Good morning Mayors and Administrators:

As we are responding to the changing situation of COVID 19, I wanted to keep you updated on the current response of the Somerset County Dept of health.

The county Department of Health is actively:

**Keeping health officials, emergency response teams and the public informed**
- The SCDOH continues to provide the best available scientific information, management practices, and federal and state guidelines related to the coronavirus (COVID-19), including links to essential resources, to officials, citizens, employees and partner organizations.
- Municipalities are asked to share this with their communities and provide updates from the SCDOH on their websites.

**Watching for and identifying disease in our communities**
- In response to the expanding global outbreak of COVID-19, the county’s public health response is aggressive and specific. The SCDOH is utilizing surveillance systems to track the movement of the virus and identify any case of COVID-19 that may arise in Somerset County. The SCDOH is ready to implement public health interventions to reduce the potential spread and impact.
- The SCDOH plans to use isolation and quarantine measures to decrease the introduction and spread of the virus in our communities.
- The CDC and the NJDOH have defined criteria for individuals with specific travel histories and have advised public health agencies of people in our communities who meet these travel criteria. These individuals will be contacted by the Department of Health’s professional staff to assess the risk of exposure to COVID-19. The SCDOH will implement quarantine measures when individuals fit certain risk categories.

**Planning for non-pharmaceutical interventions**
- Although there are currently no cases in New Jersey or Somerset County, the SCDOH has established guidelines to detect and investigate potential cases of COVID-19 in our communities.
- The county is simultaneously considering other protective measures, including non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI), that are appropriate for the current incidence of COVID-19 in the U.S. Non-pharmaceutical interventions are actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, which people and communities can follow to help slow the spread of illnesses. These actions can include maintaining or increasing the distance between people, promoting common-sense health habits and encouraging the proper cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces. These measures are an important way to fight the spread of an outbreak and reduce its impact on communities as a whole.
- Reviewing pandemic preparedness protocols and response plans in the event the COVID-19 reaches the level of a pandemic.

**Coordination with health officials and emergency response teams**
- The county Department of Health and the Office of Emergency Management are meeting with key partners to discuss how best to coordinate, support and enhance countywide and municipal preparedness and response efforts.
- Public health officials are also working with local emergency management partners to support the implementation of public health response at the municipal level.
The SCDOH is coordinating conference calls and in-person meetings with public health partners to provide situational awareness, share relevant information, address concerns and modify our response to the event based on the evolving situation.

At this time if you have not already done so, please consider scheduling stakeholder meetings with your emergency management department and individuals in your community who would be a part of this response. At these meetings, I would like to discuss steps outlined above and focus on some specific measures within your municipality -- communication protocols, isolation and quarantine protocols and address any questions you may have.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me via email or the number listed below.

Regards,

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