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### **For Immediate Release**

03/22/2020

Information is accurate as of 1500 03/22/2020

Ford County, Kansas – The Ford County Board of County Commissioners would like to provide an update to Ford County citizens, address popular rumors and provide essential facts.

The Kansas City metro area is making an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 with a shelter-in-place order while other counties have also instituted no-travel-orders. Fortunately, Ford County citizens have been doing a wonderful job social distancing, staying home, minimizing public interactions and generally making the right decisions to protect the health and safety of our family-community.

It is important that everyone continue practicing social distancing, staying home and only making public contact for essential services. Please keep in mind that the changes in lifestyle we are recommending are temporary and will not be a “new way of life” forever. All of us have to remain calm, patient and clear when it comes to our response to COVID-19.

#### **Rumors:**

- 1) The “panic buying” that communities are seeing across the country is a natural response to fear. In our case, “panic buying” is only making it more difficult for local vendors to provide an adequate amount of stock and supplies. Local grocers have had to modify business hours due to “panic buying” and that makes this whole situation even more difficult and scary. So, in reality, any shortage of products and availability has been created by “panic” and not necessity.  
**Recommendation:** At this time, it is recommended that everyone refrain from “panic buying” and shop as you normally would before COVID-19. If we all do that, business hours will be restored and everyone will have an opportunity to buy all of the things they need.
- 2) The National Guard has not been called in for martial law. Ford County is not under martial law and there are no plans to be under martial law.
- 3) The electronic signs you are seeing on the highway are for construction to begin on replacing components of the bridge at U-400.
- 4) There are pictures of “essential worker” letters being distributed on the Internet – at this time, there is no official order for any workers in Ford County to carry such a letter to perform the functions of their job. This is something select employers are doing on their own and that is okay.

**Facts:**

- 1) If you have a traveled from a “hot zone” into Ford County, you will be subject to mandatory quarantine.
- 2) If you are a close contact of a confirmed positive case, you will be subject to mandatory quarantine.
- 3) There are processes in place to ensure availability of response supplies and COVID-19 testing kits – individuals tested will have to meet certain criteria.
- 4) If, at any time, Ford County identifies evidence of community spread / transmission, we will communicate the next steps and recommendations as soon as possible.
- 5) If, at any time, Ford County needs to shelter-in-place or restrict travel, we will communicate that directly to the citizens of Ford County as soon as possible.

**Self-Education / Self-Inform:**

- 1) To learn more about sheltering-in-place or how to prepare your family for emergencies in general, please visit <http://www.kdheks.gov/cphp/families.htm>
- 2) Please explore the KDHE website for up-to-date, bona fide information.

Ford County and community partners are still working hard every day to stay up-to-date and informed. Ford County Fire/EMS, Sheriff’s Office, Emergency Management, Public Health and Administration are still working around-the-clock to mitigate COVID-19.

If you have any questions regarding COVID-19, please call the KDHE Hotline KDHE Hotline 1.866.534.3463 or email them to:

J.D. Gilbert, B.S., M.B.A.  
Email: [jgilbert@fordcounty.net](mailto:jgilbert@fordcounty.net)

If you feel you are in need of COVID-19 testing because of active symptoms or recent travel to areas with confirmed cases, please call your medical provider. Medical providers, Western Plains Medical Complex and Ford County Health Department have the ability to test for COVID-19.

**Please visit the following links for more information:**

- [www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus)
- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
- [www.cdc.gov/covid19](http://www.cdc.gov/covid19)

**Ford County Health Department recommendations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:**

- ✓ Use proper handwashing techniques
- ✓ Avoid attending large gatherings and work if you are feeling ill
- ✓ Avoid touching your mouth, eyes, nose without first washing your hands
- ✓ Cover your cough and sneeze
- ✓ Clean and disinfect contact surfaces (home, office, etc.)

**Important Telephone Numbers:**

KDHE Hotline 1.866.534.3463  
Ford County Public Health Department 620.227.4545

J.D. Gilbert, BS, MBA



County Administrator and Public Information Officer

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The Mission of Ford County Government is to build on our heritage, prepare for the future and provide quality services to our citizens.