



**Woodford County
Health Department**

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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March 15, 2020

Dear Willow Hill United Methodist Church members,

As you are well aware, a member of your congregation tested positive for COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) on Friday, March 13, 2020. There are HIPPA guidelines that all public health and medical providers have to follow per federal law. That being said, the Woodford County Health Department (WCHD) has and will continue to be as transparent as possible with information we can share with you.

In regards to this patient, you are considered at minimal risk as a member of your church congregation. The patient was not symptomatic when attending any church related activities. Per state and federal disease investigation protocols, WCHD has worked with the patient to identify medium to high risk contact individuals.

Our overall goal is to prevent the spread of illness. We need your assistance in following local, state and federal messaging regarding social distancing. We understand our community is on high alert and we are following guidance from the CDC and our partners at Illinois Department of Public Health.

If you start to feel ill and you are showing signs of symptoms including fever, cough and shortness of breath, please call your healthcare provider to discuss further. WCHD is asking you take proper precaution as this is community spread and to follow these guidelines as to not overwhelm our healthcare systems.

The Woodford County Health Department has plans in place for public health emergencies and we are following our protocols. Our agency is working with our tri-county partners including Peoria, Tazewell Health Departments, UnityPoint Health, OSF Healthcare and Advocate Eureka Hospital.

The care and safety of residents is our highest priority. All partners organizations involved remain fully prepared to respond to COVID-19 cases. Public health and hospital systems maintain highly trained infection control teams, specialized equipment and protocols consistent with the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Residents are encouraged to learn more about the steps you can take to protect yourself and your family from being exposed to the virus:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Thank you for taking this situation seriously and following the guidance provided by our federal and state partners. We appreciate the cooperation of our residents to assist in protecting and reducing the spread of illness. This is a changing environment and our agency is working around the clock to continue to identify medium and high risk patients, provide information to prevent the spread of illness, and working with our community partners to assist our residents in a time of need.

Sincerely,



Hillary Aggertt, Administrator
Woodford County Health Department