

 <p>Ed Brandt EMS Coordinator 518-669-8711 cell <a href="mailto:edward.brandt@co.schoharie.ny.us">edward.brandt@co.schoharie.ny.us</a></p>	 <p>Colleen Flynn EM Coordinator 518-944-1284 cell <a href="mailto:colleen.flynn@co.schoharie.ny.us">colleen.flynn@co.schoharie.ny.us</a></p>	 <p>Matt Brisley Fire Coordinator 518-337-3594 cell <a href="mailto:mattbrisley@co.schoharie.ny.us">mattbrisley@co.schoharie.ny.us</a></p>	 <p>Jay Belfiore Safety Officer 518-491-0858 cell <a href="mailto:james.belfiore@co.schoharie.ny.us">james.belfiore@co.schoharie.ny.us</a></p>
--	--	---	---

## Message to Schoharie County Residents & Visitors

### *In response to COVID-19*

Schoharie, NY, March 23, 2020– Schoharie County Board of Supervisors would like to address some of the concerns we have heard from many of our residents.

Schoharie County currently has one confirmed case of COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus) and is responding with measures to proactively slow the spread by reducing exposure, thereby lessening the impact on our limited resources. We ALL have a responsibility to do whatever we can to assist in halting the rapid spread of this potentially deadly virus, which can be dangerous and even fatal to the elderly and people with underlying health issues.

In the last few days, we have seen exponential growth of confirmed cases in New York State. The number of cases more than doubled from Friday to Sunday. The number of exposures will increase with movement into the area from other parts of the state and country, requiring a large amount of resources by Public Health, First Responders, Health Care Providers and other Governmental Personnel to contain and limit further transmission. Schoharie County is a rural community with one small hospital, which is not equipped to provide the higher level of care COVID-19 patients will need and will quickly become taxed if they were to receive a large number of patients.

A vaccine does not yet exist, and the effectiveness of existing treatment varies from person to person. COVID-19 is a global pandemic, and no one is immune, no matter where you are. For those who believe the chance of contracting COVID-19 is less in Schoharie County than other areas, please understand that most small businesses are closed, services are severely strained, and grocery stores find it difficult to keep basic food/paper products stocked. Travel into Schoharie County at this time is inadvisable and discouraged.

### What Can We DO?

- DO wash your hands often, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Help younger children and make it fun. If soap and water is not available, DO use Hand Sanitizer.
- DO cough and sneeze into a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Immediately throw the tissue away and wash your hands. Avoid touching your face.
- DO limit social activities to your immediate family only. This includes all activities involving contact with other persons outside the home.
- DO enjoy outdoor activity, either solitary or remain at least six feet away from others. You should NOT play games that would require you to share an item (ball, bat, frisbee, etc.).
- DO contact your healthcare provider if you or a family member develop a fever, persistent cough or shortness of breath. Isolate yourself (or family member) and follow directions of your healthcare provider.

## What Should We NOT DO?

- DON'T travel here from another county or area which is experiencing a large community transmission of COVID-19. It is far better for you to stay home and limit your movements, rather than risk infecting someone who is elderly or has underlying health issues.
- DON'T have an expectation that resources will be available to you here that are not available to you in your hometown. The area has very limited healthcare resources and testing capacity. There are also limited food and non-food essentials.
- DON'T call Schoharie County Public Health Department. Contact your healthcare provider, and if they are unable to help, contact NYS Department of Health COVID-19 Hotline at 888-364-3065. If you have a life-threatening emergency, dial 911.
- DON'T constantly go out in public spaces. If you must go shopping, do so in one trip. Bring hand sanitizer with you and use it before entering the store and after leaving the store.
- DON'T utilize local healthcare unless you are an established patient. They are deeply impacted by this pandemic and cannot be expected to handle an increase in patient requests. Contact your own healthcare provider.
- DON'T go to your healthcare provider, urgent care or hospital without calling first. Access to healthcare facilities is heavily restricted due to COVID-19 in order to limit continued spread of the virus.
- DON'T shake hands, hug, kiss or otherwise touch anyone who is not in your immediate family.

Schoharie County Government is providing essential services with limited staffing. All offices remain closed to the public. If you have questions on what services are available, please see the Schoharie County COVID-19 Information webpage at <https://www4.schohariecounty-ny.gov/home/covid-19/>.

###