



Jackson County Department of Public Health

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For Immediate Release: December 15, 2020

To: Jackson County Community & Stakeholders

From: Jackson County Department of Public Health

Re: Jackson County Department of Public Health Identifies COVID-19 Outbreak at Local Assisted Living Facility

Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) has identified a COVID-19 outbreak at a local assisted living facility. The North Carolina Division of Public Health (NCDPH) defines an outbreak in a long term care setting, like a skilled nursing facility, as two or more laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 within two incubation periods (28 days) in the same facility.

Eleven (11) employee and twenty-six (26) residents at the Morningstar Assisted Living have tested positive for COVID-19. All positive individuals are following isolation orders as appropriate. Symptomatic individuals who test positive will be required to remain in isolation under the following conditions: 1) At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND, 2) At least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND 3) Symptoms (like cough and shortness of breath) have improved. Asymptomatic individuals who test positive will be required to remain in isolation under the following conditions: 1) At least 10 days have passed since their positive test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

JCDPH is working to identify any additional close contacts of these individuals. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with COVID-19 for 15 cumulative minutes during their period of infectivity. Based on the information provided, county health officials will determine the close contacts' risk of exposure and which additional measures are needed like quarantine and/or testing.

Upon notification of the first positive case, Morningstar Assisted Living coordinated with JCDPH to determine next steps. Morningstar Assisted Living coordinated testing for all staff and residents in the facility. Positive residents were immediately isolated and staff and residents will continue to be monitored for symptoms and re-tested as appropriate. The investigation is ongoing.

For information about COVID-19, look to reliable sources like JCDPH, NCDHHS, and the CDC. Visit JCDPH's website at <http://health.jacksonnc.org/covid19>. For COVID-19 questions, call the Jackson County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 828-631-HELP.

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