

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Columbia County Public Health

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Columbia County Public Health announces first case of novel coronavirus; health officials investigating as they urge good hand hygiene and staying home

Saint Helens, OR—Columbia County Public Health has learned that a resident of Columbia County has tested positive for COVID-19.

“Our county’s first positive COVID-19 test is a reminder that we all need to remain vigilant about how to protect ourselves as well as our neighbors, friends and family,” stated Joe Skariah, DO, MPH, Health Officer for Columbia County Public Health. Skariah echoed public health messages released by other state and local health officials: “I am urging all citizens to pay attention to the direction that our Governor has provided. Please follow good hygiene measures and stay home to prevent the spread of Covid-19.”

The individual, who is currently isolated at home, works as a health care worker in another county. Columbia County Public Health will not release names of any individuals who are positive or any additional identifying information, unless more details are necessary to protect the public.

When a positive test result occurs, local public health officials conduct contact tracing, which is a way to identify and notify others who have been in close proximity to the person who has tested positive. Columbia County Public Health is currently identifying close contacts of the case, and the agency will notify those individuals, as well as review the signs of infection and next steps.

Columbia County Public Health activated an Emergency Operations Center to coordinate preparedness and response efforts across the county in order to support community capacity to respond. Columbia County Public Health staff continue to work in partnership with the Oregon Health Authority, rural health centers, fire and emergency medical services, and our community-based organizations to protect the health and wellbeing of the public.

“We recognize that this is a very challenging and uncertain time for everyone,” Commissioner Tardif said. “We want to express our gratitude to all of our community partners and community members for all the work they have done, and continue to do, to protect the health and wellbeing of individuals who live and work in Columbia County. The health of the public is a team effort”, Tardif continued. “Please follow [social distancing recommendations](#) and additional recommendations from both local health officials and the Governor’s Office. Stay home, stay healthy.”

Columbia County Public Health encourages all residents to stay informed about COVID-19:

- Oregon response: The Oregon Health Authority leads the state response.
- United States response: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention leads the U.S. response.
- Global response: The World Health Organization guides the global response.
- Oregon residents who would like more information on COVID-19 can call **211**. Call Columbia County Public Health at 503-397-7247 if you cannot find the information you need via websites or 211.
- Social media resources on Stay Home, Save Lives from the Governor's Office:
<https://govstatus.egov.com/or-stay-home-save-lives>

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE SICK

MILD ILLNESS

FEVER / COUGH / MILD SHORTNESS OF BREATH

- Stay home.
- Stay away from others in your home.
- Keep everyone in your household home.
- Stay in touch with your doctor.
- Wear a face mask.

EMERGENCY SIGNS

TROUBLE BREATHING
CHEST PAIN OR PRESSURE
NEW CONFUSION OR CAN'T AWAKEN
BLUISH LIPS OR FACE
OTHER SEVERE SYMPTOMS

- Call 9-1-1 **OR**
- Call the Emergency Room
so providers can prepare for you.

3 / 24 / 20

Stay Home Save Lives

