



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Oxiris Barbot, MD
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, March 3, 2020
(347) 396-4177

NEW YORK CITY CONFIRMS A SECOND COVID-19 CASE

This person is a New York State resident, but works in New York City

He remains in critical condition at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center in Manhattan

The Health Department is identifying people in close contact with patients who tested positive for COVID-19 and closely monitoring them for illness

March 3, 2020 – The Health Department today confirmed a second case of COVID-19. This is the first case of community spread in New York City. Community spread means the source of the COVID-19 infection is unknown. The individual is a man in his 50s who lives in Westchester County but works at a law firm in Manhattan. He is currently hospitalized at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center in Manhattan and is in severe condition.

This individual became symptomatic and sought care on February 27 at Lawrence Hospital in Westchester. The individual works at Lewis and Garbuz, P.C., a law firm in Manhattan. The patient has two children with a connection to New York City. A female child attends SAR Academy and High School in the Bronx. The administrators have voluntarily closed the school. A male child attends Yeshiva University in Manhattan. The Health Department has provided onsite guidance at all three locations and will be tracking close contacts of the family.

Disease detectives from the Health Department are identifying anyone who had close contact with these three individuals for coronavirus testing. The Department is providing anyone who may have had incidental contact with precautionary measures and information. City agencies have personnel on the ground and are working closely with the law firm, building operators and academic institutions to ensure employees are being given appropriate guidance. Anyone concerned about close contact with these individuals should go to their health care provider or call 311.

“Now, more than ever, New Yorkers must come together as a city to limit the spread of COVID-19. If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or shortness of breath, call your health care provider,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. “The Health Department will do

everything in our power to minimize the disruption caused by this evolving situation, and we will continue to communicate openly and honestly with New Yorkers.”

COVID-19 can lead to symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath. While some infections have resulted in severe illness, and even death, others have presented with milder symptoms and been discharged from care. There are now over 100 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. and over 90,000 cases worldwide. In New York City, 10 people have been identified for testing. Of those tests, one is currently pending, 8 were negative, and 1 was positive. Two non-New York City residents have also been identified for testing in NYC. Of those tests, 1 was negative and 1 was positive.

New York City’s Public Health Laboratory can now test for COVID-19, which will provide much shorter turnaround times of test results. This week, the Health Department will lower the threshold for people who get tested in order to detect person-to-person transmission. The Health Department monitors reports of flu activity throughout the year, and an unusual uptick in flu-like illness may also indicate the presence of coronavirus given the similarity in symptoms.

The Health Department has conducted outreach and provided guidance to City hospitals and health providers on how to identify, isolate, and inform the Health Department of individuals who may need evaluation for COVID-19.

Specifically, NYC Health + Hospitals is working closely with the Health Department, and the public health system is well prepared in the event that a patient with flu-like symptoms presents at or is transported to one of its emergency departments. Frontline staff have up-to-date public health clinical information on the COVID-19 virus, including infection prevention and control, personal protective equipment usage and practices, instructions on specimen collection, and in-service trainings on ‘donning and doffing’ personal protective gear. NYC Health + Hospitals has also embedded travel screening into the electronic health record system to ensure that any patient walking into one of its facility is promptly identified and isolated.

For those who recently traveled to China, Iran, Italy, Japan, or South Korea and experience fever, cough or shortness of breath:

- Stay home--do not travel or go to work or school while sick.
- Go to a health care provider and tell them about your travel history.
 - If you do not have a health care provider or insurance, call 311.
- Avoid contact with others.

All New Yorkers should:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or sleeve, not your hands.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

For more information about the coronavirus, visit the Health Department website at nyc.gov/health.

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