

Jones County Health Department

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For Immediate Release

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North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) Issues New Guidance Regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19) Press Release #4

Trenton, NC – The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has issued new guidance for Local Health Departments conducting contact tracing and follow-up during the COVID-19 pandemic and guidance for discontinuation of home isolation for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases. *There are no positive COVID-19 cases in Jones County at this time.*

As you are aware, there is now documentation of community transmission of COVID-19 in North Carolina. Community transmission is defined as the spread of an illness for which the source of the infection is unknown or cannot be directly traced back to a known exposure. Community transmission and North Carolina data is indicating that the state is moving into the acceleration phase of the pandemic. NCDHHS recognizes that moving into widespread transmission will impact the local health department's ability to perform contact tracing and follow-up for each individual case. In order to best protect the health of our residents and ensure that resources are being used efficiently, NCDHHS would like local health departments to not focus on contact tracing and follow-up for each individual case but prioritize their work to include managing cases and outbreaks in high-risk settings.

Although individual contact tracing is no longer required, to the extent possible our staff will attempt to identify contacts with positive COVID-19 cases to ensure they receive appropriate care and treatment, and to prevent further transmission of the virus.

NCDHHS has issued guidance on when individuals who have a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case can discontinue home isolation. The individual must isolate themselves until the below conditions are met:

- At least 7 days since symptom onset

AND

- 72 hours or greater after symptoms have resolved (absence of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication and improvement in respiratory symptoms).

Jones County Health Department continues to work with local, state and federal partners to share updated guidance and information in the event of an outbreak in Jones County. At this time, Jones County Health Department is not routinely testing for COVID-19; however, we can work with your provider to determine if a test is right for you. Currently, COVID-19 testing is available as needed, and it is not necessary for everyone to be tested for COVID-19 at this time.

If you begin to show mild signs and symptoms (fever or cough), stay at home and call your regular medical provider. If you do not have a medical provider and are not feeling well, call your nearest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) / Community Health Center (which can be found by clicking on the following link:

https://npidb.org/organizations/ambulatory_health_care/federally-qualified-health-center-fqhc_261qf0400x/nc), Urgent Care or Emergency Room.

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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