

Transylvania County United *Community Response*

COVID-19 TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY UPDATE TO CITIZENS #6 – March 21 , 2020

Please refer to prior updates at www.transylvaniacounty.org for additional information

There are currently no confirmed cases in Transylvania County. Emergency Management and Public Health Continue to work with state and federal systems to keep information current and to confirm plans to respond should a local outbreak occur. Please consider the guidance on social distancing and limit time in public to the extent possible to help slow down the rate of potential exposure.

Governor Cooper has revised recommendations to limit gatherings to no more than 50 people. All restaurants and bars must be take out or delivery only. Additional information, including changes to unemployment benefits can be found at: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina>. State NCDHHS has also provided a text alert system for citizens to sign up for: State COVID-19 text information and updates are available. To sign up, text COVIDNC to 898211.

Locally, organizations are continuing to work collaboratively even while social distancing is requiring changes to public spaces. Here are updates:

* If a restaurant has outdoor seating, onsite consumption in the outdoor seating area is not permitted pursuant to the Order of Abatement by the state. Restaurant staff are not permitted to serve patrons indoors or in the outdoor seating area and all areas of North Carolina are subject to mass gathering restrictions and social distancing guidelines.

*Duke Energy remains committed to working with all customers who need assistance with their energy bills to avoid creating additional hardships. As you know, last week we announced that we will not disconnect any customer's service for non-payment. Earlier today, Duke Energy Carolinas and Duke Energy Progress filed a request with the North Carolina Utilities Commission for several additional areas of relief for our customers including:

- Waiver of late fees for both residential and non-residential customers
- Waiver of returned check fees for both residential and non-residential customers
- Waiver of reconnect fees for both residential and non-residential customers
- Waiver of credit card/debit fees for residential customers only
- Authorization to work with customers on deposit issues
- Formally notified the NCUC of our suspension of non-pay disconnects effective March 13, 2020

The company also announced \$1.3 million in donations by The Duke Energy Foundation to support hunger relief and help local health and human service nonprofits across its service territories, including those providing meals to children and families impacted by school closures.

Locally, we are announcing a \$3,000 grant to the **Sharing House** to assist with their hunger relief efforts. Thanks to Shelly Webb, her staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication in helping the citizens of Transylvania County.

*PARI is proud to partner with Transylvania County Schools during this time of need. We are offering homework help to TC students in Math and Science, Monday - Friday from 10am - 4pm. Please call us at 828-862-5554 for 1-on-1 help with one of our educators.

*President Trump has ordered the Treasury Department to move Tax Day to July 15 giving citizens more time to file.

*Transylvania Public Health will be giving regular updates on COVID-19 cases. The report below is from Friday 3/20, but will be posted day of preparation with target start on Monday 3/23. Since this report, both Buncombe and Henderson have confirmed their first positive citizen case of COVID-19. Transylvania County does not currently have any confirmed cases.

Daily COVID-19 Briefing For Transylvania County Employees - 3/20/20

UPDATED CASE COUNTS:

As of Friday, March 20, there are currently NO cases of COVID-19 in Transylvania County. Several county residents have been tested for COVID-19, but all test results received so far have been negative.

North Carolina has 137 cases in 28 counties* (Brunswick, Cabarrus, Chatham, Craven, Davidson, Durham, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Iredell, Johnston, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Moore, New Hanover, Orange, Onslow, Pasquotank, Pitt, Rowan, Sampson, Union, Wake, Wayne, Wilson, and Watauga). *There are additional COVID-19 cases being tracked by North Carolina public health agencies that are not included in these numbers because they are officially residents of other states. In western North Carolina, COVID-19 cases have been reported in Cherokee County and Macon County, but both of these cases are residents of New York and will not be reported in NC statistics.

In the US, the CDC is reporting 15,219 cases and 201 deaths in all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the US Virgin Islands. The states with the highest number of cases are New York (6894 cases), Washington (1376), and California (982).

NEWS FOR TODAY:

Yesterday, North Carolina public health officials confirmed a case of COVID-19 acquired from community spread in Wilson County. Public health officials are advising that testing of people with mild symptoms will become less important as we move into the "mitigation" phase of response.

Drive-through testing options in both Henderson and Buncombe counties are closed at least until Monday. If you have a fever and cough or trouble breathing, stay at home contact your healthcare provider by phone. Do not go to the emergency room unless you are experiencing a true medical emergency.

People at higher risk for severe illness are urged to stay at home as much as possible. Everyone should practice social distancing, minimize group activities, and wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and running water.

Today, Transylvania County declared a state of emergency, which allows the county more flexibility in accessing needed resources. At this time, there are no plans for the state to close additional businesses or issue shelter-in-place orders. The state has activated the National Guard to help with receiving and distributing needed medical supplies.

For more information, visit <http://transylvaniahealth.org/covid-19>

