

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 27, 2020

Contact: Mimi Taylor, PIO
Office: (208) 521-6722

First Case of COVID-19 Confirmed in Bonneville County

(SE Idaho) – Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) and Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center (EIRMC) have confirmed the first positive case of COVID-19 in Bonneville County. The individual is a male over the age of 60. He recently returned from travel out of the country. Upon his return, he self-isolated due to his recent travel and within several days become symptomatic. As soon as he presented to EIRMC for care, the patient was isolated and droplet precautions were followed to ensure the safety of patients, colleagues, and visitors. He was ill enough to require hospitalization. During his inpatient stay, his condition improved, and he was well enough to be discharged. He is currently recovering at home and is self-isolating.

Epidemiologists with EIPH have begun an investigation. If other people are found to be exposed, health officials will contact them, provide them guidance, and monitor them closely for symptoms.

Additional case-specific information about this individual is confidential and will not be released.

EIRMC consistently has protocols in place to care for patients with infectious diseases and they have been preparing diligently for COVID-19. EIRMC continues to reinforce infection prevention protocols and works in partnership with Eastern Idaho Public Health.

Because of limited testing supplies nationwide, testing for COVID-19 has been prioritized for specific populations. Having a positive COVID-19 test doesn't change what a person would do if sick: self-isolate until symptoms resolve, use fever-reducing medications, increase fluids and rest. It is always recommended to visit the emergency room (ER) or call 911 only if respiratory illness is significant enough to need emergency care.

To stay healthy and slow the spread of COVID-19, there are simple actions we can all take. These actions include:

- Following the Stay at Home order which was announced by Governor Brad Little on Wednesday, March 25. A copy of the order can be found here: www.EIPH.Idaho.gov.
- Practicing self-distancing (maintaining at least 6 feet between individuals) and avoiding non-essential travel, as detailed in the order.
- Staying home if sick. A symptom monitoring checklist and Decision Tree was recently developed to help people and/or employers determine what they should do if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have been primarily or secondarily exposed to a person with COVID-19 symptoms. A copy of these documents can be found here: www.EIPH.IDaho.gov.

-More-

- Covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces, washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, using hand sanitizer, and limiting close contact with people who are sick.

For questions, guidance, and information about COVID-19, please visit EIPH's website at www.EIPH.Idaho.gov. You can also follow us on Facebook at @EIPH.Idaho.

We also have a hotline number that can be reached by calling 208-522-0310 or 855-533-3160 (toll free). The hotline is active Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We can be reached on weekends via email from our website at www.EIPH.Idaho.gov.

Media questions can be directed to Mimi Taylor, Eastern Idaho Public Health, at 208-521-6722 or Coleen Niemann, Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, at 208-821-7021.

#