Plattsburgh, March 29, 2020. CCHD has learned that an individual who was ill and later tested and confirmed positive for COVID-19 was active in the community while symptomatic. Through standard contact tracing and with the assistance of the Clinton County Sheriff’s Department, several businesses visited by this individual have been identified. Notification of those with whom this person had contact began on Saturday. Sheriff’s Deputies worked to pinpoint additional dates, locations and times and CCHD staff made phone calls to contacts. Individuals who were considered to have had close contact at Beekmantown Central School, SUNY Plattsburgh, Sawatdee Restaurant, Koto Restaurant, Eclipse Gym, Hannaford and a taxi company have been notified. During the time when this person was symptomatic, several visits were made to Walmart as well. Unfortunately, the case-patient was unable to specify the exact times of day when he went to Walmart, but states he was there most days between 3/11 and 3/24 and that he used self-checkout. The Sheriff’s Department is investigating financial transactions to further track the movements of this individual.

“This incident underscores the critical importance of staying home if ill, even if you have not been tested or do not believe you have COVID-19,” emphasized Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department. “It also represents the enormous challenge of containing a viral illness like COVID-19 without the full cooperation of the community.”

Being in the same location as someone with COVID-19 does not automatically put individuals at risk. The highest risk is associated with close and prolonged (less than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes) contact. Contact of shorter duration or interaction that is not close carries less risk. Having been in the same location without being near someone who is ill with COVID-19, poses a lower risk and is dependent on many factors. “We understand that this information may be of limited comfort for those who fear they might have been exposed” stated Ms. Streiff. “We ask that anyone who experiences symptoms that include cough, fever or shortness of breath, consider themselves likely to have COVID-19. Then, take appropriate steps based upon your symptoms.”

Most people who contract COVID-19 will experience only mild symptoms that can be managed at home. Confer with your healthcare provider and follow their advice for managing symptoms. Shortness of breath that becomes severe, chest pain, or a bluish color in the face or lips are serious symptoms that warrant a call to 9-1-1.

CCHD will continue to share information as it becomes available. To date the total number of lab-confirmed cases in Clinton County is 14 including one inmate at the Clinton Correctional facility. There is additionally one probable case with a lab result of indeterminate. There are numerous suspect cases who are symptomatic but unable to be tested at this time due to the shortage of test kits. Four of the lab confirmed cases have recovered. There have been 0 deaths to date.
About the Clinton County Health Department:

The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at www.clintonhealth.org or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).

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