



March 6, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Public Health and Jerome County work together to prepare for COVID-19**

JEROME COUNTY- South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) and Jerome County Emergency Management are working together to prepare for COVID-19, the novel coronavirus spreading across parts of the United States and world. **At this time, no one in Idaho has tested positive for COVID-19 and SCPHD is not monitoring anyone for the disease.**

“There is no reason to panic. Our staff is trained and prepared to investigate and respond to all potential cases of the virus,” said Melody Bowyer, SCPHD Director. “If there is a case of COVID-19 in Idaho we will work closely with community leaders to prevent the spread of disease and protect the health of our residents.”

Bowyer urges residents to take precautions to protect their family from all disease, including COVID-19, by:

1. Checking public health recommendations and watching for local updates.
2. Washing your hands often for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
3. Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or the crook of your elbow instead of your hand.
4. Avoiding contact with sick people.
5. Staying home when you are sick.

“It's important to take this time to check your family and community preparedness plans,” said Tanya Stitt, Jerome County Emergency Manager. “What will you do about childcare if a school closes temporarily? Can you work from home if a coworker is sick? Make sure those plans include checking for information from reliable sources only.”

SCPHD activated a phone hotline Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, that will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. You can reach the hotline at 208-737-1138. South Central Public Health District is also actively updating information on:

- Their website: [phd5.idaho.gov/coronavirus](http://phd5.idaho.gov/coronavirus)
- Facebook: @southcentralpublichealthdistrict
- Twitter: @scphd

You can find updated information for the state at [coronavirus.idaho.gov](http://coronavirus.idaho.gov).

If you are concerned you have COVID-19 please call your healthcare provider and ask for guidance. Only visit a hospital emergency room if you are having a health emergency.

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