For Immediate Release – April 1, 2020

First Lab Confirmed Case of COVID-19 Reported in Morrow County – OHIO

The Morrow County Health District (MCHD) has been notified of the first lab confirmed case of COVID-19 in a Morrow County resident. This person is an adult female who is recovering at home. No other information about this person will be released. MCHD's epidemiology staff is conducting a public health contact investigation. These investigations are used to identify and notify a person's close contacts of their possible exposure. Contacts will receive a phone call from an MCHD nurse who will assess them for symptoms. They will also be instructed to separate themselves from others and not go to any public places (self-quarantine) for 14 days. We will not release a list of locations visited by this individual unless the contact investigation warrants such an announcement in order to protect the health of the public.

MCHD and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) have stated that we know there has been community spread of COVID-19 throughout Ohio. We want people to keep in mind that a confirmed case does not show a true picture of how widespread the illness actually is in an area. It is only a small sample of what is likely taking place in our community, so we are stressing how important it is to follow the Stay at Home Order, and practice social distancing. "We have suspected that COVID-19 has been in Morrow County. It was just a matter of when we would see our first lab confirmed case," said Morrow County Health Commissioner, Stephanie Bragg. "Our staff has been prepared for this, and we are ready."

If you are sick, you should CALL your healthcare provider (or local Emergency Room) to see if you need further evaluation. In many cases, people who get sick with COVID-19 have a mild to moderate illness, and they will not need to be tested. Medical staff will evaluate them over the phone, and give them instructions on how to isolate themselves at home.

We urge you to follow ODH's Stay at Home Order. Stay at home as much as possible, keep your trips out for supplies short, and practice social distancing when you must go out. These public health measures are important to follow whether you are sick or not, because they help slow the spread of this disease within the community.

For more information on COVID-19, please visit www.coronavirus.ohio.gov, and for local information follow our Morrow County Health District Facebook page.

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