News Release

Date: January 9, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Clinton County Health Department Releases 2019-2021 Community Health Assessment

The Clinton County Health Department, along with UVM Health Network-CVPH, its partner in community health assessment and planning, is pleased to announce the release of the 2019-2021 Clinton County Community Health Assessment (CHA). The assessment is a comprehensive report that evaluates and identifies priority issues related to the health and wellbeing of all residents of Clinton County.

After a year’s long process, that included participation by partner organizations and stakeholders from across the county, two top priority health issues have been identified: Prevent Chronic Diseases and Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders. The assessment process included a review of over 300 different health metrics. A survey of community residents added 1,600 local voices to the process. Providers of health, mental health, education and human services, along with representatives of the business community, shared their insight into the state of health in the county via surveys and at a community health priority setting session. Representatives from these sectors joined CCHD and UVMHN-CVPH in a Priority and Focus Area Finalization Process.

The goal of the CHA is to develop shared strategies to address the priority issues and improve the community’s health. These strategies are outlined in a work plan included in the CHA. Specific activities aimed at focus areas within each priority issue will be completed by various partners over the next three years. Healthy Eating and Food Insecurity, Tobacco Prevention and Chronic Disease Preventive Care and Management, along with, Well Being and Mental and Substance Abuse Disorders and Prevention will be addressed.

The priority areas selected for 2019-2021 are the same as those identified in the previous CHA. Mandy Snay, Director of Health Planning & Promotion at the Clinton County Health Department states, “Having both residents and health professionals weigh in and choose the same priority issues speaks to the complexity of these issues and the need to work together for collaborative, lasting solutions. By not changing course, we are able to build off of the great work toward health improvement already happening in our community.”

The Clinton County 2019-2021 Community Health Assessment and the resulting community health improvement plan can be found at clintonhealth.org.

About the Clinton County Health Department:

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FLU CASES CONTINUE TO RISE

Plattsburgh, January 14th, 2020: Cases of influenza, more commonly known as flu, continue to rise in New York State and across the Country. Clinton County Health Department would like to remind residents that it is not too late to get your flu shot. Even in cases where the vaccine does not fully prevent you from getting the flu, it still helps your body fight the virus and you are less likely to end up being hospitalized with flu.

Please also take these precautions to keep yourself and everyone around you healthy:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- If you are sick stay home. People with flu are contagious for up to seven days after symptoms begin.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Do not sneeze or cough directly into uncovered hands.

Those who get the flu should contact their health care provider to determine if they are a candidate for treatment with anti-viral medications. Anti-virals can lessen the severity and duration of the flu. They work best when started within 48 hours of first symptoms.

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###
News Release

Date: February 19th, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

UVHN Elizabethtown Health Center Becomes ‘Breastfeeding Friendly’

Elizabethtown, NY February 4th, 2020 UVHN Elizabethtown Health Center was officially designated as a New York State Breastfeeding Friendly Practice on January 30th, 2020, making them the first designated health care practice in Essex County. UVHN Elizabethtown Health Center was supported in this effort by the Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Communities grant at the Clinton County Health Department.

According to pediatrician and provider champion, Dr. Michael Celotti, “Creating a breastfeeding friendly environment for patients, visitors, and employees is a positive step in ensuring breastfeeding moms feel encouraged and supported.” He adds that “Providing a comfortable space for moms to nurse and pump creates a welcoming atmosphere that promotes healthy behaviors.”

As part of the process, the practice has implemented policies and procedures such as; ongoing staff training, maintaining a breastfeeding friendly office environment and facilitating internal and external referral opportunities for mothers and infants. The practice also promotes a culture within the office that supports breastfeeding as the nature way to feed one’s baby.

The Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Friendly Practice include:
1. Develop and maintain a breastfeeding friendly office policy.
2. Train all staff to be breastfeeding friendly by promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding.
3. Eliminate infant formula and formula company materials from your office.
4. Create a breastfeeding friendly office environment.
5. Discuss breastfeeding benefits, especially exclusive breastfeeding, and the basics of breastfeeding management with women and their families during the prenatal period.
6. Discuss breastfeeding benefits, especially exclusive breastfeeding, and the basics of breastfeeding management with women and their families during the postpartum period.
7. Encourage breastfeeding mothers to feed newborns only breast milk.
8. Teach mother about maintaining lactation when separated from their infants.
9. Identify your local breastfeeding support network and foster collaborative working relationships and referral systems.
10. Provide comprehensive breastfeeding support to new mothers.

