



## **First confirmed case of COVID-19 in Gunnison County, Colorado**

Joni Reynolds, Director of Gunnison County Health and Human Services

**March 10, 2020, Gunnison, Colorado:** Today, Gunnison County County Public Health is reporting the first positive case of COVID-19, or coronavirus, in the county.

The patient is a woman in her 40s in the area and likely exposed during international travel. The patient was not hospitalized and is recovering in isolation. The patient is working with local Gunnison County Public Health officials in the ongoing investigation to identify people that may have had close exposure. The case is presumptive positive, which means test results haven't yet been confirmed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Local health and medical partners have acknowledged that the arrival of COVID-19 to Gunnison County was a matter of when versus if. As a result, they have been planning what a local response would look like as well as running through different scenarios.

Please note, more than 80% of people who have been exposed or contracted COVID-19 will experience a relatively mild illness. Most people will be able to self treat with over the counter cold medication at home. There are greater risks for complications among older adults, especially above the age of 80 years, as well as people with underlying health conditions [heart disease, diabetes, lung conditions, etc). Individuals who have a severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing are encouraged to call Gunnison Dispatch at 970-641-8201.

Identification of the first case in Gunnison County is an important indicator. Health officials are reminding residents and guests that the individual precautions they can take to limit their exposure are the same precautions that can help slow the spread of COVID-19 within the community. These precautions will also help protect people in our community who may be at greatest risk for complications if they get infected.

### **Protect Yourself:**

- Wash your hands regularly, especially before eating or touching your mouth and nose.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

### **What to do if you think you are sick**

- Stay home if you develop a fever, cough or shortness of breath.
- Wear a mask or cover your cough and sneeze.
- Wash your hands frequently and don't share personal items (drinking glass or utensils) with others.

- Call your healthcare provider. Do not show up at a clinic, urgent care or the emergency department unannounced.
- Your doctor's office will assess your illness on the phone and provide information or guidance for you, household members, and other close contacts.
- Testing for COVID-19 is not a routine test. Your healthcare provider will assess your symptoms and risk for the disease based on guidance from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.
- Since many of the illnesses are mild, we expect most COVID-19 patients will be isolated in their own home to rest and recover. If possible, sleep in a bedroom and use a bathroom that is not used by other household members.
- There is no antiviral treatment for COVID-19. Getting rest and drinking plenty of fluids will likely be helpful for recovery. Only the most critically ill will be hospitalized.

Public Health officials also recommend residents prepare for an emergency that might require them to stay at home for several days, including having food supplies, water, and medications.

Those with questions about COVID-19 can call CO HELP HOTLINE AT 1-877-462-2911  
Updates and changes to the guidance are ongoing and will continue to be posted to:  
[www.gunnisoncounty.org/938/COVID-19](http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/938/COVID-19)