



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

May 29, 2020

Health Department Announces Record Single Day COVID-19 Increase, Reminds Employers that Executive Order 38 Prohibits Positive Workers in the Workplace

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – The Hamilton County Health Department reports 96 new COVID-19 cases today for a cumulative total of 939 since the first case was reported in Hamilton County on March 13, 2020.

“Transmission is associated with workplaces, with positive cases going to work, spreading it in the workplace and then workers taking the infection home, infecting their entire household,” said Health Department Administrator Becky Barnes, “We can’t stress enough that this virus is very active in our community. If you’re sick or suspect infection, do not go to work.”

According to Governor Lee’s Executive Order 38, effective May 22, employers are prohibited from requiring or allowing workers to work if they are positive with COVID-19. EO-38 also requires that persons with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms must stay at home.

The Health Department is seeing this increase in all sectors of industry and business. It is urgent that employers and individual employees take preventive actions at once to help contain the spread of the virus.

- When workers cannot be more than 6’ apart, they need to wear masks. Free masks are available at the Health Department. Call (423) 209-8383.
- Avoid multiple employees in one vehicle, or wear masks while keeping the windows down to increase circulation.
- Employees should take self-temperature before leaving home. Do not leave home with a fever or other symptoms.
- Ensure ample hand wash/sanitizing stations in the work place, and urge employees to use them frequently.
- All businesses, industries, and organizations should adhere to the [Tennessee Pledge guidance](#).

For workers who may have been exposed at work and live with other household members, follow this [CDC guidance](#):

- Limit errands out of the house. Wear a mask if you must go somewhere.
- Vulnerable member (65+ and those with medical conditions) should avoid caring for children and those who are sick.
- Separate a household member who is sick.

Without a vaccine, the only tools we have against this virus are social distancing, isolation, wearing a mask, and handwashing. Treat yourself and everyone around you as if you have COVID-19.

Facemasks can greatly reduce the asymptomatic transmission of the virus. They are more about preventing the virus from leaving the mouth and nose than from entering. Asymptomatic transmission is occurring in Hamilton County.

Nearly all zip codes in Hamilton County are affected. The complete county map showing the zip code distribution of COVID-19 cases can be viewed [here](#).

(continued)

The Health Department offers free testing this weekend at the following location and times:

- Hardy Elementary, 2100 Glass St, Chattanooga, TN 37406
- Hours: 7AM-11AM
- Drive-Thru and Walk-Up Testing Site

Starting Monday, Health Department free testing will be offered at:

- Brainerd High School, 1020 N. Moore Rd, Chattanooga, TN 37411
- Orchard Knob Elementary School, 2000 E. 3rd St, Chattanooga, TN 37404
- Both locations 7AM-11AM
- Drive-Thru and Walk-Up Testing Sites

The testing is free, no symptoms necessary, no referral needed.

The complete schedule and details for Health Department testing can be found on their website [Health.HamiltonTN.org](https://www.health.hamiltontn.org).

Anyone with questions should call the Health Department's COVID-19 hotline at (423) 209-8383. Hotline hours are M-F 8AM-6PM, Sat 10AM-3PM, and Sun 10AM-2PM.

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