-more-
Because of the well-documented health benefits of breastfeeding for infants, children and mothers, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US Department of Health and Human Services recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, with continued breastfeeding as long as mutually desired by mother and infant.

For more information about receiving Breastfeeding Friendly Designation:
https://www.health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/breastfeeding/

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###
News Release

Date: February 27, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Respiratory Illness Preparedness

Plattsburgh, February 27, 2020. As concerns over a novel (new) respiratory illness grow, Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) wants to remind residents that we’ve been practicing for this for years. Not just the Health Department but all of us! We cover our coughs. We wash our hands and stay home when we’re sick. Don’t we?

Messages about standard measures to stop the spread if infection are repeated by CCHD and other public health professionals around the state, the nation, and around the world as the flu season begins and throughout the year. “Sometimes we feel like a broken record,” states Karen Derusha, Supervising Public Health Educator and spokesperson for the department. “Hearing the same message over and over again may get tedious but these simple steps save lives.” Prevention measures for the new (novel) coronavirus, known as COVID-19 are the same as measures used to prevent the spread of flu. At this time, it is still more likely that an individual in the United States will contract flu than become ill with COVID-19.

Local public health partners have been preparing in other ways too. Health departments have Emergency Preparedness Plans that are reviewed and updated routinely. There are Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) that outline when certain day-to-day operations may be suspended, allowing more staff to focus on monitoring and prevention steps. Other organizations, businesses and schools throughout our community have COOPs as well.

Since December, CCHD has been monitoring information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health. Information has been shared with health care providers, and between border patrol, emergency service providers and others. Organizations that are part of the Clinton County Multi-Agency Coordination (CCMAC) group, which meets monthly, have begun reviewing their own plans, as have school districts and other entities. “Systems developed during previous outbreaks such as SARS, MERS, H1N1 and Ebola have helped to prepare us,” states Ms. Derusha. In the meantime, she reminds residents to take these precautions to protect themselves from contracting any respiratory illness.

- Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces that may harbor germs.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is ill.

Take these steps to protect others.

- Cover your cough.
- Sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue away.

-more-

“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”
Clinton County Health Department  
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- Stay home when you are ill.
- Do not return to work, school or attend social activities until your fever is gone for at least 24 hours without use of fever reducing medicines.

Ms. Derusha also notes that “COVID-19 is a new virus. The public health community is working hard to learn all it can about this virus to keep people safe.” That may include asking people to avoid close contact with others. She notes that today is a good day to check your own preparedness plan. Visit https://www.ready.gov/pandemic for tips. “If you had to stay home, would you have sufficient food, water and medication on hand? Generally we advise a 3-10 day supply. That’s a good place to start.”


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###
Interim Guidance for Large Gatherings and Public Spaces During the COVID-19 Outbreak
March 13, 2020

Background:

In December 2019, a new respiratory disease called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was detected in China. COVID-19 is caused by a virus (SARS-CoV-2) that is part of a large family of viruses called coronaviruses. Recently, community-wide transmission of COVID-19 has occurred in the United States, including New York where the number of both persons under investigation and confirmed cases are rapidly increasing.

It is therefore directed that any gathering with 500 or more participants be cancelled or postponed. This guidance is intended to determine whether or not a gathering of 500 or fewer participants can safely continue during the outbreak period.

This guidance is not intended for governmental, medical, educational, retail spaces, or mass transportation facilities, including but not limited to:

- Schools,
- Libraries,
- Government Buildings,
- Hospitals,
- Residential Health Care Facilities,
- Retail Establishments, including:
  - Grocery Stores,
  - Pharmacies,
- Public Transit Facilities:
  - Trains/Railway Stations,
  - Subway Terminals, and
  - Buses and Bus Terminals.

Large gatherings and public spaces within the scope of this guidance include, but are not limited to:

- Theaters,
- Auditoriums,
- Concerts,
- Conferences,
- Worship services,
- Sporting events,
- Restaurants,
- Bars,
- Gaming establishments, and
- Physical fitness centers.

