



RICE COUNTY

320 Third Street N.W.
Faribault, MN 55021

PRESS RELEASE

Date to Expire from Website: April 19, 2020

March 19, 2020

First Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in Rice County

Rice County Public Health was notified late on March 18th by the Minnesota Department of Health of a lab confirmed case of COVID-19 in Rice County.

Limited information indicates the confirmed case is linked to recent international travel and was seen on an outpatient basis.

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) staff will be working with Rice County Public Health staff on follow-up. Cases are isolated to prevent disease spread and a contact investigation is completed to identify close contacts. Close contacts are quarantined for 14 days from their exposure and monitor for fever and respiratory symptoms.

As of noon on March 18th, Minnesota had 77 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with cases indicative of community transmission.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Governor Walz have implemented community mitigation measures to help slow the spread of COVID 19 in Minnesota. This is for the health and safety of everyone. The goal is that these measures will help slow the spread of infectious disease and place less demand on the health care sector so the most seriously ill people get the supportive care they need.

Public Health officials are recommending anyone 70 years and older, and those with underlying health conditions stay home as possible, and avoid gatherings and other instances of potential exposures, including travel.

Current recommendation is that if you are sick with respiratory symptoms or fever, stay at home for 7 days after illness onset, or 72 hours after resolution of the fever, whichever is longer.

Testing ability is currently limited, and prioritized to those most at risk. If you can manage your symptoms, you don't need to be tested – testing would not change the recommendations for your care or how you would be clinically managed since there is not a vaccine or medication to treat COVID-19 at this time.

For those who are so ill they need to seek medical attention, they should call their health care provider.

Reminders of what you can do:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- If you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Stay home when you are sick
- Avoid crowds and maintain social distancing of 6 feet

Stay informed

- The most up to date information about COVID-19 can be found on the MDH and CDC websites:

CDC website on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Minnesota Department of Health - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>

CONTACTS:

Deb Purfeerst, Rice County Public Health Director (507) 332-5914

Tracy Ackman-Shaw, Rice County Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator (507) 332-5921

Sara Folsted, Rice County Administrator (507) 332-6100