FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 24, 2020

Van Buren/Cass District Health Department Announces
First Positive Case of COVID-19 in Van Buren County

Hartford, Mich. – On Tuesday, March 24, the Van Buren/Cass District Health Department (VBCDHD) was notified by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) of one positive case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Van Buren County. The individual is a female in her 60s who is in stable condition and has been self-isolating at home. VBCDHD is continuing to investigate the circumstances around this case and working to identify individuals who may have come into close contact with the individual.

“This is the first confirmed case in Van Buren County but judging from other areas of the state, we anticipate more positives. As of today, there is one (1) confirmed positive case of COVID-19 in Van Buren County, zero (0) cases in Cass County, and 1,791 positive cases in the state of Michigan. We urge all residents to please take all precautions to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19” says Larry Wile, MD, MPH, Medical Director at Van Buren/Cass District Health Department.

COVID-19 symptoms can appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus. VBCDHD is asking anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) to self-isolate to avoid potentially exposing others and reminding the community that it is vital everyone understands the hospital is intended for those who are very sick. People who suspect they may have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and call their primary care provider, one of the COVID-19 numbers provided by each local health system, or do a virtual visit with their health system. VBCDHD has local COVID-19 Healthcare Advisor phone numbers listed on their website. It is important to stay home, outside of seeking urgent medical care, to avoid infecting people. If severe, life-threatening symptoms appear, individuals should go to the emergency room.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, people should:

- Wash their hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
• Stay home when sick (except to get medical care)
• Avoid close contact with sick people
• Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs.
• Keep 6 feet distance between yourself and others
• Follow the current ["Stay Home, Stay Safe" Executive Order 2020-21](#) and suggested guidelines for social distancing

As the situation continues to change rapidly, Van Buren/Cass District Health Department provides local updates about COVID-19 and prevention resources at [www.vbcassdhd.org/covid-19](http://www.vbcassdhd.org/covid-19).

Individuals are encouraged to call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136 with questions about COVID-19 (7 days a week, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.).

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Van Buren/Cass District Health Department
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