

Public Health Announces Additional Positive Case of Coronavirus in Delaware

DOVER (March 15, 2020) – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is announcing one additional positive case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The case involves a New Castle County woman under the age of 30. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is no longer requiring presumptive positive results to go through CDC for confirmatory testing, and that all presumptive positives up to this date are considered confirmed.

The individual is not severely ill and is currently self-isolated at home. The individual is connected to the University of Delaware community. The source of her exposure is still under investigation. Epidemiologists from the Division of Public Health are working to identify any close contacts of the individuals who were possibly exposed. If other people are found to have possibly been exposed, state health officials will provide guidance to these individuals and monitor them closely for the development of symptoms. DPH will not be disclosing additional information about the individual.

“Because of the nature of this disease, we know that we are going to continue to see an increased number of cases in Delaware. This announcement brings Delaware’s total positive cases to seven,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay. “With the amount of test samples that health care systems and providers across the state are submitting to the Delaware Public Health Lab and to commercial labs, the numbers of patients being tested have increased significantly. We want to make sure that we are giving the most accurate information to the public, so going forward we will only be releasing the number of positive cases

in Delaware.”

Symptoms of COVID-19 are most similar to lower respiratory infections with patients having fever, cough, and shortness of breath. There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19 infection at this time. While in some cases illnesses can be severe and require hospitalization, many individuals infected with COVID-19 recover by resting, drinking plenty of liquids and taking pain, and fever-reducing medications.

Testing for coronavirus disease is not recommended for individuals who do not have any symptoms of illness. For individuals who have symptoms of illness (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) testing is being run at both the Delaware Public Health Lab as well as commercial labs. Medical providers should evaluate patients and rule out other causes of illness first before recommending testing for COVID-19.

While testing for the disease at the Public Health Lab requires DPH approval, providers do not need DPH approval to submit test samples to commercial labs. With the addition of commercial lab testing now available, Delaware has enough capacity to accommodate its current testing needs. Providers only need to collect nose swabs as they would for flu to submit samples for testing. Commercial labs are required to report testing and results to DPH.

Delawareans with questions about COVID-19 or their exposure risk can call the Division of Public Health’s Coronavirus Call Center at 1-866-408-1899, or 711 for individuals who are hearing impaired, from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, or email DPHCall@delaware.gov. The DPH Call center does not have test results. Individuals awaiting test results should wait to hear back from their medical provider. For the latest on Delaware’s response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For more information, visit de.gov/coronavirus.