**CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**COVID-19 CASES RAPIDLY INCREASING**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 2, 2020**

As of 4:00 p.m. today, Central District Health Department (CDHD) reports a running total of thirty-three (33) positive lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19. This number includes twelve (12) new cases, of which nine (9) are in Hall, two are in Hamilton County, and includes the first confirmed case for Merrick County. This is a 50% increase over yesterday’s count of 21. Please note these numbers do not include the cases which are diagnosed by healthcare providers based on symptom pattern. Since there is no specific treatment for Covid-19 infections, providers determine the necessity of testing. It is estimated that for every person diagnosed with COVID-19, 10 people have it but have not been diagnosed.

CDHD is issuing an additional directed health measure, DHM 2020-2, that will effectively close salons and parks in the Central District until further notice. Please refer to the directed health measure for further details. Hike and bike trails will remain open. CDHD encourages the community to get out and travel the trails, keeping social distancing in mind.

**It is absolutely essential to stay away from others whenever you can**. We know that we have community wide-spread. We also know that some people carry the virus but have no or very mild symptoms, so they continue to be out in the community. This means that when you are around others, you put yourself and others at risk for catching COVID-19. Limit your outings to stores as much as possible and only send one family member into the store at a time. If you are sick, stay away from others. Remember, it is important for everyone to wash their hands often and well.

Our community is now being targeted by the COVID-19 virus. The choices we each make in the coming days are absolutely critical to reducing the number of people who become infected with the virus.