COVID-19 Update

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 15, 2020

Talbot County Announces First Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Easton, MD – County Council President Corey Pack has announced that Talbot County will declare a local State of Emergency on Monday following the confirmation by Health Officer Dr. Fredia Wadley that the county has its first confirmed case of COVID-19 disease.

The patient has been hospitalized after coming into contact with a person in another county infected with the COVID-19 virus. When the Talbot County resident developed symptoms, they were tested and found to be positive for the virus.

"Staff from the Health Department are contacting those who have been exposed to this person and, if they have symptoms, we are asking them to take appropriate measures," says Dr. Fredia Wadley. "The proven public health method of managing the spread of such an infection is to identify cases and then isolate them and the people with whom they have had contact."

To support the Health Department's efforts in leading this response, Talbot County Emergency Services has activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This coalition of community partners is working together to coordinate the county's response and disseminate information about this public health crisis.

"We are in frequent contact with county and state officials and our private-sector partners," says Director of Emergency Services Clay Stamp. "We are reviewing plans and deciding the best course of action to keep the residents of Talbot County safe and informed."

The Talbot County EOC will be releasing information about the virus, including any new confirmed cases. Staff are currently posting information on the Talbot County Emergency Services website and on the DES Facebook page as it becomes available. The department also expects to launch a dedicated COVID-19 website this week that will summarize all of the county information and will allow hourly updates when indicated to keep residents informed.

"Our goal is to provide you with information that is timely, accurate, and credible," says Stamp. "As soon as new cases are confirmed, we will immediately update the website and our Facebook page to reflect the number of confirmed cases in our county."

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Having a proven case of the virus in Talbot County of a person who has not traveled elevates official's concerns. Healthcare professionals stress that elderly people with chronic conditions and those with weakened immune systems should avoid crowds and people who are sick.

"This new development underscores the need for increased testing," says Dr. Wadley. "Anyone experiencing flu-like symptoms such as cough, fever, and shortness of breath should call their primary care physician immediately."

Talbot County government offices will be closed to the public effective Tuesday, March 17. All staff will report for duty as assigned and will be answering phone calls and emails.

Information about Talbot County's response to the coronavirus COVID-19, log on to talbotdes.org or visit the TalbotDES Facebook page.

Where to Find More Information

- o **CDC COVID-2019 Website:** https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html
- o **Talbot County COVID-19 Information** **www.talbotdes.org/covid19.asp**
- o **Maryland Department of Health Website:** https://health.maryland.gov/pages/home.aspx
- o **Talbot County Health Department Website:** https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/Pages/home.aspx
- o **Talbot County Health Department Facebook:** https://www.facebook.com/TalbotHealthMaryland/
- o **Talbot County Department of Emergency Services Website:** http://www.talbotdes.org/default.asp

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