



Public Health Idaho North Central District



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tara Macke

PHONE: (208) 799-3100

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HEADLINE: Public Health – Idaho North Central District Announces First Positive Case of Novel Coronavirus

LEWISTON, IDAHO –Public Health – Idaho North Central District (PH-INCD) has confirmed the first positive case of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in an adult under the age of 60 in Nez Perce County.

The investigation into this new case is in the preliminary stages. The individual is home recovering and did not require hospitalization.

The patient’s healthcare provider acted appropriately with ruling out influenza, discussing exposure risk, and appropriately determining that a COVID-19 test was necessary. Clinical specimens were then collected and sent to a commercial laboratory, where laboratory testing indicated infection with COVID-19.

Epidemiologists with PH-INCD will work to determine reasonable risk criteria for locations visited by this patient and any close contacts of that individual who were possibly exposed. If other people are found to have possibly been exposed, public health officials will provide guidance to them and will monitor them closely for symptoms.

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

“We know the novel Coronavirus is causing concern and uncertainty in our communities. There are personal actions you can take to stay healthy”, said Carol Moehrle, Director. These actions include:

- Avoid non-essential travel if possible.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs using a disinfecting solution.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.

PH-INCD, in collaboration with key stakeholders, are monitoring the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation very closely both domestically and internationally. We are working with hospitals, healthcare providers, county emergency managers, first responders, schools, local and state governments. We have taken many steps to prepare our agencies for this and feel confident in our efforts to respond.

It is currently flu and respiratory illness season, and flu activity is still high and expected to continue for a number of weeks. Public health officials recommend taking everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus. In order to slow the spread of the virus, the general public should refer to the updated guidance on mass gatherings. Please visit www.cdc.gov for additional information on mass gatherings.

For more information about the novel coronavirus please visit www.idahopublichealth.com or <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/> or call our Public Health Hotline at 1-866-736-6632.