



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **LOCAL COVID-19 RESPONSE AND TESTING**

The Coffee County Health Department is working in partnership with other local, regional and state officials to implement prevention and mitigation strategies for our communities based on guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and by state leadership. We have a local preparedness plan for pandemics that we practice at least once a year, and this plan is the basis for our response. Our local leaders are empowered to make decisions based on the needs of the residents of Coffee County and are doing so.

We're working to ensure that everyone in Coffee County that has a clinical picture consistent with COVID-19 can be tested. It's important to note this process is not like that of something like a rapid flu test conducted during a regular doctor's office visit, with results provided on the spot. Testing for COVID-19 is conducted in the laboratory, so tests themselves are not distributed to health care facilities. Rather, health care providers take samples from their patients and submit them to a laboratory for testing.

Many health care providers can assess patients for COVID-19 and collect samples to submit for testing. People who have concerns about their health should contact their regular health care providers, who can assess their risk and determine if they should be tested. People who don't have insurance and have concerns they may have symptoms of COVID-19 can contact the Coffee County Health Department for consultation and to talk through potential options for testing in their area. Most people, particularly those with mild or no symptoms, do not need assessment for COVID-19. We are prioritizing testing of people in high-risk categories: contacts of confirmed cases; people in occupations with exposure to large numbers of contacts; health care workers; nursing home residents; severely immunocompromised patients; critically ill patients; pregnant women and people who have traveled to areas with high case counts. Again, anyone concerned about their health should first contact their regular health care provider. If you feel you need treatment, call the health care provider or facility first, so they can arrange for your arrival if you need to come in and can accommodate you while reducing risk of exposing other people to illness.

### **Recommended Precautions**

There are lots of things everyone in Coffee County can do to help flatten the curve and reduce the

impact of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water (or alcohol-based hand rub) for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your arm or a tissue
- Clean and disinfect objects (e.g., cell phone, computer) and high touch surfaces regularly

Some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness, including older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes or lung disease. It's extra important for people in these groups to take actions to reduce their risk of getting sick with COVID-19:

- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often
- Avoid crowds as much as possible
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel
- During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed

### **COVID-19 Information Line**

The Coffee County Health Department has launched a local South Central Regional Coronavirus Public Information Line in partnership with the South Central Regional Health Department. The number is **931-490-8312** and is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST.

TDH has launched a Tennessee Coronavirus Public Information Line in partnership with the Tennessee Poison Center. The numbers are **833-556-2476** and **877-857-2945** and are available daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. CST.

People with concerns about their health should contact their health care providers. TDH has additional information available at [www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html](http://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html). The CDC has updated information and guidance available online at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).

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