

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio Department of Health Monitoring Person Under Investigation for 2019 Novel Coronavirus

New process for sharing information on Persons Under Investigation announced

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is monitoring a new Person Under Investigation (PUI) for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

Samples from the PUI have been taken and were sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing. Results are expected in the coming days. A local health department, working in collaboration with ODH, is monitoring the individual and their contacts.

No additional information personal will be released about the PUI. Ohio remains at low risk and there are no confirmed cases.

“This is part of public health’s ever-present work to balance public interest with the privacy rights of our individual citizens,” said Amy Acton, MD, MPH, director of ODH. “We are committed to ensuring they receive proper, compassionate care and to preventing any possible spread of infectious disease.”

Also today, ODH announced a new process for publicly sharing 2019-nCoV PUI updates. Starting Thursday, February 5, the department will begin posting numbers of any Ohio confirmed cases and PUIs on the ODH website by 2 p.m. These numbers will be updated twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, paralleling the manner in which the CDC reports numbers. Local health districts and PUIs will be notified when test results are received from the CDC, whether they be negative or positive.

As PUIs are resolved as either positive or negative, these also will be reported on the website following the same posting schedule.

If there happens to be a confirmed case, ODH will update the local health department and the general public to provide guidance as appropriate.

Local health districts and ODH are committed to monitoring and promoting the public health and welfare. As local health districts monitor situations of infectious disease in the community, information will be shared as is necessary to protect the public while also considering the rights of any ill individual to privacy.

Dr. Acton is reminding Ohioans to guard against letting fear or panic guide their actions and to be compassionate toward all people who are sick.

“Ohioans are known for treating one another, as well as visitors, with acceptance, respect, and understanding,” Acton said. “Whether someone is ill or well, a traveler or not, they deserve to be afforded the same kindness. Please keep this in mind as we learn more about 2019 novel coronavirus.”

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