Members of the public who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, troubled breathing) or susceptible to infectious illnesses (e.g. older adults and people with serious chronic medical conditions, such as lung disease, heart disease, diabetes) should not attend large gatherings.
Guidance:

Effective March 13, 2020 at 5:00PM, organizers hosting large gatherings must postpone or cancel any events with in-person attendance of more than 500 participants.

Effective March 13, 2020 at 5:00PM, private and public operators of establishments or organizers of events with fewer than 500 occupants or attendees must operate at no more than 50% of their maximum occupancy.

There are limited exceptions to the restrictions prescribed in this guidance. Specifically, businesses that are not gathering places can seek an exemption from the State Commissioner of Health that would allow for capacity in excess of these limits, if appropriate social distance can be maintained and the risk of viral transmission is low. Please call the New York State Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline at 1-888-364-3065 with specific questions about your establishment or event.

For all other gatherings or public spaces, private and public organizers and operators shall:

- **Promote messages that discourage people who are sick from attending or visiting:** This should include messages requesting that people leave if they begin to have symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. They should seek medical advice promptly by calling ahead to a doctor’s office or emergency room prior to a medical evaluation.

- **Review existing plans and procedures:** Private and public operators or small event organizers should review their existing emergency plans and procedures for outbreak response to ensure plans meet the needs of the current and anticipated state of COVID-19 outbreak. Planning considerations include but are not limited to protection of staff and patrons, planning for staff absenteeism and supply chain interruptions. Develop new contingency plans if gaps are found in the current plans. Private and public operators and small event organizers should engage with key stakeholders and partners in the planning process. These partners include the local health department, community leaders, law enforcement, hospitals, emergency and first responders and vendors.

- **Consult state and local officials about local preparedness and response capacities:** Work closely with local public health officials to assess local capacities related to healthcare and law enforcement in the area. During a COVID-19 outbreak, resource limitations among local healthcare systems and/or law enforcement can influence the decision to modify, postpone or cancel your events. If it is determined local capacities are already limited by the COVID-19 outbreak and may be further strained by the event, private and
public operators and small event organizers should provide an alternate method for event delivery, postpone, or cancel.

- **Use alternative event delivery**: Private and public operators and small event organizers should consider and, if possible, develop alternative ways for participants to attend or participate in the event, such as by television, radio, or online. Large meetings may be conducted remotely by phone or video conferencing. Concert organizers may choose to offer a paid video stream for attendees wishing to watch from home. Places of worship may choose to offer a video or audio broadcast or stream for congregation members. Organizers of sporting events that are not already broadcast may research the feasibility of offering that option. Depending on available technology, video streaming options may be available at little to no cost for event organizers.

- **If a small event proceeds with in-person participation, use procedures for community containment strategies**: Train staff on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Event organizers should ensure that all event staff are trained on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If any staff feel they have these symptoms, and possible exposure to COVID-19 they should call their healthcare provider. Staff should stay home if they are sick. The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, or trouble breathing.

- **Train all staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene**: Small event organizers should take steps to ensure that all event staff are trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene. Proper personal hygiene is a good preventative measure for all respiratory illnesses including COVID-19.

**Hand Hygiene:**
Signage with handwashing procedures should be posted in prominent locations promoting hand hygiene. Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:
- Before and after eating.
- After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing.
- After using the restroom.
- Before handling food.
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated.
- After using shared equipment and supplies like electronic equipment such as keyboards, mice and phones.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers by children should always be supervised by adults.

**Respiratory Hygiene:**
- Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or the bend of elbow.
• Disposing of soiled tissues immediately after use.

- **Plan for staff absences:** Event staff need to stay home when they are sick, or they may need to stay home to care for a sick household member or care for their children in the event of school dismissals. Identify critical job functions and positions and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff.

- **Make reasonable accommodations for workers:** Persons with underlying health conditions or older adults are considered to be at increased risk for severe illness and complications from COVID-19. Event organizers can consider reassigning duties for high-risk staff in order to have minimal contact with other persons. People in high-risk groups should consult with their healthcare provider about attending large events.

- **Provide prevention supplies at your events:** Plan to have extra supplies on hand for event staff and participants to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including sinks with soap, hand sanitizers, tissues, and disposable masks.

  **Disposable masks should be kept on-site and used only if someone (worker or attendee) becomes sick at your event.** Those who become sick should be immediately isolated from staff and participants who are not sick and given a clean disposable facemask to wear while awaiting medical attention.

