



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

March 25, 2020

Health Department Announces First Coronavirus (COVID-19) Death in Hamilton County

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – The Hamilton County Health Department was notified today of the first reported COVID-19 death of a Hamilton County resident. The individual was over 65 years old with underlying illness and died in a local hospital. Contacts of the individual have been identified and are being monitored.

“It is with a heavy heart that we announce this COVID-19 death,” says Health Department Administrator Becky Barnes, “We extend our condolences to the family; however, this reminds us to continue our prevention efforts and to fight this disease with firm resolve.”

The Health Department reports 11 new cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), bringing the total to 26.

Age Demographics

- 7 are between the ages of 18-49
- 3 are between the ages of 50-64
- 11 are 65 or older
- 5 are unknown

Sex Demographics

- 12 of the cases are male
- 9 are female
- 5 are unknown

Race Demographics

- 19 are white
- 1 is black
- 1 is Asian
- 5 are unknown

In order to address this growing public health threat, on March 26th the Health Department will close three of their satellite health centers in Birchwood, Ooltewah, and Sequoyah. The 3rd Street campus and Homeless Healthcare Center will remain open. This is part of the [Health Department’s Continuity of Operations Plan](#). Staff from these health centers will be reassigned to COVID-19 response duties. The satellite health centers will reopen at a later date.

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Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Anyone who has been experiencing these symptoms or has had close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, should contact their healthcare provider before presenting at a healthcare facility.

If an individual is tested for Coronavirus (COVID-19) and they are not hospitalized, they are required to go home and self-isolate until the test results come back. They must assume they are positive until they receive the negative result. If the individual tests negative, they should continue to follow CDC, Health Department, and community directives of social distancing.

The foundation of a community-wide response is the everyday actions we can take to protect ourselves and prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in our community. These actions include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home if you are sick to protect others.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve, elbow, or tissue. Discard the tissue immediately after use.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects.
- Stay informed using reliable information sources, such as the Tennessee Department of Health.

For the latest information about COVID-19, please visit the Health Department's Coronavirus (COVID-19) [webpage](#), or call the information hotline at (423) 209-8383.

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