



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 17, 2020

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**Two Additional Chatham County Residents Test Positive for New Coronavirus**

PITTSBORO, NC—Two additional Chatham County residents have tested positive for the new coronavirus, COVID-19, bringing the current total to three. The Chatham County Public Health Department was notified of the positive tests March 17, 2020, by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. To protect privacy, no further information about these individuals will be shared by the Chatham County Public Health Department.

“As testing for the new coronavirus ramps up, we are expecting to see more cases,” said Chatham County Public Health Director Layton Long. “We urge residents to stay vigilant and follow the guidance of local, state and national public health officials.”

Chatham County Public Health Department staff are monitoring the individuals who tested positive and will follow up with anyone who is identified as a close contact. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines “close contact” as being within six feet for 10 minutes or more.

The Chatham County Public Health Department continues to urge all residents to take measures to reduce the spread of coronavirus: Wash their hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, avoid touching their face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow, and stay home and away from others if they become ill except to seek medical care. Health officials also encourage everyone to implement social distancing measures to reduce frequency of contact, like maintaining six feet of distance and avoiding large crowds. This is important for everyone and especially those at high risk of severe illness, specifically anyone over 65 years old or anyone who has an underlying health condition like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes or a weakened immune system.

“Social distancing is going to be critical to our efforts in slowing the spread of the new coronavirus,” added Long. “We ask residents to please heed the guidance of the governor’s office and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. We all must work together to protect our community, especially those at high risk, and reduce the burden from the new coronavirus on the healthcare system.”

For more information about the new coronavirus and Chatham County’s response, please visit [www.chathamnc.org/coronavirus](http://www.chathamnc.org/coronavirus).

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