



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **First Cases of Coronavirus Disease in Central and Southern Illinois**

*State also identifies first case associated with a long-term care facility*

**SPRINGFIELD** - The Illinois Department of Public Health today announced the first cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in central and southern Illinois. A Woodford County resident in his 70s and a Cumberland County resident in his 70s both tested positive for COVID-19. Additionally, two St. Clair County residents have tested positive – a woman in her 60s and a woman in her 70s. Possible exposures and travel histories for the two individuals are still being investigated and public health officials are working to identify and contact all individuals who are close contacts for these two cases.

“As we expected, we are beginning to identify cases of COVID-19 outside of the Chicago area,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Over the past several days, we have announced aggressive measures to reduce and slow the spread of the virus in Illinois. These are not easy decisions to make and we are not taking them lightly, but we believe these actions will help limit the spread of the virus in our communities and keep our residents safe.”

“We are starting to receive results from commercial laboratory testing,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “With these additional results, we expect the number of identified cases to increase dramatically all across the state. It is vitally important that we implement social distancing measures, such as staying home and cancelling large events. These are actions that can reduce the number of infections that occur in the community, and ultimately alleviate the strain on our health care systems.”

A DuPage County woman in her 60s residing in a long-term care facility has also tested positive. Illinois Department of Public health officials are on the ground and working with the long-term care facility to identify all close contacts and protect the health and safety of all residents and staff at the facility. Infection control measures are required for all nursing homes, additional vigilance for respiratory illness should be implement as well as increased cleaning, and visitor restrictions are to be implemented. The Illinois Department of Public Health has guidance for long-term care facilities on its [website](#) to assist facilities take proactive steps to ensure the health and safety of their workers, patients and families.

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The total number of cases in Illinois now stands at 64. In addition to cases in Cumberland, DuPage, St. Clair, and Woodford counties, there are seven new cases in Chicago, four in suburban Cook, one in Kane, and one in Lake counties. Public health officials are still investigating the travel history of these individuals and any potential contact with a known COVID-19 case. Public health officials will identify and contact people who are considered close contacts of these cases.

For information about how you, your school, workplace, and community can prepare, please visit [Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Communities](#). For general questions about COVID-19, call the hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email [dph.sick@illinois.gov](mailto:dph.sick@illinois.gov).

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