



Cook County DEPT. of
Public Health

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**Public Health Officials Announce Two Chicago Patients Released
From Home Isolation Per CDC Guidance**

Repeat negative test results indicate no virus present

CHICAGO – The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) are today announcing the two Chicago area patients confirmed as having had coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) were released from home isolation late yesterday, following U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance.

“Our two Illinois residents with confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 have recovered from their illnesses and there has been no further spread of the virus from these two cases,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “The risk to the general public remains low and we are continuing to use every tool at our disposal to keep our community safe.”

“Based on what is currently known about the virus, and after close consultation with CDC and IDPH, we believe both patients can now safely return to their regular activities, including work, without restrictions,” said CDPH Commissioner Dr. Allison Arwady. “They have now had multiple rounds of negative testing for the virus and are clinically well. They do not need to wear masks, and neither does anyone interacting with them. They have been cleared.”

“We understand people may be concerned because this is a new disease, but it’s difficult to spread what you don’t have. The negative test results mean there is no virus present,” said CCDPH Chief Operating Officer Dr. Terry Mason. “You can’t spread what you don’t have. We hope the media and the public will respect the couple’s privacy and be kind to them. They have been through a lot. We thank them, and everyone else involved, for their cooperation throughout the process; including the hospital, healthcare workers, public health employees and contacts who were later ruled out.”

Due to privacy concerns, no further information will be shared about the couple that was previously hospitalized at AMITA St. Alexius Medical Center in Hoffman Estates in January and released to home isolation Feb. 7.

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The woman – a Chicago resident in her 60s who had returned from Wuhan, China – was identified as the first confirmed Illinois case of COVID-19 on Jan. 24, and her husband, also in his 60s, was the second confirmed Illinois case and first human-to-human transmission in the U.S. identified on Jan. 30.

Public health officials worked to identify and actively monitor individuals who were in contact with both confirmed cases in an effort to reduce the risk of additional transmission. A CDC team was also deployed to Illinois to support these efforts and has since returned to Atlanta.

CDC is closely monitoring the outbreak of respiratory illness caused by COVID-19 that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and which continues to expand. There have now been close to 50,000 cases worldwide and more than 1,300 deaths; the vast majority in China. Symptoms reported among patients have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. Right now, because it has not been found to be spreading widely in the U.S., there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take.

Public health officials are encouraging the public to go about their daily business as usual and remain vigilant about keeping germs from spreading, by covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands with warm soap and water, and staying home when sick.

For more information, contact:

- Illinois Department of Public Health
 - Call the COVID-19 Hotline at 1-800-889-3931
 - Email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV
 - Visit <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>
- Chicago Department of Public Health
 - Call 311
 - Visit https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/health_protection_and_response/svcs/2019-novel-coronavirus--2019-ncov-.html
- Cook County Department of Public Health
 - Call 708-633-4000
 - Visit <https://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/communicable-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

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