

Public Safety Alert!

March 31, 2020
Osage County, Missouri
Susan Long
Health Department

Good afternoon, this is Susan Long from the Osage County Health Department in Linn, Missouri.

As was reported to the commissioners and through the county emergency management agency this morning, Osage County Health Department was notified of its second positive COVID-19 case. This person is a contact to the first case and had been quarantining already. The case and contact investigation have been completed. Again, if you didn't hear from me this morning, you were not identified as at-risk. Again, do not call the health department for information as this would be a violation of HIPPA.

This morning, the 3 commissioners and I, extended the limited intentional gatherings order to May 1st. This will be in the UD, posted on the county emergency management agency website as well as the health department website and the county website. The two advisories remain in effect also. If you review them and have any questions or concerns, I ask that you contact the Health Department through our Facebook page or through our email address. Our staff is monitoring both of these frequently through the day and evening hours.

With both Cole and Gasconade Counties issuing their shelter in place or stay at home order, there are concerns about what might happen here in Osage County. At this time, we are NOT planning on issuing a stay at home order. However, small businesses are now starting to contact us and the emergency management director. If you have a business and have not started planning for this, then you really need to start thinking about what you might need to do to keep things going. Some of the restaurants have changed to delivery and curbside pickup when they previously had not done so. Some retailers are offering items online when they previously hadn't done so. This is a time that you need to be creative. Just keep the social distancing in mind. If you don't have a business continuation of operations plan currently, you need to think about this. There are other disasters that could potentially disrupt your business like a tornado or flooding. What would you do in those situations BESIDES sit back and wait for the insurance money, if you have insurance, to cover it? Most likely, you'd be scrambling for another space and inventory and figuring out how to keep things going like numerous businesses had to do in Jefferson City last year after the tornado. Most business owners I know want to keep their employees working and they want to keep their loyal customers coming back. SOO, plan now for the unexpected.

I would encourage people to continue to support their local businesses. Buy gift cards, offer an extra-large tip for that delivery. I know someone who went ahead and sent her hair stylist the money for her next two haircuts. Be creative! We all need to support each other. Sometimes we need to lean on each other and then at another time, we can be the support.

The faith-based community is gearing up to offer support whether it is calling to check on someone or running errands for someone who is too high risk to be out- and-about and many other acts of kindness. You can contact your own church to get more information if you need something or to volunteer. It's okay to pick up a quart of milk for your neighbor and leave it on their porch after you ring the doorbell and go back down the stairs. You are keeping social distancing while helping someone else out. Call people. This is a lonely time for some. I haven't had time much to call my own mom during all this, but I can talk with her when I'm driving home from work at 7p with Bluetooth. I can check on my aunt who doesn't have any kids herself. If she needs something, then my husband, who is retired, gets what she needs and takes it to her house. Reaching out means a lot, especially now.

This is hard on all of us mentally. We aren't in our normal routines. We can't see anyone when we want to see them. We can't go to the movies. Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Find some positives in this! You may have more time to cook homemade meals for your family! You may now have time to learn how to cook! Put in a garden and support the local nurseries! Learn a craft! Learn how to do some simple maintenance on your car like checking tire pressure! You'll get better gas mileage from that when you do have a place to drive to again.

I will continue doing these messages because it is important that you know what is going on. I appreciate the kind words for the whole health department staff that we've received. It's keeping us going! Please reach out to us if you have questions. Thank you!