Elkhart County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   **CONTACT: Jennifer Tobey (574)238-0144, jtobey@elkhartcounty.com**
03/21/2020   **Melanie Sizemore (574) 276-1197, msizemore@elkhartcounty.com**

ELKHART COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS
1st CASE OF COVID-19

Elkhart County Health Department announced today the first presumptive positive case of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the County.

The local health department is working closely with the local and state officials to ensure that contacts of the patient are identified and monitored and that all infection control protocols are being followed.

The patient is currently hospitalized and no additional information about the patient will be released due to privacy laws.

The best way to protect yourself from any respiratory illness, including COVID-19 and the flu, is to:

- 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 with 60% or greater alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice social distancing (no group functions such as book clubs, meetings, and or congregations of 10 or more)
- Stay home unless it is essential for you to go somewhere.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The myth is, that this virus is only affecting people 60 years of age and older. Please understand, that this virus can and will affect every age group. **Everyone is a target of the COVID-19 Virus**.

The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms to protect others from the risk of infection.

The Elkhart County Commissioners, with recommendation from the Elkhart County COVID-19 Incident Management Team, being fully supported by the Mayor's and Elkhart County Health Department, has put a travel advisory in place for all of Elkhart County as of 5:00 p.m. today. This travel advisory means that routine or unnecessary travel or activity is discouraged because of a hazardous situation, and individuals should use discretion on what is necessary for daily living. With that, residents are advised to only travel for essential reasons such as work, grocery stores, dinner pick-ups, pharmacies, doctor appointments, helping and/or checking in on family members.

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) will provide updates as new information becomes available. Visit the ISDH website at in.gov/coronavirus for the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Indiana.

We will continue to provide updates as changes occur. Please follow our Facebook page at Elkhart County Health Department Health Education Division www.facebook.com/healtheducation.echd, www.elkhartcountyhealth.org, or go to the Indiana State Department of Health's website at www.isdh.in.gov for up-to-date information on COVID-19.