



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Health Outlines Differences Between Quarantine and Isolation Regarding COVID-19, Announces One New Presumptive Positive Case in Philadelphia

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Health this afternoon provided an update on COVID-19 and confirmed one additional presumptive positive case of COVID-19, the first in Philadelphia County, bringing the statewide total to 12. This patient is in isolation at home.

“Isolation and quarantine help protect the public by preventing exposure to people who may have a contagious disease,” Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said.

“Pennsylvanians should know that we are taking every precaution to keep our communities safe. If someone is sick with COVID-19, they are in isolation at home or at a hospital and getting medical care. If someone is in quarantine, they have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19 and are at home to limit exposure to the community.”

Isolation separates people who are sick with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. Isolation is usually voluntary, but in an emergency, the department has the authority to isolate people who are sick.

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. If someone is in quarantine, they may not become sick. Quarantines can also be voluntary, but in an emergency or disease outbreak, the department has the authority to require someone to be quarantined if they come in contact with someone who has an infectious disease.

“While we anticipate that there will be more Pennsylvanians with COVID-19 in the coming days and weeks, it is important for residents to know the commonwealth is prepared and to be prepared themselves,” Dr. Levine said. “Right now, you have a higher chance of testing positive for COVID-19 if you have traveled to a country or state with known community outbreaks or have come in contact with someone who has the virus. We are working with the health care community across Pennsylvania to keep them informed, consult on patient testing and ensuring they have the resources they need to care for patients.”

To date, there are more than 116,000 cases worldwide, including more than 4,000 deaths. There are 761 cases and 27 deaths to date in the United States. The

department expects cases to continue to be confirmed in the upcoming days and weeks but wants everyone to take action to help prevent the spread of the virus. The department also said due to the rapidly changing nature of the spread of COVID-19 around the world, it is important for families to be prepared.

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