

## Jones County Health Department

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For Immediate Release

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### North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) Issues Updates and New Guidance in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Press Release #6

**Trenton, NC** – The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) continues to update and provide guidance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following are new updates and guidance from NCDHHS to identify and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

#### Testing Criteria Guidance

COVID-19 testing is available; however, at this time testing is most important for people that are: 1) seriously ill, such as those in a hospital or in a high risk setting like a long-term care facility or nursing home, and 2) health care workers and other first responders caring for those with more serious infections. **In general, people in non-congregate settings who have mild symptoms compatible with COVID-19 that do not progress do not need testing for COVID-19 and are instructed to stay and recover at home.**

#### Migrant Workers and Employers Interim Guidance

As we approach crop season, NCDHHS has developed guidance for migrant farmworkers and their employers on how to protect them during this time. This guidance provides key components needed to create a prevention plan which includes: 1) minimizing the risk for exposure to the virus, 2) early detection of people with symptoms of COVID-19, and 3) caring for individuals with COVID-19 while ensuring that they do not give the infection to someone else. For more information related to migrant farm workers, please contact the North Carolina Department of Labor's Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau at **919-707-7820**.

#### High Risk Population

According to the CDC, some people are at **higher risk** of getting very sick with COVID-19. People at high risk should call their doctor if they develop symptoms of fever (100.4 or higher) and cough. You are at higher risk if you:

- Are 65 years or older;
- Live in a nursing home or long-term care facility;
- Have a high-risk condition, including chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, heart disease with complications, compromised immune system, severe obesity with a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher or other underlying medical conditions, such as diabetes, renal failure or liver disease.

Women who are pregnant should be monitored since they are known to be at risk for severe viral illness. To date, data on COVID-19 has not shown increased risk for severe illness due to pregnancy. Although children are generally at lower risk for severe infection, some studies indicate a higher risk among infants.

### Control Measures

**If you are sick with mild symptoms (fever or cough without shortness of breath or difficulty breathing) stay home and call your doctor for medical advice.** When people leave their home with mild symptoms to get tested, they could expose themselves to COVID-19, and if they have COVID-19 they can spread the virus to someone else including people who are high risk and health care workers.

People who are sick with COVID-19 or believe they might have it should stay home and separate themselves from other people in the home as much as possible. They can go back to their normal activities when they can answer **YES** to all the following questions:

- Has it been at least 7 days since you first had symptoms?
- Have you been without fever for three days (72 hours) without any medicine for fever?
- Are your other symptoms improved?

People who have been in close contact with someone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home as much as possible for 14 days and monitor themselves for symptoms. Close contact means within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes. If they start having symptoms of COVID-19, they should practice the same steps as described above.

### Treatment

**At this time, no vaccine for COVID-19 is available and no specific treatment for COVID-19 has been approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA).**

Jones County Health Department continues to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and is closely working with local, state and federal partners to provide the most current guidance and information. As of today, the Health Department has been notified that 23 Jones County residents have been tested for COVID-19, of which 16 test results were negative and 7 test results are still outstanding. **Currently, there are no positive cases in Jones County, but this could change at any time as COVID-19 testing is on-going and test results continue to come in.**

For more information on the coronavirus, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>) and the North Carolina Division of Public Health Coronavirus call line (1-866-462-3821) or (<https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/diseases/COVID19.html>). Jones County Health Department also is a source of information (252-448-9111) or <http://www.jonescountyhealth.com/>.

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