



## Ford County Public Health Department

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For Immediate Release

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### **Ford County, IL COVID-19 Update**

The number of persons diagnosed with COVID-19 in Illinois continues to rise. Yesterday, Ford County Public Health Department (FCPHD) announced the second confirmed COVID-19 case in Ford County, IL. Today, FCPHD is reporting Ford County's first death. This person was a male in his 80's with underlying health conditions. These numbers are accurate as of the release time.

While FCPHD has chosen to issue a press release for this occurrence, we also want to highlight the federal regulatory requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). In its Accountability requirements, HIPAA requires we protect health data and its integrity, confidentiality, and availability. The Act provides protection regarding personal health information and there are consequences for healthcare providers and others who violate HIPAA. Therefore, we will not disclose any person's name, address, where they work, or their frequently visited places.

It is important we all consider ourselves at risk for exposure to COVID-19. That means everyone should stay home as much as possible and self-monitor for symptoms. Self-monitoring means checking yourself daily for fever, cough, shortness of breath or a sore throat. Residents must be vigilant and continue to take preventative actions to prevent the spread of illness. Everyone has a role to play in staying healthy and keeping others healthy.

We know many people are feeling stressed or experiencing grief during this difficult time. Please reach out for mental health support when needed, like contacting local mental health providers. Individuals can also contact the Disaster Distress Helpline, which can provide immediate counseling to anyone who needs help in coping with the mental or emotional effects caused by the Coronavirus pandemic. The hotline is 1-800-985-5990, or text "TalkWithUs" TO 66746. For additional mental health and other COVID-19 resources, visit our website ([www.fordcountyphd.org](http://www.fordcountyphd.org)) and follow our Facebook page.