- **Identify a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill at the event:** Designate a space for staff and participants who may become sick and cannot leave the event immediately. Work with partners, such as local hospitals, to create a plan for treating staff and participants who do not live nearby. Include a plan for separating and caring for vulnerable populations.


Local health department contact information can be found at: https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/index.htm

News Release

Date: March 16, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: CCHD 518-565-4840 or UVM-CVPH

Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Plattsburgh, March 16, 2020. Clinton County is closely monitoring the spread of coronavirus and today has confirmed a case of COVID-19 in Clinton County. The individual is receiving appropriate medical care. Health Department staff are working to identify those who may have come in contact with this individual prior to testing and will notify any person who may be at risk to provide information and guidance.

CCHD is reminding residents to practice social distancing which includes remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others. John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County further states “to the extent possible, people should stay home. Limiting exposure will slow the spread of the virus and prevent a sudden spike in cases that would potentially exceed the healthcare systems capacity to treat patients with or without COVID-19.”

Most people, even if they have been exposed and become ill, will only experience mild symptoms. These should be monitored and reported to a health care provider, especially if they include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. As with any other illness, if symptoms are severe, call 911. Mr. Kanoza also asked that residents help to support individuals and families affected by COVID-19, as well as the larger community by following recommendations offered by health care providers and public health partners.

While there is currently no vaccine to prevent the virus, these simple steps can help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses:

- Visit the grocery store or pharmacy at slow hours, where the number of people are reduced.
- Practice social distancing and avoid handshakes.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available then use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick. If you need to see a health care provider, call first.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from other people to help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The Clinton County Health Department continues to work diligently, along with our community partners and New York State agencies, to contain and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the county.

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###
Media Alert

Date: March 18, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

COVID 19 Media Conference

Clinton County Public Health Partners to Discuss Resources Available to Residents.

Plattsburgh, March 18, 2020, Clinton County Health Department, 133 Margaret Street. A media conference is scheduled to take place in the 2nd floor meeting room today at 3:00 PM. Media outlets are invited to attend. The event will also be live streamed via Facebook.

Attendance by the following has been confirmed. Additional partners may also be in attendance.

- Clinton County Department of Social Services
- Clinton County Office of Emergency Services
- North Country Chamber of Commerce
- United Way of the Adirondack Region
- University of Vermont – CVPH Medical Center
- Clinton County Health Department

When you arrive, please keep social distancing in mind and allow 6 feet of separation between seated individuals.

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###

"Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations"
News Release

Date: March 19, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Another Case of COVID-19 Confirmed in Clinton County

Plattsburgh, March 19, 2020. A second case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in Clinton County. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) learned of this case on Wednesday evening and immediately began the process of contact tracing. Staff are identifying and reaching out to all individuals who may have had close contact with the infected individual. Any person who may be at risk will receive information and guidance from CCHD. This case is not connected to the first identified case. The individual is isolated at home.

“This brings the total number of confirmed cases in Clinton County to two with another case in Essex County,” states John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County. “While not unexpected, these local confirmed cases should remind us how important it is to follow the recommended steps, such as social distancing, to prevent illness and contain the spread of COVID-19.”

For most people, COVID-19 produces mild symptoms. Certain individuals, however, including older adults and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk. Stopping or slowing the spread of COVID-19 can save lives. With or without testing, there are steps we can take.

“If you think you may have come in contact with a person who is sick with COVID-19, please self-quarantine by staying at home,” states Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for the Clinton County Health Department. “If you are ill with symptoms that include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, self-isolate at home. Separate yourself from other family members by using a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible. Family members of sick individuals should also self-quarantine. Residents with severe or life-threatening illness should immediately call 9-1-1.”

If you have been determined to be a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19, Clinton County Health Department will contact you directly. Additional guidance about stopping the spread of COVID-19 can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html.

The Clinton County Health Department is working alongside our community partners, state and federal agencies, and residents to contain and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the county.

—more—
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###
**News Release**

**Date:** March 19, 2020  
**For Immediate Release**  
**Contact:** 518-565-4840

**Stay Home, Save Lives!**

**Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 and Protect Family, Friends and Neighbors**

**Plattsburgh, March 19, 2020.** With a second confirmed case of COVID-19 identified in Clinton County, health officials are reiterating the importance of staying home. This is a critical step in slowing the spread of COVID-19 in our region.

