

Friday, March 20, 2020 – 6:37 pm

We have just received word from the Western Tidewater Health Department (WTHD) that the first person in Isle of Wight County has tested positive for COVID-19. At this time, all we know is that it was a 27-year-old female with a Smithfield address. The WTHD is beginning their evaluation of the case and their potential contact investigation process. Any individuals at high risk of having been exposed to COVID-19 through contact with this person will be contacted by the health department as part of the contact investigation process.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. As a reminder, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Practice social distancing – maintain a 6-foot separation between you and others as much as possible.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 second. When soap and water is not available, use at least 60% alcohol hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (e.g. at home or in a health care facility).

If you think you may have COVID-19: **CALL your healthcare professional** if you feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, or if you live in or have recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Stay HOME except for getting medical care.

If you have questions about COVID-19 or what actions you should take, visit the VDH (www.vdh.virginia.gov) or Center for Disease Control (CDC) (www.cdc.gov) websites. The VDH also has a information hotline – 877-ASK-VDH3 that you can call to get answers to your COVID-19 questions.