

# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 16, 2020**

**FROM: TERESA ANDERSON, HEALTH DIRECTOR**

## **CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON COVID-19**

Over the weekend, CDHD worked with over 100 returning travelers from New York City and the states of Washington and California to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Sponsors, teachers, and students on the trip returning from a New York City trip were asked to quarantine and self-monitor. Anderson explains, "In this instance, quarantine includes self-isolation where the person stays in an area of the home away from other household members for a period of 14 days." Anderson adds, "We ask that the person take and record his/her temperature every twelve hours. Additionally, we advise that if a person has symptoms of cough, fever, and/or shortness of breath, he/she should contact the health care provider."

CDHD also screened several folks returning from the states of California and Washington. As Nebraska DHHS clarified which counties are at highest risk for spread, we were able to reduce the number asked to quarantine. Additionally, based on DHHS guidance as of March 15, 2020, CDHD advises that all travelers returning from outside of Nebraska are at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19, and should limit public interactions, practice strict social-distancing and self-monitoring for symptoms. If a returning traveler develops fever or respiratory illness, they should IMMEDIATELY self-isolate and report to a provider or to CDHD. Travelers are advised to track the publicly reported COVID-19 disease burden areas to which they have travelled through both the local and state health departments and public media websites.

Tests for COVID-19 are still not readily available. At this time, certain criteria have been developed to assure that the people who are most likely to have COVID-19 are tested first. CDHD has been able to get approval for just 9 COVID tests to date. Six of these tests were negative and three test results are pending. Currently, there are no positive cases of COVID-19 in the Central District. Anderson states, "We continue to work on slowing the presence of COVID-19 in our district thereby reducing the strain on our healthcare system and on our community in general."