

Public Safety Alert!

March 27, 2020
Osage County, Missouri
Susan Long
Health Department

Good afternoon. This is Susan Long again with the Osage County Health Department in Linn, MO.

I wanted to give you an update on what's been going on since Tuesday's message. The good news is that I have not received any positive reports and that only 8 negative tests that we know of, have been reported on Osage County citizens. What I consider to be bad news is that the state health department made the decision that they are busy enough that they are only going to report positive cases starting today. There are no directives to all health care providers, hospitals or labs to report the negatives to anyone, but the ordering provider and to the state health department. As the governor reported at 3pm today, the state has 670 positive cases with 9 deaths. More testing is now available. If you feel you have symptoms, CALL your doctor or if you don't have one, call one of the hospitals about testing. They can assist you with this.

We understand the Cole County just issued a shelter in place order and I know there will be concerns in regards to those traveling to and from Osage County. For those employees that are considered essential, I recommend getting a note from your employer indicating that you play an essential role and are needed at work to perform your duties. I also recommend that you keep this in your vehicle at all times.

I issued 2 health advisories yesterday reminding people basically to continue what we've all been saying: good hand hygiene frequently and staying away from others as much as possible and if you don't have to be out-DON'T. The other advisory was asking people to self-quarantine themselves for 14 days if they traveled out of central Missouri. None of this is anything that is not being asked of any other Missourian or American. I know we've said that most people don't get really any sicker than if they have the flu and recover at home. We continue to be worried about our folks who are high risk who might be exposed and could die from this. Think about your grandma or grandpa. How would you feel if you got this, didn't follow the rules and one or both of your grandparents got this and got very sick and possibly died because you thought you had to be with a bunch of friends rather than to follow the rules for a few weeks? Think Skyping and use your cell phone! We will all survive a bit of time at home.

A lot of people have been asked to stay home and work. Just because someone is at home doesn't mean that they aren't working. They may not be able to do their work and watch their small child during those regular work hours and still need child care. By the same token, if you have to be home, but you aren't working, keep your child with you. It is safer for your child and it may free up a space for a health care worker's child so they can work extra time at the workplace to help out with sick people. Also, please don't send a child to daycare with a fever!

The health department staff has continued to provide education, assistance in finding supplies, helping formulate sick leave plans for this situation, answer inquiries on our Facebook page and our email address. I'd like to also express my thanks to all Osage County employees and community partners that have assisted with community updates coordination of services so that I can provide these updates to you. This has been a team effort in this county to try to keep everyone informed and I want to express my deep gratitude to everyone who has helped or supported this health department in its effort to keep the county safe.

Now, I'd like to encourage you to enjoy the warmer weather outside, but in your own yard! Keep up the social distancing! Keep the groups down to 9 or less. Start working on the yard! Enjoy sunshine if we do get to see the sun this weekend! Open those windows! Breathe! But not in someone else's space! Thank you for your time. Again, I will let you know as soon as I can, if and when we have a positive case. Thank you!