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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: MARCH 19, 2020
TO: ALL MEDIA
FROM: JOEL STRASZ, PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER
RE: **UPDATED AS OF 03/19/2020 - COVID-19 TESTING CRITERIA AND AVAILABILITY**

COVID-19 Testing

The Bay County Health Department (BCHD) is not currently testing for COVID-19. The BCHD will assist with monitoring and surveillance of suspect and confirmed cases of coronavirus. McLaren Bay Region's emergency department is only testing individuals who meet the criteria as defined by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. [The Provider COVID-19 Triage, Evaluation, and Disposition Algorithm](#) can be found on the Bay County Health Department webpage at www.baycounty-mi.gov/health/coronavirus.aspx

At this time, testing supplies are extremely limited both locally and globally. As such, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has created prioritization criteria for specimen collection and testing for those at highest risk of impacting the public's health and health care systems.

Current testing criteria* include:

1. Individuals presenting with signs/symptoms of COVID-19 infection who are identified as a known contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 Infection and are not members of the same household or congregate living situation as the confirmed case (unless as part of a public health investigation).
2. Individuals who become symptomatic while being in a 14-day monitoring and quarantine period (such as, but not limited to, monitoring due to travel from a region with widespread transmission).
3. Symptomatic individuals who are part of a public health investigation of a cluster of illness associated with a vulnerable population (e.g., long term care facility).
4. Symptomatic individuals who may be more likely to infect many of people or a vulnerable population (e.g., healthcare providers and those living in congregate settings like dorms, camps, long term care facilities).
5. Individuals presenting with severe illness requiring hospitalization and having no other identified etiology.

* This will be adjusted as the COVID-19 epidemic evolves and information needs change. BCHD is working with all of its partners to pursue wider availability of testing as soon as possible.

More

If you have mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19:

- Stay Home – if in a home with other people keep to one room of the house and only have one person assist you.
- Wash Hands often for at least 20 seconds.
- Direct coughing and sneezing into a tissue or elbow.
- Do not share ANY personal household items such as dishes, drinking glasses, towels, eating utensils etc.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched items every day with approved cleaner, see EPA list or use a solution of 1/3 cup bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- Wear a facemask when around other people or going to doctor.
- If symptoms get worse, call your medical provider who will determine if medical care is needed and refer for testing.

For the latest and most accurate information regarding the COVID-19 please go to the Bay County Health Department website at www.baycounty-mi.gov/Health and the Center for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov.