



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stay Healthy. Stay Informed.

***Clear Creek County COVID-19 Incident Management Team
Prepares for Peak COVID-19 Response Actions***

Georgetown, CO, April 8, 2020—As the number of COVID-19 cases increases across the country and in Colorado, the Clear Creek County Incident Management Team (IMT) continues to serve and safeguard the community while preparing for the localized peak of the pandemic.

According to IMT leaders, Sheriff Rick Albers and Public Health and Environment Director Cindy Dicken, “The Clear Creek community is doing an incredible job during this difficult time. The majority of our residents are practicing social distancing and wearing protective face coverings when out for essential activities; this is helping to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our area.” This is especially important since Clear Creek County has a high percentage of at-risk residents.

The County Public Health and Environment Department (PHED) reports that there are now nine confirmed positive cases in Clear Creek County; with one hospitalization and no deaths. Of the nine, five have been confirmed by valid COVID-19 testing, and four exhibited symptoms and had close contact with confirmed cases. Seven of the nine cases are out of isolation, and all are being monitored by the County PHED. Testing in Clear Creek is limited to those exhibiting severe symptoms. If you are experiencing severe symptoms, please call your health care provider or the PHED Nursing Staff at 303-670-7545.

If you are a resident of Clear Creek County and are experiencing or have recently experienced the onset of COVID-19 related symptoms such as cough, fever or shortness of breath, please complete the new Self-Reporting Form on the County website/COVID-19 page-- <https://www.clearcreekcounty.us/> and click on the HAVING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS? Information Box. For non-emergency COVID-19 related health questions, including how to use the new Self-Reporting Form, call the County’s COVID-19 HEALTH INFORMATION LINE at 303-670-7528.

Because of the ongoing nation-wide shortage of valid test kits, obtaining this self-reported information is critical for our public health agency to track the spread of the disease, understand health outcomes for residents, support local agency requests for additional resources, and help our IMT make informed decisions to protect the Clear Creek community. “Waiting until the county receives test kits to make public health decisions is not an effective way to coordinate our planning,” says IMT Situation Unit Leader and County Environmental Health Specialist Charlotte Hampson. All personal information will remain confidential. To date, 43 people have self-reported.

To be safe, it is best to assume that anyone, including yourself, could be a carrier of the virus and is contagious – whether or not symptoms are apparent. Take proper precautions and follow State and County guidance and orders—wash your hands frequently and vigorously with soap and warm water for 20 seconds; do not gather or congregate; only leave your home to do necessary tasks; when you do go out for essentials, practice social distancing (stay 6 feet apart at a minimum), do not touch your face, and wear a protective mask that completely covers your nose, mouth and chin.

While Clear Creek County boasts beautiful trails and vistas, now is not the time for non-residents to visit. During this public health crisis please respect the health and resources of our small mountain community, including our First Responders, and stay in your county outdoor recreate. IMT Operations Section Chief and County Office of Emergency Management Director, Suzanne Boccia explains, “This is a unique emergency that is impacting everyone everywhere at the same time, which puts extreme pressure on First Responders and medical professionals. Protecting the health and safety of those on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic by limiting possible exposure and providing them with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) better protects the overall community.”

To keep the community safe, the IMT continues to:

- procure additional valid COVID-19 test kits as they become available, despite the ongoing national shortage
- collect, organize and distribute Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) to those most at-risk
- assess and meet community need for food and other necessary supplies
- manage volunteer efforts, including food and supply distribution
- apply for federal, state and local financial assistance
- provide up-to-date information about health issues, local services/contacts, food resources, small business assistance, and more through the COVID-19 Information page on the County website www.clearcreekcounty.us, daily posts on the County Facebook page, interviews on KGOAT radio, and the new County COVID-19 Health Information Line at the Idaho Springs Resource Center

- support online learning for Clear Creek students by adding internet hotspots and assisting with health and safety plans for limited, scheduled building re-entry by staff and students for essential supplies and equipment

Says IMT Planning Section Chief and County Department of Human Services Administrator Donna Kline, “We have such a helping spirit in Clear Creek; folks are volunteering and we have ongoing donations of food and supplies, as well as generous financial support.”

Additionally, to keep you informed and receive community feedback, the County Commissioners are now holding virtual meetings twice a week, County Business on Tuesday at 9am and COVID-19 Updates on Thursdays at 11am. Connection information will be provided. The closure of County Government offices has been extended through April 19 and essential staff has shifted work schedules in accordance with the Governor’s Stay-In-Place Order.

We realize these are challenging times, but please do your part to keep healthy and minimize the spread of COVID-19 by continuing to social distance and only leaving your residence for essential services. Stay Healthy. Stay Informed. Stay the Course, Clear Creek.

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