

Maine DHHS Press / News Release

March 13, 2020

Preliminary Testing Indicates Two New Presumptive Positive COVID-19 Cases in Maine

AUGUSTA – The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) was informed this morning by MaineHealth that preliminary testing in their lab indicates two more individuals in Maine have tested presumptively positive for the disease caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Those test samples have been sent to the Maine CDC for review and will require confirmation by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Maine recorded its [first presumptive positive test](#) for COVID-19 yesterday. That individual, a woman in her 50s from Androscoggin County, is in self-isolation at her home.

The two new preliminary presumptive positive tests are for a woman in her 20s, who is being cared for at Maine Medical Center in Portland, and a man in his 50s, who was screened at a MaineHealth outpatient clinic and is in self-isolation at home. County of residence information for the second individual will be released when available. Maine CDC staff, working closely with MaineHealth providers, has begun investigating the patients' travel histories under the assumption that the preliminary test results are presumptive positive.

The immediate concern is for the care and treatment of the individuals who have presumptively tested positive. Maine CDC will release further information today. **Maine CDC Director Dr. Nirav D. Shah** will be available at 1 p.m. at the Department of Health and Human Services, 109 Capitol St. in Augusta for his daily media briefing, at which point he can provide more information on these cases if available.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, shortness of breath, and lower respiratory distress. Individuals who exhibit those symptoms are advised to contact medical providers before going to a health care facility. Medical providers will make initial determinations about who should be tested.

On Thursday, Governor Janet Mills [announced](#) three steps in response to the first presumptive positive test for COVID-19 in Maine. These steps include: 1) [proclaiming](#) an insurance emergency to improve access to care and require private health insurance plans to cover costs related to coronavirus testing; 2) suspending all non-essential out-of-state work travel by State employees; and 3) [recommending](#), on the advice of Maine CDC, that non-essential large, indoor gatherings of 250 attendees or more be postponed in order to delay a potential coronavirus outbreak and substantially reduce its spread.

Last week, Governor Mills convened a Coronavirus Response Team, led by Maine CDC Director Dr. Nirav Shah and comprised of key individuals in her Administration, to coordinate State government's response across departments and local agencies and health authorities to the threat of COVID-19. The response team builds on the [work that has already been done by the Maine CDC to prepare for potential cases](#) of COVID-19.

For more information

Contact 211 Maine for answers to frequently asked questions on COVID-19:

- Dial 211 (or 1-866-811-5695)
- Text your ZIP code to 898-211
- Email info@211maine.org
- 211 is TTY and Video Relay accessible if calling from Maine
- Visit www.maine.gov/dhhs/coronavirus