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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2020

Contact Lindsey Salvatelli
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COVID-19 Testing Guidance

MCDH GUIDANCE FOR COVID-19 TESTING AFTER PHYSICIAN EVALUATION

WOODSTOCK – McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) has been working diligently to investigate the close contacts of the two confirmed coronavirus cases in the county but wants to remind the public that, at this time, MCDH cannot test for the virus.

As a result of the high demand for testing, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) laboratories has instituted a prioritization process for testing. **Before MCDH can approve a test, the resident must first be evaluated by a primary care physician.** A physician may then request the testing through MCDH. If it meets the priority criteria then testing is authorized and MCDH will assist with finding a test collection site. Commercial laboratory testing is starting to become available and IDPH and MCDH are providing this information to healthcare providers as it becomes known.

Melissa Adamson, MCDH Public Health Administrator, said it's critical that those who think they have symptoms receive an evaluation to determine if they meet the COVID-19 testing criteria. "We are still in the middle of flu season, so we want to be sure that coronavirus tests are being used on people with a strong probability of having the virus and the potential for severe illness" Adamson said. "MCDH can only provide authorization for testing, through the IDPH laboratory, to a person evaluated by a physician and in consultation regarding specific criteria." For those individuals not receiving authorization through MCDH for testing, commercial testing can be ordered by the physician.

MCDH will continue to partner with IDPH and regional health departments to monitor all possible new cases as this situation continues to evolve. Residents who are ill should stay home until symptom free and distance themselves from household members. Residents should also continue to use precautions in their daily routine to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 such as, frequent hand washing, cover cough and sneezes, and social distancing, as well as developing a plan in the event that they become ill.

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Get the latest guidance for school, employers and community preparedness by visiting [Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Communities](#) or by visiting mcdh.info. For general questions about COVID-19, call the IDPH hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov

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