"Stay home, save lives! The message bears repeating," states Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department. "We recognize that social distancing is not always easy, but we cannot emphasize enough, how important this action is in slowing the spread of COVID-19."

Those who are ill or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or someone who has tested positive for the illness, must stay home. Self-quarantine or staying at home if you have been in contact with someone who is sick, helps others stay healthy. "As a community, we need to protect each other. We need to ensure that our health care workers stay well and we need to slow the spread of infection so that hospital resources are not overwhelmed by a large influx of patients," notes Ms. Streiff.

CCHD is working diligently, along with local, state and federal public health partners to keep the public as safe as possible. Other community partners are working together to address needs associated with school and business closures, reductions in the workforce and the sense of social isolation that may accompany “stay at home” directives. “This is not an easy time,” states Director of Public Health, John Kanoza, “but we will get through it together. We all have a role in safeguarding the health and well-being of Clinton County residents and our North Country neighbors.”

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###

*Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations*
New COVID-19 Case Confirmed in Clinton County

Plattsburgh, March 20, 2020. A third case of COVID-19 has been identified in Clinton County. The female, in her thirties, was identified as a direct contact of the second confirmed case. Since that time, she has been quarantined at home to limit the possibility of spreading the virus to others. The individual is now isolated at home and contact tracing by the Clinton County Health Department will begin. If you are identified as a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19, Clinton County Health Department will contact you directly.

“We anticipate that the number of cases in our region will continue to rise,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health for Clinton County. Our hospital, emergency services personnel and health care professionals are prepared to handle this crisis, however, we must all do our part to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Our goal is to slow the number of new cases so that local resources can keep pace.”

For most people, COVID-19 will produce mild symptoms. Certain individuals, however, including older adults and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk. Director of Health Care Services, Erin Streiff stressed, “Those who are ill or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or someone who has tested positive for the illness, must stay home. Stay home also if you have been in contact with anyone who is sick. She further advised “Even those who are well, should stay at home as much as possible.”

Mr. Kanoza added, “We need to shield those who are most vulnerable from this virus and we need to ensure that our health care workers stay well. Slowing the spread of COVID-19 will save lives.” Additional guidance about minimizing the spread of COVID-19 can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html.

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###
COVID-19 Numbers Continue to Change as Fourth Case Identified in Clinton County

Plattsburgh, March 220, 2020. As another case of COVID-19 is confirmed in Clinton County, numbers reported on the NYS Department of Health website are causing some confusion. As of yesterday, Clinton County had 3 positive cases, but the NYSDOH was reporting four. One individual who used to reside in Plattsburgh is listed within the Clinton County count, even though they had previously moved from the region. The person had not updated their license information with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Today, March 22nd, CCHD has been notified of another positive test result bringing the total number of cases in Clinton County to four (although the NYSDOH site will say five).

This most recently confirmed case is isolating at home. The individual, is a male in his fifties who was identified for testing through the Health Department’s contact tracing process. He was determined to have had close contact with the second case and was tested for that reason.

“As we see spread in our community, it becomes even more important that residents continue to take steps to slow the spread of COVID-19.” stressed Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for Clinton County Health Department.

“Our federal, state and local partners have taken unprecedented steps to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. Individuals and businesses need to comply with the directives that have been issued. Residents who are well should stay home except to take care of essential needs. Businesses that have been advised to close, must do so. And, businesses that are deemed essential and are remaining open, need to examine customer service practices so that the health and well-being of their employees are protected.”

For most people, COVID-19 will produce mild symptoms. Certain individuals, however, including older adults and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk. Those who are ill or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or someone who has tested positive for the illness, must stay home. Stay home also if you have been in contact with anyone who is sick. Other individuals should stay at home with limited exceptions such as shopping for food, picking up medications or going to medical appointments.

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###
A Message from the Clinton County Legislature:
“Be prepared, not scared.”

Dear Friends:

This is an unsettling time for our country and our community as we are in a public health emergency due to the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Your elected leaders and public health officials are working around the clock to slow the spread of the virus and provide care to those who need it. It is important to remember that we need to be prepared, not scared. Heed the advice of public health experts who agree that the most effective way to “flatten the curve” or slow the spread of the virus, is to practice social distancing. Below is some helpful information regarding COVID-19:

How can you be infected?
- Coronavirus can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Because these droplets can travel up to six feet, public health experts advise maintaining six feet of distance from others.
- The virus can also remain on a surface or object and enter the body through the mouth, nose, or eyes. This is why it is important to wash your hands before touching your face.

