



For Immediate Release: April 7, 2020

On April 7, 2020, the Richland County Health Department was notified by the Montana State Public Health Laboratory of a positive case of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in an individual residing in Richland County. The individual is a male in their 40's. The case investigation is ongoing. The Richland County case was tested at Sidney Health Center. In accordance with Federal law, the Department will not release any other identifying information about the positive case to protect the individual's personal privacy.

The Richland County Health Department is working with the individual to identify close contacts, and provide recommendations to self-isolate based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control. The Department will be calling the named contacts as soon as possible with instructions to help protect them and their families.

Only those people who meet the definition of a close contact will receive calls. A contact to a positive case is considered to be a person with whom the case spent at least an hour in close contact, generally defined as 6 feet or less apart. These individuals may or may not be tested, but will be asked to isolate and monitor themselves for the development of symptoms.

It is extremely important for those who may have been exposed to follow self-isolation and monitoring recommendations given by health officials to prevent further spread of COVID-19 in our community. It is important that people who are not named as close contacts and are not sick do not go to the clinic or hospital seeking coronavirus testing.

It is extremely important for all Richland County residents to follow recommendations from the Health Department and the Governor to stay home as much as possible and avoid contact with others outside of the home, especially if you are not feeling well. This includes non-essential travel outside of Richland County.

At this time, residents should continue to be vigilant in practicing the standard precautions for avoiding the spread of communicable diseases, including COVID-19. These are practicing social distancing, including cancelling or postponing large gatherings, avoiding handshakes, washing hands frequently, do not touch your face, cleaning and sanitizing frequently-touched surfaces, and importantly, staying home when you are sick, and as recommended by health officials.

CONTINUED



The symptoms of COVID-19 include a fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing. If you are experiencing these or other flu-like symptoms, please stay home. If you are sick enough to require medical care, call your healthcare provider. If you do not have a healthcare provider, you may call the Sidney Health Center Walk-In Clinic at 406-488-3963.

If you have questions about COVID-19 or believe that you have been exposed, you may call the Coronavirus Information Line at 406-433-6947.