

### Health Officials Confirm First Case of COVID-19 in Cook County

**June 10, 2020** – Cook County noted its first positive case of COVID-19 this afternoon, reported by North Shore Health. Cook is the last county in northeast Minnesota – and the second-to-last in the state – to have a confirmed case of COVID-19.

The infected person is a male resident of Cook County in his 30s. Due to state and federal data privacy regulations, no other information about the infected person will be released. Further, because of the time it takes for case information to transfer between the testing lab and the MN Department of Health (MDH), the case may not appear on the MDH map for two to three days.

Per established protocol, MDH will interview the individual and work to identify and contact people who have been in close physical contact with the infected person. Close physical contacts will be asked to quarantine for 14 days from date of contact, during which time they will be asked to monitor themselves for fever and respiratory symptoms.

“We have been expecting and preparing for this,” said Interim Medical Director Kurt Farchmin, MD. “By identifying the early cases, we can help people isolate so that the virus does not spread further. This is how we control how the virus enters our community and slow the curve.”

Farchmin urged people to continue following the state’s StaySafeMN guidelines, including wearing cloth face coverings and maintaining social distance – and, of course, letting the clinic know right away if they feel they may have COVID-19.

Symptoms typically start like the common cold. Fever, cough and fatigue are most typical, but any common cold symptoms such as loss of smell, runny nose, sore throat and body aches can also be part of the illness.

“While most people have mild symptoms, there are those in the community who will get very sick if they get COVID-19; therefore, if you have any of these symptoms, stay home and contact the clinic,” Dr. Farchmin advised. Those at highest risk for severe illness include older people and those who have certain underlying health conditions. Farchmin encouraged anyone with a chronic health condition to check with his or her health care provider regarding individual risk.

“As Dr. Farchmin stated, we have been preparing for this,” said Cook County Emergency Operations Center Incident Co-Commander Grace Grinager. “Helping people who are sick connect to the support services they need is a key way that we as a community can help minimize the impact and spread of COVID-19.”

Anyone with clinical questions about the COVID-19 virus, including symptoms or testing, should call the Sawtooth Mountain Clinic at 218-387-2330. Other questions can be directed to the Cook County COVID-19 information line at 218-387-3668 or the Minnesota Department of Health line at 651-201-3920.

People also can visit [cookcountycovid19.org](https://www.cookcountycovid19.org) for the latest information, as well as to find links to trusted information from MDH, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Additionally, health officials encourage people to reach out to their family and social networks – or to the Cook County Community Support Line at 218-877-7071 – to support them in times of stress or isolation. Public Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health and Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, will assist persons in isolation and quarantine who are in need of essential services, including food and shelter.

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