FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2020

COLUMBUS COUNTY COVID-19 UPDATE: 2 COVID-19 RELATED DEATHS & 5 NEW CASES OF COVID-19

Columbus County, NC – Columbus County is reporting two additional COVID-19 associated deaths. The individuals passed away on the morning of May 7 while hospitalized. The individuals were two of the previously identified positive cases in Columbus County. To protect the families’ privacy, no further information about these individuals will be released. We offer our deepest condolences and sympathies to all of the individuals’ family and friends in this very difficult time.

Columbus County also has five new cases of COVID-19 to report today. Our current total number of COVID-19 cases stands at 189. Three of the new cases are connected to positive family members, one case is work-related, and the source of infection could not be identified for one case. There have been thirteen COVID-19 related deaths in Columbus County. For more information about cases of COVID-19 in congregate living facilities or the number of cases by zip code, please visit the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services website.

There are 26 individuals that have completely recovered from COVID-19 in Columbus County. Many workplaces require at least two negative COVID-19 tests within 24 hours in order for individuals who no longer have symptoms to return to work after having COVID-19. Retesting many previously positive individuals found that, while they are no longer experiencing symptoms, they are continuing to test positive. Therefore, we cannot consider them recovered. Due to several COVID-19 outbreaks at congregate living facilities and the course of the disease lasting longer than 30 days for many individuals, we are continuing to process recoveries every day. We will be providing another update on COVID-19 recoveries next week.

With the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths continuing to rise in Columbus County, we are asking the public to take the necessary measures to stop the transmission of COVID-19. The Columbus County Health Department would like to remind everyone of the recommended measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which are:

- Social distancing (e.g. avoiding crowds, self-quarantining, no mass gatherings, only going out in public when necessary)
- Wearing a mask or face covering when in public places
- Washing hands frequently with soap and water, and for at least 20 seconds each time
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, throw it away, and then wash your hands
- Do not reuse tissue after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose

Public Health continues to work with our health and safety partners in the community to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to provide daily updates. The Columbus County Health Department regularly updates our Facebook page with accurate and current information regarding COVID-19 and Columbus County. For more information regarding, prevention, symptoms, reputable sources, and other important information please see our previous COVID-19 updates and press releases at Facebook.com/columbuscountyhealth. For information, you can also reach the Columbus County Health Department’s COVID-19 Call Center by calling 910-640-6615 ext. 7045 or 7046. The call center hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM.

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