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Date: March 23, 2020
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Stay at Home Order” following First Local Case: COVID-19

MARIETTA, OH- Marietta/Belpre Health Department informed our residents yesterday that the City of Marietta has its first confirmed case of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The person, a female in her 50s, had travel outside Washington County to an area with known cases. She has been isolated at home and is being monitored closely by the Health Department. The Health Department has notified all the individuals who have been in close contact with this person with instructions; she had very minimal contact with others.

“This person handled the situation exactly how we are instructing residents,” states Beth Casto, Director of Nursing, “She had traveled for work, came directly home to quarantine, and monitored herself for symptoms. She did not go out to grocery stores or public places”.

There is community spread of COVID-19 in Ohio. This means that roughly 1% of residents have the virus, but just haven’t been diagnosed yet, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. It’s safe to assume there are roughly 600 local residents (~136 people in Marietta, ~64 people in Belpre, and ~402 people elsewhere in Washington County) with COVID-19, and they are unintentionally spreading it to others. Most of these cases will be mild or may not display symptoms.

“We need to be kind during this time of uncertainty”, encourages Anne Goon. It is important not to create fear or anger towards individuals being tested or individuals positive with COVID-19. Everyone is in this together and working hard to minimize the risk of COVID-19 in our community. Stop stigma related to COVID-19 by knowing the facts, seeking reliable information from the Ohio Department of Health and Centers of Disease Control, and only sharing factual information with others in your community.

“As more people are getting tested, we fully anticipate additional cases will be identified”, notes Goon, “it is critical that we slow the spread of COVID-19 by following the “Stay at Home” order issued by Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton, MD., MPH.” The order requires Ohioans to stay at home and non-essential businesses and operations to stop effective 11:59 P.M. on March 23rd, 2020. The order can be found at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov in the latest development section.

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