



# Chaffee County Public Health

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For immediate release:

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## Chaffee County Public Health Reports First COVID-19 Death of County Resident

Chaffee County Public Health is reporting that one of the patients who had recently received a positive COVID-19 test result has passed away from the virus. The patient was an 83 year old male with some underlying health conditions. He was tested on March 17<sup>th</sup>, was hospitalized locally on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and he was transported to a hospital outside of the county on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Chaffee County Public Health has been working with this patient's family to understand the activities that he was involved in upon falling ill and has been reaching out to community members who may have come into contact with him.

“Chaffee County Public Health strives to be as transparent as possible and provide the public with up-to-date, accurate information. However, in order to protect patient privacy, we are only releasing gender and age at this time. The purpose of the public health investigation is to understand the risk of all activities that occurred while the case was potentially infectious. We have identified the contacts who have exposure that put them at risk and are contacting them. Outdoor and casual activities and contacts like casual contact in a restaurant or passing in a hallway are not a risk for transmission.” Andrea Carlstrom, Chaffee County Public Health Director.

Community transmission is occurring in Colorado. The recommendation is not to wait for a test. Not everyone who has been exposed to or becomes ill with COVID-19 will be able to or need to have a test to confirm whether or not they have the illness. Isolation and quarantine, even without test results, is what people must do to slow the spread of this illness in our state. Even people who feel mild illness, and aren't sure, should follow self-isolation orders, and their contacts should follow self-quarantine orders.