



News Release

March 24, 2020

For Immediate Release

For More Information:

Andrea Whitmarsh, Public Information Officer

518-873-3546 | andrea.whitmarsh@essexcountyny.gov

Fourth Case of COVID-19 Confirmed in Essex County; Limited Testing Underscores Importance of Staying Home

Elizabethtown, NY. Another case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in Essex County, bringing the total number of positive cases to four. The University of Vermont Health Network – Elizabethtown Community Hospital tested the individual, who traveled domestically and has since been home, self-isolating. Contact tracing activities have begun, with health department staff identifying and reaching out to anyone who may have had interaction with the confirmed case. Any person who may have an exposure risk will receive information and guidance from the Essex County Health Department (ECHD).

“The lower number of confirmed cases in Essex County is very likely the result of reduced access to tests, which is occurring throughout the region” stated Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for Essex County. “We know that we are now facing community spread, so the potential for exposure is a reality for everyone, regardless of travel or other risk factors. The best way to protect yourself, your family, and your neighbors is to stay home as much as possible, minimize your interactions with others by practicing social distancing, and maintain hand hygiene.”

The guidelines related to COVID-19 testing criteria are changing and becoming more stringent. Residents who are experiencing symptoms should call their doctor, and if the criteria is met, testing will be ordered. Because testing may be delayed, it’s important that everyone follow the recommendations from the New York State Department of Health and the Essex County Health Department to work together to stay home, ‘flatten the curve’, and ensure our healthcare system isn’t stretched beyond capacity.

“The practice of isolating individuals who are showing symptoms or who are confirmed to have COVID-19 is an important tool in slowing the spread of this virus and reducing the pressure on our healthcare system”, Beers added. “Doctors are advising suspect cases to self-isolate, because for most people, illness with COVID-19 can be managed at home, further preserving healthcare resources and limiting the potential exposure to others. Individuals at higher risk for severe illness, like older adults and those with chronic conditions, should be more vigilant in monitoring their symptoms, calling their healthcare provider or 9-1-1 if worsening illness occurs”.

Residents who are showing symptoms of COVID-19 should follow the directions of their doctor, which may include: staying home and self-isolating; using a separate bathroom from household members; staying at least six feet away from other household members; resting; staying hydrated and refraining from having any visitors into the home.

For general questions regarding COVID-19, individuals can contact the state Department of Health hotline at 1-888-364-3065 or visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

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