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Mecklenburg County Manager's "Board Bulletin"
 Mecklenburg County [web@subscriptions.mecklenburgcountync.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 6:21 PM
To: Steve Johnston



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COVID-19 Update – Message from the County Manager

I cannot thank you enough for your support during this unprecedented event! In the past week I have received several questions that I thought you or your constituents might also have. So, I have asked Health Director Gibbie Harris to provide answers to those questions. Here are her answers.

Q: Why it is taking so long to get test results and what is being done about it?

A: Atrium Health is processing tests onsite while Novant Health was sending tests to Lab Corp for processing. Initially, it was taking several days for Lab Corp to return results. However, currently Novant is able to provide nearly all test results within 48 hours and Atrium is providing results within 24 hours. Therefore, over the past few weeks we have seen significant improvements in result reporting times.

Q: Are we expecting to return to contact tracing when the community spread is reduced to levels where it feasible?

A: Mecklenburg County Public Health has continued to implement contact tracing since the first case was identified; however, currently we are prioritizing notification of individuals in high risk occupations or who have direct contact with individuals who are at high risk for complications.

Q: Is antibody testing in the queue and when?

A: Antibody testing is a high priority for COVID response and significant effort is underway to develop a widespread, reliable response. At this time, we do not know the timeframe for this availability.

Q: Should we require wearing masks in enclosed public spaces?

A: Mecklenburg County Public Health has released guidance on masks on our [website](#).

Q: Are we expected to have enough beds, ventilators, personnel?

A: According to our healthcare partners they continue to work on developing the resources based on current projections. Social distancing and flattening of the curve will better enable them to meet the needs and the surge when it occurs.

Q: If there are shortages projected what are we doing to address it?

A: Our most significant concern continues to be PPE and ventilator shortages. Our Emergency Operations Center is working collaboratively to attempt to address the ongoing demand through purchasing as it becomes available and through donations of PPE from other jurisdictions.

Q: How are we procuring and managing inventory levels of PPE?

A: Our Emergency Operations Center is working on this on an ongoing basis and has a vigorous process to track and manage the flow of PPE.

Q: How are you informing regularly elected officials of projected healthcare shortages?

A: As the situation evolves and data analysis is conducted and refined, we will keep elected officials and our partners and the community informed through regular updates via the media, our website, social media and

with community outreach.

Q: How are you advancing a defined strategy to mitigate those shortages?

A: This is an ongoing and evolving situation. Efforts to mitigate are conducted daily in the EOC to meet needs as they are identified.

Q: What promoted prevention initiatives are being undertaken?

A: We continue to push the prevention messages on every front to multiple sectors of the community and in multiple languages. All COVID-19 information and current prevention messages are on our [website](#).

If you have further questions please contact Gibbie Harris at Gibbie.Harris@mecklenburgcountync.gov.

Sincerely,

Dena. R. Diorio, Mecklenburg County Manager

News Releases 4/10/2020-4/15/2020:

- [**NEW Atrium, Novant Say Field Hospital Not Needed for Now](#)
- [Retailers Must Spread Out as Mecklenburg County Cases Now at 975 with Three Additional Deaths](#)
- [CharMeck Responds Coalition is Uniting Volunteer Efforts Across Charlotte-Mecklenburg](#)
- [Public Health Says Potential Flaws in Unapproved Local Rapid Test Outweigh the Convenience for Now](#)
- [County COVID-19 Cases Top 900, New Data Released](#)

Click [here](#) to view a full list of news releases.

Mecklenburg Minute

The Emergency Operations Center has been working for 35 days. As you know, this is a collaboration among the County, Emergency Management professionals, the city, CMPD, the hospitals, the towns, businesses, volunteers and our other partners. We have been in lock step confronting this pandemic. You can see how we work together in our most recent [Mecklenburg Minute](#).

Media Update:

Tuesday, the Public Health Director Gibbie Harris and I gave an update on COVID-19 cases in Mecklenburg County during a virtual media update after the Board of County Commissioners meeting. We shared information on COVID modeling projections, social distancing compliance, and the need for more data.

You can see the virtual media update, <https://mecklenburg.ravnur.com/media/599>.

Visit <https://mecklenburg.ravnur.com/media/598> to view Tuesday's virtual BOCC meeting.

Future updates will be announced via a media advisory at least two hours prior to the event. Visit <https://mecklenburg.ravnur.com/live/media-feed> to watch any meeting or media updated that has been livestreamed.

Community Resources:

Mobile Testing is available through Novant and Atrium:

COVID- 19 testing sites are available from Novant Health and Atrium Health. Always call ahead before venturing out to a medical provider. As a reminder, not all people who have symptoms are being tested right now per CDC guidelines. It is recommended that people seeking testing call ahead to see if they should be further evaluated. Testing location information is available [here](#).

Mecklenburg County's Cloth Face Mask Guidance:

We continue to learn more about COVID-19 and how to reduce the spread of it. There is some evidence people without symptoms may be spreading the virus. Droplets from breathing or speaking may spread COVID-19 from person to person. Therefore, the use of cloth face masks may help decrease transmission of the virus. Since the County is experiencing significant community spread, Mecklenburg County Public Health recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies).

Wearing a mask does not change the importance of complying with the Stay at Home Order.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the County's Cloth Mask Guidance.

Stay at Home Order Information:

Residents with questions about the County's Stay at Home Order can call 704-353-1926 Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

COVID-19 Symptoms:

As the pandemic continues to impact the community, click [here](#) to view a list of COVID-19 symptoms.

COVID-19 Testing and Medical Advice:

Residents who feel they may have been exposed to the virus can contact the County's Public Health Hotline at 980-314-9400 to speak with a medical professional or for guidance on testing.

What to Do If You're Feeling Sick:

Click [here](#) for more information on what to do if you think you may have been exposed to the virus.

Frequently Asked Questions - Residents:

Click [here](#) to view a list of the most frequently asked questions related to COVID-19.

Resources for Businesses:

Mecklenburg County is providing COVID-19 Stabilization Funds for Small Businesses. Click [here](#) to learn more about the loans and the eligibility requirements.

The Centers for Disease Control has issued guidelines for businesses and employers during the pandemic. Click [here](#) to view the guidelines.

Resources for County Employees:

Employee Rights Under Families First Coronavirus Act

On April 1, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act was signed to help provide additional paid leave for government employees affected by COVID-19.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the act.

The latest
[MecklenburgCountyNC.gov](https://www.mecklenburgcountync.gov)

Board Bulletin

is [now available](#) online.

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