



TOWN OF MARBLEHEAD

Board of Health

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Andrew Petty, Director of Public Health

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advisory –First Case of Presumptive Positive COVID-19 in Marblehead

On Wednesday March 18, the Marblehead Health Department announced that a resident has tested “presumptive positive” for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The patient is currently doing well and is isolated at home.

“There have been cases of COVID-19 in most states and across Massachusetts,” said Health Director Andrew Petty. “The Marblehead Health Department and the Town of Marblehead have been preparing for this. COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving situation, and we will continue to share COVID-19 information as it becomes available. Since the risk level throughout Massachusetts is rising and COVID-19 is now in our community, we will not be announcing any more cases of COVID-19 in the community.”

Extensive contact tracing is being done on this case. The Health Department will determine through this investigation and will identify contacts of this case. If you have not been contacted by the Health Department, you are not considered a contact of this case. All people who have had direct, face-to-face contact with this person are being instructed to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms.

About the COVID-19 Coronavirus

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 can cause mild to more severe respiratory illness, and most patients who have had COVID-19 so far have recovered on their own. However, COVID-19 can cause severe illness, and even death, particularly among those who are older or who have chronic medical conditions. Symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Symptoms appear within 14 days of being exposed to an infectious person. COVID-19 spreads primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Public Health recommendations to reduce risk of infection with COVID-19:

While there is currently no vaccine to prevent Coronavirus (COVID-19), there are several important measures you can take to stay healthy. These precautions are similar to those you would take to avoid the flu:

- Stay home when you are sick
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Cover your cough (cough into your elbow) or sneeze with a tissue
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid gatherings of more than 10 people

The Health Department is aware that events are being postponed or canceled and employers are encouraging that employees that can work from home do so, and residents should stay at home if they are sick. While evidence currently available is that the vast majority of children and most adults are not at risk for severe illness, we do know that some members of our community are at higher risk. These include:

- People 60 and older
- People with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes
- People who have weakened immune systems
- People who are pregnant

People at higher risk should stay home and away from large groups of people as much as possible, including public places with lots of people and large gatherings where there will be close contact with others.

For More Information

Always check with trusted sources for the latest accurate information about novel coronavirus. Please visit:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (mass.gov)

<https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

Centers for Disease Control (cdc.gov) for more information.

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