



Press Release

Date: May 6, 2020

Contact: Holly Kerns or Ashley McClay, 541-523-0014 or pio@bakercounty.org

First Coronavirus Case Reported in Baker County

The Baker County Health Department has been notified by Oregon Health Authority that Baker County has a confirmed case of COVID-19. This is the first confirmed case in Baker County. The individual has been directed to isolate from others for the duration of their illness, which is until they are symptom-free for 72 hours (3 days).

The Baker County Health Department is performing contact tracing to identify and isolate anyone who may have come in close contact with this individual in the last 14 days. Nursing Supervisor, Alicia Hills, will be leading the investigation effort with public health staff and the support of the Oregon Health Authority. If you have been identified as a close contact with this individual you will be contacted as part of the investigation. Please support the contact tracing work by having voicemail available in the event you cannot answer. If you have had changes in your address or phone number, update the information with all your medical providers including your doctors, dentists, the health department or anywhere else you receive care.

Health privacy laws prohibit releasing identifying information about the individual who has tested positive or their contacts.

Nancy Staten, Baker County Health Department Director, says, "Our Health Department, County and Community Partners have been preparing for this day since we learned of this virus spreading its way across the world. Now that it is here, we need to not panic, but pull together as a community. Just because we have a confirmed case of COVID-19 in Baker County doesn't change the everyday precautions that are already in place. Please understand this is a serious illness and take the appropriate measures to keep ourselves, our families and our community safe."

Residents are urged to take precautions to prevent the spread of coronavirus to those most vulnerable to complications from COVID-19. The high-risk populations include adults age 60 and over, those suffering from a serious health condition including lung/heart issues, diabetes, and kidney disease, or anyone with a suppressed immune system. Those vulnerable to complications are advised to follow the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to stay home as much as possible and avoid gatherings.

To protect those most at risk, follow these basic steps:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth or nose when you cough or sneeze.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- If you feel ill, stay home.
- Practice Social Distancing by staying home when possible, avoiding crowded areas and staying 6 feet away from others.
- Wear a cloth face covering when going out into a public setting.

Learn more on the Oregon Health Authority website: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/pages/index.aspx>