News Release

Plattsburgh, April 5, 2020. As of mid-day Sunday, 32 positive test results confirming COVID-19 had been received for residents of Clinton County. Additionally one case is considered probable but not listed as confirmed due to indeterminate test results. Other cases are also now being identified based on clinical assessment. There are over 30 of these suspect cases in the County. Cases that are identified as suspect for COVID-19, are treated as though they had received positive test results. All precautions including isolation and contact tracing apply. Negative test results have been received for 229 individuals. As of yesterday seven of the confirmed cases were listed as recovered.

Clinton County Health Department (CCHD), the County’s Office of Emergency Services and municipal leaders report that, over the past few days, they have received multiple phone calls and social media messages about people who are disregarding “stay at home” and social distancing guidance. Complaints of families out shopping together, parties, and children playing in groups have been received, to name a few. All of these activities contradict the direction that has been provided by public health professionals aimed at slowing community spread of COVID-19.

Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at CCHD stated, “These reports are highly disturbing; they keep me awake at night. We have the power to lower the impact that COVID-19 will have on our community. We have a chance to save lives, but only if we all act responsibly.”

Whether people who defy public health recommendations don’t understand or don’t believe is uncertain. After several weeks of being cooped up at home, a desire to have things return to normal could be at play too. Ms. Streiff conceded “In some cases, a parent may have no other option than to bring children when shopping or running other essential errands, but whenever possible residents should solo-shop. If there are two parents in the household, one should remain at home with the children. Groups of friends, and extended family also need to follow the recommendations. Only those who live in the same household, should be together.”

On a more positive note, many businesses have done an exemplary job of safely continuing to provide essential services while following recommendations for slowing the spread of COVID-19. Grocery stores are wiping down carts between uses, placing signage on the floor to space out customers and implementing specified hours for seniors and other vulnerable populations. Storewide announcements and posters are helping consumers follow new policies at retail locations that remain open to shoppers. Other businesses are only accepting call-in or on-line orders and bringing products out to cars. In many locations, customers have been observed intentionally allowing space between themselves and other shoppers, and avoiding aisles with other shoppers in them. COVID-19 has forced the global community to change normal routines and behaviors. Solo-shopping must be part of this new norm.

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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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