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**DATE:** March 3, 2020

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission Continues Efforts to Control New Coronavirus**

While media reports about the spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continue, it should be noted that the immediate risk to the general public remains low at this time. Further, the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission (MBRHC), your local health department, remains vigilant in its monitoring and response to this new coronavirus; collaborating, planning, and meeting with partners including local, state and federal governmental partners. The Health Officer, Kevin G. Sumner, met last week with federal partners including a meeting at the White House led by U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, and other representatives of the Administration. This week he is meeting with local officials to assure a consistent message and that partners have the most current information.

The health department is regularly making current and accurate information available to healthcare providers, schools, and partners and are available to answer questions about COVID-19. In addition, the New Jersey State Department of Health, in partnership with the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System, has made available a 24-hour hotline to answer the public's questions. You can contact them at 1-800-222-1222.

Since it is cold and flu season, you may experience similar symptoms to the coronavirus. As with all respiratory illnesses, you can help protect yourself and others by practicing the following.

- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60% or greater alcohol.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- **Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.**
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.**
- **Be aware of current travel advisories at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>**

There has been a lot of attention recently to the use of masks. **CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.**

Like other health departments around the County, State, and Nation we are working hard to prevent the spread of disease, including the novel Coronavirus, and to keep you healthy. While the Coronavirus has made this work and the need for this work more visible, know that it goes on all the time to protect our communities.

For more information please contact the health department at 732-968-5151 or 908-753-8000 or NJPIES at 800-222-1222. In addition, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), the NJ Department of Health at [www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health), or the Commission at [www.middlebrookhealth.org](http://www.middlebrookhealth.org).