



Health Department
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Franklin County COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center
Two (2) Franklin County Health Department Workers Test Positive for Coronavirus

From:

Scott S. LaVigne, MSW, MBA
Franklin County Health Director
Public Information Officer, Franklin County COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Communication:

On Friday, 4/24/2020, the Franklin County Health Department (FCHD) received positive coronavirus test-result notifications on two (2) employees. The two (2) employees do **not** serve as healthcare providers within the department.

The first employee was last at work on Thursday, 4/09/2020 at 5:00pm, and first reported mild symptoms on Saturday, 4/11/2020. This employee has not been inside the FCHD since 4/9/2020. As per the employee's healthcare provider's guidance, a coronavirus test sample was collected on Monday, 4/20/2020, but the results were "inconclusive". A second sample was collected on Wednesday, 4/22/202, with positive test results being reported to the Health Department later in the morning on Friday, 4/24/2020. As noted above, this employee was last in the health department on 4/9/2020.

The second employee was tested on Wednesday, 4/22/2020, after reporting symptoms they initially thought were allergies. Following sample collection, the employee was sent home and given instructions to isolate. Their positive coronavirus test-results were received a little after 9:00am on Friday 4/24/2020.

Immediately after the Health Department received notification of the first positive test result, all **non**-health department staff were instructed to leave the Department. All appointments were canceled, and a total of 48 Health Department staff were tested for coronavirus, with 42 employees being sent home with written instructions on isolation and symptom monitoring. The remaining 7 Department staff canceled all appointments for Monday, 4/27/2020, and prepared the facility for disinfecting which is to occur on Saturday, 4/25/2020. Test results for all staff should be available by late Sunday (4/26/20) afternoon, or earlier Monday (4/27/2020) morning. Only staff who receive a negative test result are allowed to return to work.

As of the date and time of this release, all face-to-face: clinical services; care management services; and WIC are cancelled for Monday, 4/27/2020. Patients will be able to speak by phone to staff in those programs on Monday, 4/27/2020 if needed. Patients whose appointments were cancelled have been notified and the department will contact you on rescheduling those appointments. The Health Department anticipates a resumption of these services on Tuesday, 4/28/2020.

Environmental Health services (septic, wells, Food & Lodging inspections, etc.) and the Franklin County Home Health Agency services will continue to operate remotely (as they have been doing for some time). Limited drop-off service will be available for Environmental Health needs.

The Franklin County Health Department continues to conduct contact tracing for COVID-19, so any individual suspected of being exposed to the coronavirus will be notified by Health Department staff and given specific instructions on what they need to do next.

As noted above, only Health Department employees with a negative test result will return to work on Monday, 4/27/2020 or thereafter.

Look for more updates from the Franklin COVID-19 EOC as more information becomes available.

Scott S. LaVigne
Scott S. LaVigne, MSW, MBA
Franklin County Health Director
Franklin County COVID-19 EOC – Public Information Officer

4/25/2020
Date

Steps We All Need to Take:

Guidance for Those with Fever & Upper Respiratory Symptoms:

If you feel illness coming on, isolate yourself and call your doctor if your symptoms worsen. Everyone with fever and respiratory symptoms should isolate themselves from everyone until BOTH conditions below are met:

- At least 7 days since symptom onset.

AND

- Over 72 hours after symptom resolution (i.e. absence of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication and improvement of respiratory symptoms).

Close Contacts:

- Those with close contact to a person with fever or respiratory illness are encouraged to stay home to the extent possible, and to monitor themselves for symptoms.

Recommendations:

What is important is that everyone do their part to keep us all safe:

- avoid touching your face;
- Wash your hands frequently & thoroughly using warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds (sing “Happy Birthday” twice, or use your own tune)
- use hand sanitizers frequently;
- cough/sneeze into your arm, or if you use a tissue, immediately throw it out and wash your hands.
- Isolate yourself from others if you’re sick;
- stay home from work/school or going out anywhere if you feel the slightest bit sick.
- Everyone needs to avoid vulnerable populations, including: those over 65; those with underlying health conditions and/or weakened immune systems; and those who are pregnant.
- Do not group together, and certainly not in groups any larger than 10, and keep six (6) feet apart from anyone you don’t live with.
- If you have to go out, please maintain at least 6 feet of space between you and others.
- If you have to go out, feel free to use a cloth covering to protect others from **you**, if you happen to have the virus but just aren’t showing symptoms yet;
- Don’t count on gloves or a cloth mask alone to keep you safe, wash your hands, don’t touch your face, and use hand sanitizer if you have it.
- If you are lucky enough to have Personal Protective Equipment (gloves, masks etc.) use it correctly (wearing a pair of gloves everywhere you go means you now have collected everything you’ve been in contact with, on those gloves.)
- Live by the motto **“If they don’t live with you in your house, then they can’t come-in, and if you meet them in public, keep them at least 6 feet away.”**