

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Ventura County Public Health Press Release**

Contact: Ashley Bautista, Public Information Officer, 805-654-2640

March 6, 2020

**Ventura County Public Health reports one presumptive positive case of COVID-19**

Ventura, CA – One presumptive positive case of the novel coronavirus has been confirmed by the Ventura County Public Health Lab. Secondary confirmation is pending from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The patient had traveled on the Grand Princess Cruise Ship from San Francisco to Mexico. The patient returned to the port of entry in San Francisco on February 21, 2020. This was the same ship on which an elderly adult traveled and later died, in Placer County, after testing positive for COVID-19. The cruise destination was not on the list of at-risk destinations so the travelers that disembarked the ship on February 21, 2020 were not under travel restrictions or health checks upon return.

Once Princess Cruises learned of the passenger's death, they began notifications to passengers. The California Department of Public Health notified Ventura County Public Health on March 4, 2020 at 7:40 pm that there were six Ventura County residents that had traveled on the cruise. Ventura County Public Health quickly began contacting cruise travelers on the same evening. One of the six travelers had already been in contact with their primary doctor. The primary care doctor had requested that the traveler be tested for COVID-19. In an abundance of caution, the doctor had the patient remain in their vehicle during curbside specimen drop off. This was requested to limit any possible exposure. The Ventura County Public Health Lab, one of eleven labs in the state able to conduct testing, confirmed preliminary positive results on March 5, 2020. Results are pending from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The patient was not feeling well upon return from the cruise and remained home resting. The patient only left their home to seek medical attention. Ventura County Public Health is working with the California Department of Public Health to provide notifications to anyone who may have been in contact with the patient while seeking medical attention or during transit to Ventura County from San Francisco. The patient is currently under home quarantine with mild symptoms. The patient's spouse was also on the cruise but has no symptoms. The spouse also remains under home quarantine.

Public Health has contacted the four remaining passengers. One passenger is symptomatic and being tested at this time. The remaining three have no symptoms.

"There is no evidence of community transmission in Ventura County. This is a travel related case. We appreciate our lab and nurses for quickly responding. Their swift action helped limit community exposure," said Ventura County Public Health Officer, Doctor Robert Levin. "We understand the concern this new virus is causing. The risk

to the public from COVID-19 remains low. Community members are encouraged to take the same steps they would take to help prevent colds and the flu. Preparing for social distancing is still recommended.”

According to the California Department of Public Health, as of March 5, 2020, there are a total of 60 positive cases in California: 24 travel related cases and 19 other confirmed cases. This is the first positive case, pending CDC confirmation, in Ventura County. As of March 6, 2020, there have been 8 people tested, 7 negative results, 2 pending result, 25 travelers on home quarantine, and 1 traveler under quarantine with no symptoms at Naval Base Ventura County – Point Mugu.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are like the flu, which include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or up to 14 days after exposure.

If you are presenting symptoms of COVID-19 and may have had contact with a person with COVID-19 or had recent international travel please contact your health care provider. Before seeking medical care, consult with your provider first to prevent possible transmission in the health care setting.

#### Recommendations for the Public

Take these precautions to stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like COVID-19:

Wash hands with soap and water and rub for at least 20 seconds;

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing;

Stay home if you are sick; and

Get a flu shot to protect yourself and others from flu, which has similar symptoms to COVID-19.

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