Montgomery County Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO BEGIN CONTACT TRACING MONDAY FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind. — Last week, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) began assisting county health departments with contact tracing. The first phase consisted of 20 counties, and beginning Monday, May 18 Montgomery County will be among those in the next phase to be assisted by the ISDH.

Contact tracing is used to determine those who have been in contact with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19. Contact tracing also provides what steps should be taken to prevent others from getting sick. It is essential to slowing the spread and safely reopening the State of Indiana.

As part of getting Indiana "Back on Track," the ISDH has opened a call center staffed with more than 500 trained people to conduct contact tracing throughout the state. Though contact tracing will mostly be done at the state level, the MCHD will continue to assist with tracking down contacts as needed and will be available to citizens if they have any questions or need information.

"As the number of positive COVID-19 cases increase in Montgomery County, contact tracing has become more difficult to complete," said Becki Reynolds, Montgomery County Public Health Nurse. "With the state assuming contact tracing for all Indiana counties, they will have the ability for closer, daily follow-up with positive cases and their close contacts."

When someone tests positive for COVID-19, they will be interviewed by an ISDH representative about who they were in contact with over the infectious period. The call center will also notify contacts that were exposed. Contact tracers will discuss symptoms, refer to testing as needed, and will monitor by text or email for up to 14 days after exposure. Contact tracing ensures that people with COVID19 are provided necessary care, given instructions for self-isolation, and connected with local support resources.

The MCHD would like residents to be aware that in the case you test positive or are identified as an exposed contact, you may receive a text or email asking you to contact the ISDH. You may also be asked to send a daily symptom assessment by text or email and contacted to follow-up on reported information as needed.

"When we were notified that the state was going to assist with contact tracing, we definitely had some concerns," said Amber Reed, Montgomery County Health Department Administrator. "There are connections we can make as a local community that an outside agency may never be able to do. For us, it's personal. These are people we know, the people that we live with, work with, and spend time with. These people are members of our community and we care about them on a personal level. After going through the training and informational conferences with the state, we began to feel more comfortable knowing we remain in the loop, we can see the information they are gathering and follow up wherever we need. Right now, we're doing this with one person. This will free us up to be able to answer the individual calls we get with more questions. In the end we believe this will be a true benefit."

Please note that you will never be asked for money, financial information or for your social security number.

Stay connected with the Montgomery County Health Department website and social media channels for updates and other information. Additional information is also available on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website (www.coronavirus.gov) or the Indiana State Department of Health website (www.in.gov/coronavirus).

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