How long does it take to show symptoms after being infected?
- It takes 2 to 14 days to develop symptoms after exposure to the virus. The average is about 5 days.

What are the symptoms?
- Fever
- Dry cough
- Shortness of breath

When should you seek testing?
- If you are exhibiting symptoms
- If you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus
- If you have recently traveled to one of the high-risk countries

Except in the case of an emergency, please call your healthcare provider before seeking treatment in person.

While it is normal to feel anxious, there are ways to take control of the situation and be prepared. I urge you to take the following precautions to keep yourself and our community safe.
- Wash your hands often and for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Avoid physical contact like handshakes and hugs
- Stay home if you feel sick
- Avoid large crowds
- Abstain from unnecessary travel

What is the difference between “Safer at Home” and “social distancing”?

Safer at home is a stricter form of social distancing. There are some differences. Safer at home means:
- Stay home (stay unexposed and do not expose others)
- Only go out for essential services
- Stay six feet or more away from others
- Don’t gather in groups

It is important during this national emergency that we unite as a community, follow the advice of experts and take responsibility for our actions to #SlowTheSpread of coronavirus. For more information, visit coronavirus.health.ny.gov or call the NYS Novel Coronavirus Hotline at 1-888-364-3065.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Henry
Chairperson
News Release

Date: March 23, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

COVID-19 Case Update for Clinton County,

Plattsburgh, March 23, 2020. One of the more common questions that residents have been asking involves the current number of cases in our community. Clinton County Health Department has issued press releases with each of the first four cases in the County. There are now seven cases of COVID-19 and it is anticipated that, just as in other locales, this number will begin to rise more quickly. For this reason, CCHD will be providing a once-a-day case count along with other relevant information. The count will be updated by the day rather than by each newly confirmed test.

For today, March 23, 2020 the total number of confirmed cases among Clinton County residents is seven. Additionally, CCHD has shared that seventy-one individuals are quarantined, eleven of whom have a history of travel that warrants quarantine. Eleven other individuals are in isolation due to illness. So far, fifty-seven tests have come back negative.

John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County shared his appreciation for the sacrifices that residents are making to help protect our community. “It’s not easy to stay at home, especially if you are feeling well, but it is necessary.”

Guidance for anyone who is feeling sick includes staying home except to get medical care. This step is critical to reducing community spread of COVID-19. Other steps include separating yourself from other people in your home, cleaning commonly touched surfaces and monitoring your symptoms.

“Most people who become infected with COVID-19 will have symptoms that can be managed at home,” states Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services for Clinton County Health Department. “If you develop symptoms such as difficulty breathing; pain or pressure in the chest; new confusion or inability to arouse (wake-up); bluish lips or face call 9-1-1 and advise the call center if you suspect COVID-19 is the cause.”

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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News Release

COVID-19 3-24-20 Case Update

Plattsburgh, March 24, 2020. As of Tuesday afternoon, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is reporting eight confirmed cases of COVID-19; seven of these cases are community residents. Earlier today, CCHD received laboratory results for an eighth case. This individual is an inmate at Clinton Correctional Facility. CCHD has been in contact with Clinton Correctional Facility, the NYS Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS). All entities are focused on ensuring the health and well-being of the community.

To date, seventy-two tests have come back negative. Seventy-nine residents are in quarantine without symptoms and thirteen are isolated due to symptoms or positive test results. Many more individuals are also self-quarantining or self-isolating based upon general recommendations for anyone who suspects they may have been exposed or are having symptoms, even if they have not been tested.

In previous media releases, CCHD reported the number of tests pending. Ms. Erin Streiff, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department, explained that the only numbers that CCHD can reliably share at this point are the number of positive and negative test results for residents of the County. “This is not just a local outbreak. Testing is happening outside the County which may include tests for our residents. In addition, other sites are testing and those tests are not always reported to CCHD as they are done. The results that CCHD receives through the NYS Electronic Clinical Laboratory Report System (ECLRS) consist of tests that are confirmed positive or negative.”

Community efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 continue to be our best defense. With limited exceptions for those providing essential services, residents are reminded to stay home as much as possible.

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”