

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2020

**STARKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS
1st CASE OF COVID-19**

Starke County Health Department announced today the first presumptive positive case of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Starke County.

Starke County Health Department is working closely with the local and state officials to ensure that contacts of the patient are identified and monitored and that all infection control protocols are being followed.

Gov. Eric J. Holcomb issued a public health emergency declaration that calls on state agencies to continue their diligence and cooperation in responding to COVID-19 and ensures that Indiana can seek funding to control and stop the spread of coronavirus. The declaration is posted at www.in.gov/. The governor has also issued additional [steps](#) to protect the public from COVID-19.

The patient is self isolating at home. No additional information about the patient will be released due to privacy laws.

Human coronaviruses most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:

- Respiratory droplets released into the air by coughing and sneezing;
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands; and
- Rarely, fecal contamination.

The best way to protect yourself from any respiratory illness, including the flu, is to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms to protect others from the risk of infection.

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) will provide updates as new information becomes available. Visit the ISDH website at in.gov/coronavirus for the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Indiana.

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