet with our partners in law enforcement, healthcare, human services, school district and others to ensure we understand the needs of our community and how best to respond.

We have instituted a large gathering order that limits events to 50 people or less to decrease the possibility of spread. That means that the St. Patrick's Day is cancelled.

Internally, we have looked at our Influenza Pandemic plan which emphasizes non-pharmaceutical measures like those currently suggested as protective measures for COVID-19:

- Wash your hands
- Cover cough and sneeze
- Stay home when sick
- Practice social distancing

The Pandemic Plan outlines if there was a medication or a vaccine that would be beneficial to combat the threat than a Point of Dispensing (POD) site would be established to ensure every person would receive that medication or vaccine in a timely manner. In our County, the goal would be 12 hours. In 2016-2017 we planned and successfully implemented a full-scale exercise to practice this. We will be ready when that day comes.

At this time, there is no known medication for COVID-19 and a vaccine is being developed. This may take up to a year.

Lake County Public Health Agency has looked at its Quarantine and Isolation Plan. We have orders ready to go when informed of a positive exposure to COVID-19 or a confirmed positive test. We have heard that people are worried that community members if asked to be either quarantined meaning they are well and are being monitored or isolated meaning they have symptoms and are being monitored will not comply with orders. We will make every effort to ensure that those people have the resources they need to follow those orders so as not to need to leave their homes for the specified time.

Even with all this planning and behind the scenes efforts, it is going to come down to us working together as a community to support each other. We know that the population 65 and over with underlying health conditions like heart, lung, kidney disease and diabetes are at the greatest risk. Let's protect them by reaching out to your neighbors who may fit this description and offer to shop for them to avoid possible exposures. Work with your family and friends to plan if someone in your circle needs to be quarantined or isolated. This could last up to 14 days.

Once again as this situation changes from day to day we appreciate your cooperation and support to keep our community safe.

At this time, our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated for specific Emergency Support Functions (ESF). Please expect an update on Monday, March 16 at 1000. We will update sooner if needed.

Colleen Nielsen, RN  
Director

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