Governor Whitmer Activates State Emergency Operations Center to Coordinate State of Michigan Response to Coronavirus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Whitmer Activates State Emergency Operations Center to Coordinate State of Michigan Response to Coronavirus

LANSING, Mich. -- Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer activated the state Emergency Operations Center to coordinate with state, local and federal agencies to help prevent the spread of Novel Coronavirus.

The governor, Chief Medical Executive Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Director Major General Paul Rogers, and Captain Emmitt McGowan of the Michigan State Police gave an update on coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Michigan to inform Michiganders on how the state is preparing to protect public health. As of now, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Michigan, but Michiganders should take all necessary precautions to prepare and to keep themselves and their families safe.

“Right now, we’re harnessing all of the resources of state government to help people prepare and keep themselves and their families safe,” said **Governor Whitmer.** “By activating the State Emergency Operations Center, we’re ensuring that every branch of state government is on alert, and actively coordinating to prevent the spread of Coronavirus if it comes to Michigan. We are taking this step out of an abundance of caution. We will continue to take every necessary precaution to keep Michiganders safe.”

“While the current risk to the general public of getting COVID-19 is low, we need to use all of our public health tools to make sure we are prepared,” said **Dr. Joneigh Khaldun**, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health for Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). “Michiganders can be assured that we are taking this seriously and we will continue to make preparations to limit the spread and impact of COVID 19. Everyone can do basic things like washing hands frequently, covering their coughs appropriately, and staying home if they feel unwell to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.”

COVID-19 has been identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan City in the Hubei Province of China. As of February 27th, there were over 81,000 cases globally, with over 78,000 of those in China, including over 2,600 deaths in China. Investigations are ongoing to learn more, but person-to-person spread of the virus has occurred according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Patients with confirmed infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The best prevention for viruses, such as influenza, the common cold or COVID-19 is to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home, and avoid contact with others.

On Feb. 3, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) activated the Community Health Emergency Coordination Center (CHECC) to support local and state response to the outbreak. MDHHS is working closely with healthcare providers, local public health departments, and the CDC to identify potential cases of COVID-19 in Michigan. MDHHS has implemented emergency response standard operating procedures that address infectious disease outbreaks and new or emerging illnesses, such as COVID-19.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at **Michigan.gov/Coronavirus** and **CDC.gov/Coronavirus**.

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