



Lawrence · Douglas County  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Advancing Health for All



**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **First case of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) identified in Douglas County**

**LAWRENCE** – Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health is announcing the first case of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Douglas County. Testing sent to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment’s Laboratories identified the positive case.

The case involves a man in his 20s who recently traveled from Florida. Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health is working to identify any close contacts of the individual, and those who were exposed will be contacted as soon as possible. We will be monitoring them for fever and respiratory symptoms. No further information about the patient will be released.

The KDHE has [recent recommended guidelines](#) for quarantine and isolation of travelers who visited places in the United States where the disease is present in large numbers.

“Given the number of cases elsewhere in Kansas and in the United States, we have been working diligently with our local partners to prepare for a positive case here,” said Director Dan Partridge. “This confirms what we’ve thought for days now — that coronavirus is in our community, and we need to continue to take appropriate action.”

On March 13, Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health [ordered closures](#) in effect until March 30 of all K-12 schools in Douglas County, recreational facilities and public libraries in an effort to stem the outbreak, on advice of Douglas County Health Officer Dr. Thomas Marcellino, who also on March 17 [prohibited public gatherings](#) in the county of more than 50 people for eight weeks to help stem the COVID-19 disease outbreak.

“The actions we have taken may yet need to be expanded if we are to effectively control the spread of the virus,” Marcellino said. “This case is also a reminder that we need the community’s support in complying with our recommendation.”

Marcellino has also strongly recommended:

- People avoid non-essential trips and stay home to the extent they can.
- Restaurants close in-house dining and limit service to carry out or delivery.

- Daycare centers close while schools are closed.
- Retirement communities and long-term care centers limit visitors.
- People avoid large gatherings including sports practices, games and tournaments and unnecessary social gatherings.
- If you do need to go out in public, work to ensure you maintain six feet from other people.

Public Health has worked closely on these decisions with numerous community partners, including Douglas County Government, City of Lawrence, Douglas County Emergency Management and leadership of local public and private school districts.

Douglas County residents can also stay informed as information changes frequently. For more information visit [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19) or [LDCHealth.org/Coronavirus](http://LDCHealth.org/Coronavirus).

For general information, call the KDHE phone bank at 1-866-534-3463 (1-866-KDHEINF) Monday – Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m., email [COVID-19@ks.gov](mailto:COVID-19@ks.gov) or Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health’s information line at 785-856-4343 or email [info@ldchealth.org](mailto:info@ldchealth.org).

#### **About Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health**

Nationally accredited Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 130 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

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