Delaware County Updates Residents on the County’s Prevention and Preparedness for Coronavirus

Members of County government, including County Council, the Department of Intercommunity Health and the Department of Emergency Services first began meeting in January to discuss how the County can prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and also how to plan for a local outbreak, should one occur. Members have been in daily communication with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor the situation. To date there are no confirmed cases in Pennsylvania.

The County met with members of police, fire and the EMS community on March 2 to address concerns and best ways to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. During the meeting, the County committed to providing all first responders with face masks to help protect themselves during emergency calls that may involve residents who have Coronavirus. On March 3, the County, with the help of the County’s Medical Reserve
Corps (MRC) was able to distribute the masks, ensuring that all of our first responders are protected. Currently, all first responders also have gloves and hand sanitizer in their emergency vehicles and EMS vehicles have additional safety equipment including protective eyewear.

County officials met on March 3 to discuss internal procedures and protocols for handling a local outbreak, should one occur. The County, throughout the year, plans for emergency situations such as a pandemic. The county has plans in place for a possible outbreak and will continue meeting to discuss best practices to handle a local outbreak. Right now, the best planning for all residents and employees is prevention.

The best way to protect yourself is to take the same precautions you would to prevent the flu or common cold:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze with your elbow to avoid touching your face
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm/hot water for at least 20 seconds
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- Clean surfaces frequently, including countertops, light switches, cell phones, remotes, and other frequently touched items
- If you are feeling sick, stay home. Rest, take care of yourself and don’t spread the germs.

Call your healthcare professional if you develop symptoms, have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you have recently traveled from an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19. As with any medical situation, call 911 if you or the patient is in distress and it is an emergency.

The County does not perform the testing for 2019 Novel Coronavirus. National and academic labs are ramping up for testing. Testing will be performed based on clinical presentation and medical indication.

If a resident tests positive for COVID-19, the County will follow the CDC and the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s recommendations. Updates and resources from the CDC and Pennsylvania Department of Health can be found here:
www.health.pa.gov

The County’s facilities department is upgrading sanitation in all County buildings and taking extra precautions to ensure County buildings are as germ free as possible. Janitorial staff will be wiping down surfaces and doing additional cleaning in common areas and high traffic areas.
The County has created a website dedicated to information on the Coronavirus, including prevention, resources and a FAQ section: