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For Immediate Release

Presumptive positive case of COVID-19 reported in Coconino County

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. – Coconino County Health and Human Services (CCHHS) confirmed the first presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in Coconino County. The test was conducted by TGen North Clinical Laboratory.

The individual is from the greater Flagstaff area and is over 60-years old, which is considered a vulnerable population. CCHHS is conducting an investigation regarding the case to identify other individuals potentially exposed to the illness. Close contacts of the individual will be contacted by CCHHS staff and provided appropriate information. The CCHHS Communicable Disease is monitoring the person who is under home isolation. Due to medical privacy requirements and to protect the person's identity, further information about this case will not be released.

"The County's number one priority is the safety of our residents," said Chair of the Board Lena Fowler. "We have complete faith in our public health officials, our community leaders and partners to manage our response to the pandemic. While information continues to change and more cases are identified, we encourage people to stay calm. If you're sick, please stay home and contact a health care provider to obtain medical guidance."

CCHHS is working closely with healthcare providers and partner organizations to continue to monitor the virus. People who are experiencing respiratory symptoms, including cough, fever and shortness of breath, and have either been in contact with someone who was tested positive, traveled to China or other areas experiencing community spread of the virus, or respiratory testing has not identified a known illness should be evaluated for testing. COVID-19 testing is conducted at the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory and in partnership with TGen North Clinical Laboratory.

"The CCHHS Communicable Disease team is determining potential exposures from this case," said County COVID-19 Incident Commander Dr. Marie Peoples. "As the illness spreads in the U.S., the County has been educating people about prevention and working with health care providers and community partners to monitor and test potential cases. We encourage everyone to take actions to prevent the spread of respiratory illness."

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According to public health officials, the immediate risk of COVID-19 infection to individuals in Coconino County is still believed to be relatively low. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include fever, cough and shortness of breath consistent with other respiratory illness. Reported illnesses range from infected people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill.

Some people may be at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes: Older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions like:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Lung disease

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. As a reminder, CCHHS recommends actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Get a seasonal flu shot
- Wash hands frequently.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your mouth with your upper sleeve or with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The County has set-up a COVID-19 Information Line. People are encouraged to call 928.679.7300 if they have any questions. The Information Line is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. People can also email: covid19information@coconino.az.gov.

Please go to www.coconino.az.gov/covid19 for more information.

TGen's Pathogen and Microbiome Division in Flagstaff, also known as TGen North, studies disease caused by bacteria, virus, fungi and parasites. More information is available at <https://www.tgen.org>. TGen, an affiliate of City of Hope, is a non-profit biomedical research institute headquartered in Phoenix.

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