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Coronavirus Awareness Update

(Hardyston, NJ) The Sussex County Division of Health (SCDOH) is working closely with state and federal agencies preparing to respond to potential cases of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by this particular coronavirus, have occurred in a growing number of locations worldwide including the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed “community spread” of COVID-19, meaning that it was detected in a person who did not have relevant travel history or contact with a confirmed case in communities in California, Oregon, and Washington. The CDC has also stated that the virus is not currently spreading widely in the United States. The immediate health risk from the coronavirus for the general American public remains low with individual risk dependent upon exposure. Though according to the CDC, the potential global public health threat posed by this coronavirus is high, and it is anticipated that more cases will occur in the United States.

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While no cases have yet been confirmed in New Jersey at the time of this publication, the SCDOH is actively engaged with local, state, and federal partners including the CDC, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), and local medical providers and hospitals to enhance our preparedness and response to this situation. “The Division has emergency plans in place that are ready to be activated should COVID-19 emerge in Sussex County. Volunteers from the Sussex County Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Teams are prepared to assist in a potential emergency response to this outbreak,” according to James R. McDonald III, Sussex County Health Officer.

At this time, there is neither a vaccine for COVID-19 nor is there any treatment besides supportive measures if you become infected. The CDC has stated that the most important interventions against COVID-19 and other coronaviruses include:

- Wash your hands with soap and water regularly, for at least 20 seconds
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or arm not with your hands, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home when you are sick and avoid sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

The Division is providing education on coronavirus and preventative measures to various organizations throughout the county, and has been communicating with schools, medical facilities, and healthcare providers regarding preparation and response to potential cases of COVID-19.

The SCDOH remains vigilant in keeping up to date with the latest state and federal recommendations to ensure the safety of our community and encourages Sussex County residents to exercise the interventions as listed above to protect against infection from

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COVID-19 and other circulating respiratory illnesses. The SCDOH is prepared to respond, in coordination with local, state, and federal partners, to potential cases of COVID-19 that may occur in Sussex County.

More information on coronavirus may be found at:

<https://www.sussex.nj.us>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>