**THIS IS A RAPIDLY EVOLVING AND FLUID SITUATION.  INFORMATION AND ACTION ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME.  BE PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE AND PATIENT**

**PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS WIDELY**

**3/27/2020 First (#1) Baca County POSITIVE COVID-19 Case In Baca County**

**Please take the time to read and understand this entire message.  I know it is long; but please, read the whole message.**

Hello to all.  This morning (Friday 3/27/2020) the Baca County Public Health Agency received a lab report on a resident from Baca County that has tested positive to COVID-19.

Out of respect for patient privacy, we will only release the following information (No other information will be released at this time):

* The person
  + was placed into quarantine while awaiting test results.
  + was tested because they had symptoms and been in contact with a known positive COVID 19 person in another area.
  + was placed into isolation while awaiting test results and will remain in isolation until 10 days from symptom onset AND 72 hours of being fever free AND patient has improvement of symptoms.
  + Per the CDC **Isolation** separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. **Quarantine** separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to see if they become sick.
  + is a resident of Baca County.

A thorough epidemiological investigation is currently underway, with absolute priority given to contact investigations, risk assessments, and isolation/quarantine information (disease control and containment measures) based upon the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.  We will specifically be looking into any possible connections to other cases.

**Here is what you can do right now**:

* **COMPLY WITH ALL PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS CURRENTLY IN PLACE, INCLUDING THE NEW “STAY AT HOME” ORDER.  THE STATE PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS CAN BE FOUND HERE**:  <https://covid19.colorado.gov/public-health-executive-orders-explained>
* One of the best things you can do RIGHT NOW is to get accurate, up-to-date, reliable information, and check for information updates frequently.  Make this a PRIORITY in your household!
* Once again; two main priorities, are established right now:
  + Disease control and containment measures.
  + Understanding and complying with the public health orders.
* Find out how you can protect yourself and your family:  <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#anchor_1584386949645>
* Find out if you are at higher risk:  <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#high-risk>
* What you can do to prepare for an outbreak (widespread community transmission):  <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#anchor_1584388857241>
* Find out about symptoms and testing:  <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#anchor_1584388857241>
* Learn how to reduce fear and take care of yourself:  <https://covid19.colorado.gov/reducing-fear-and-taking-care-yourself>
* Important Note:  These website locations and the information is subject to change, please check back often.
* If you are sick, please call your healthcare provider and they will provide you with instructions on what to do next.  If you do not have a healthcare provider, please call Southeast Colorado Hospital District at (719) 523-6628.  ALWAYS call your healthcare provider FIRST before you go to the office, so they can give you instructions.
* Only go to the Emergency Room (ER) if it is an emergency.  Only you can decide if it is truly an emergency or not, but emergencies typically are life threatening and time sensitive.

Please remember our Baca County goal:

* Our vulnerable populations are at a greater risk, so we want to keep COVID out as long as possible to protect them.
* We want to keep COVID at bay; as long as possible, to allow time to develop and manufacture a vaccine and/or antiviral treatment.  Our vulnerable populations and Health Care Workers (HCW) with direct patient access will be prioritized.
* There is a critical worldwide shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as respirator masks, gloves, etc.. We want to keep COVID at bay as long as possible to conserve the use of PPE and get more resupplied.  We need to protect our front-line HCWs so they can continue to help us.
* And, of course, we just do not want COVID-19 here!
* My community updates and other information can be found at the following website: <https://www.bacacountyco.gov>