MEDIA RELEASE

Canton City Public Health

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For Immediate Release

Canton City Public Health Reports First Presumptive Positive Case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Stark County

CANTON, OH – Canton City Public Health (CCPH) has been notified of a "presumptive positive" test result for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) at Mercy Medical Center in a resident of Stark County. This is the first presumptive positive result for Stark County. CCPH is working to identify any close contacts of this resident who would require testing or monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.

CCPH along with Alliance City, Massillon City and Stark County Health departments, our hospitals, healthcare providers and community partners have been actively preparing to respond to possible cases of COVID-19 in our community. "We are working closely with the Ohio Department of Health, following protocols and guidance in place, to identify close contacts of this individual who will be instructed to self-quarantine, and public health will monitor for 14 days," said Jim Adams, Health Commissioner. "Our focus right now is to support the care of this individual and protect the health of our residents."

"The news of a COVID-19 case in our county is not a surprise. We have been planning and preparing to respond to cases when they occur. We have community interventions in place that are designed to slow transmission in our community while lessening the impact. Our investigation is on-going. Our main goal is to isolate those who are ill, identify close contacts and monitor for illness."

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 can cause mild to more severe respiratory illness. Symptoms include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Symptoms appear within 14 days of being exposed to an infectious person. According to the CDC, COVID-19 spreads primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Those at high risk for illness of COVID-19 are those over 60 with chronic illness or a weakened immune system.

To prevent the spread of disease, Canton City Public Health encourages everyone to follow these effective practices:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer only if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces – doorknobs, light switches, keyboards, etc.

This is a rapidly evolving situation. Information is being shared as it becomes available on the following websites: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus, www.coronavirus.ohio.gov, www.cantonhealth.org.

People with questions about COVID-19 can call the Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Call Center, 7 days a week from 9AM – 8PM at: 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

We invite the media to join us for a media advisory conference at 3:30 p.m. this afternoon in front of Canton City Public Health, located at 420 Market Ave. N, Canton, where we will answer questions.

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