



Macon County
Public Health

Public Information

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Press Release

Macon County Public Health Identifies a Cluster in a County Department

Macon County Public Health has identified a cluster of employees at the Macon County Sheriff's Office who have tested positive for COVID-19. A cluster is defined as a minimum of 5 cases with illness onset or positive results within a 14-day period. All staff who have potentially been exposed to these individuals have been contacted and will be tested for COVID-19.

In addition to Macon County Sheriff's Office staff, MCPH is working to identify any additional close contacts of these individuals. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time of 15 minutes or longer. Based on information provided by each staff person, county health officials will assess risks of exposure, determine which if any additional measures are needed such as temperature and symptom checks, quarantine and/or testing. MCPH's Medical Director and Macon County Sheriff's Office are working together to limit the spread of COVID-19 among staff and the community.

The entire state of North Carolina is under a "Safer at Home" executive order, currently under phase 2.5 with masks required to be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19; however, anyone of any age can become infected with this illness. Therefore, we ask that community members **strictly follow** the governor's orders and continue to practice **social distancing**, as well as safe hygiene measures such as hand washing and frequently cleaning touched objects and surfaces. The public can monitor the different phases of re-opening and learn more about the restrictions at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance>.

It is important to make sure the information you are getting about COVID-19 is coming directly from reliable sources. For more information, please visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and NCDHHS' website at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus, which also includes future positive COVID-19 test results in North Carolina.

MCPH regularly updates our Facebook page with accurate and current information regarding COVID-19; we encourage the public to check our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MaconPublicHealth for up-to-date information.

Symptoms for COVID-19 are fever, cough, other lower respiratory illness (shortness of breath). If you believe that you may have COVID-19, please call the Health Department at 828-349-2517. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am – 4:00pm, closing daily for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm, until further notice.

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