



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2020

Nathaniel Pecina, Public Information Specialist - Ellis County TX

(512) 507.5879

nathaniel.pecina@co.ellis.tx.us

Message From Ellis County Judge Todd Little

Ellis County Identifies First Presumptive Positive of COVID-19

It is imperative as a county that we seek out the facts and information that are being delivered to us by national and state professionals. As stated in today's press conference, information is changing by the hour in Ellis County and throughout Texas.

At 7:15 pm, we were notified by our Local Health Authority that they have identified the first presumptive positive case of COVID-19 within the county. A Maypearl woman in her 70's recently went into the hospital to test for a stroke and began to meet the criteria of COVID-19, where she was then administered a test. The patient along with her family will be isolated in their home and monitored by DSHS. The state is currently in contact with any potential residents that might have come in contact with the patient.

The presumptive positive case has no former travel history neither domestic or international. This confirms that there is community spread of COVID-19 within Ellis County. The immediate risk of transmission in Ellis County remains low, however, we are requesting the full support of every member of the County to come together and do their part to protect our families, our neighbors, and those most vulnerable within our communities.

Ellis County has planned for this situation and has taken preventative actions to minimize the risks of COVID-19 in the community. Earlier today, I issued a community gathering restriction order prohibiting both public and private community gatherings of more than 50 people and urged residents to refrain from non-essential community gatherings. This order **does not** include Restaurants, Grocery Stores, Retail Establishments, and Essential Services.

According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness for COVID-19 cases. These include symptoms of fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, viral pneumonia, and acute respiratory distress

syndrome (ARDS) which can lead to permanent damage and or death. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

As a reminder, the CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Consult CDC's travel website for any travel advisories and steps to protect yourself if you plan to travel outside of the US.

For more information on COVID 19 and Ellis County, please visit:

<https://co.ellis.tx.us/948/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>

Todd Little
Ellis County Judge & Emergency Management Director

###