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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 7, 2020

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Steele County Experiencing Uptick in COVID-19 Cases

Steele County is seeing a rise in positive COVID-19 Cases as the total count is now at 41 positive cases. This is up 10 cases from yesterday. Those affected are asked to isolate themselves for 2 weeks and until symptoms subside for 10 days, with no fever for 3 days. The age range of cases are teens to those in their 70s. While most people are able to recover at home, those who are older or have underlying health conditions may require further medical assistance in a hospital.

An area business is experiencing a cluster of employees who have tested positive for COVID-19. Steele County Public Health is working in partnership with MDH, health care partners and the business to address the situation and to try to contain further spread.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spread primarily by respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread when people touch surfaces that have been contaminated by an infected person and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

There is much we do not know about this virus. However, there are things we can do to protect ourselves, our family members, our neighbors and our vulnerable populations. You can do this by taking the following actions:

- Wear a cloth face mask when you are out in public; especially when out getting groceries, supplies or medications. The mask will not protect you but will protect others in case you are carrying the virus unknowingly.
- If you are currently carpooling to your work or other places, please consider other options. If you do not have any other options wear a cloth face mask for some protection.
- Practice Social or Physical Distancing from others by keeping a distance of 6 feet between you and others out in public.
- If you have an underlying health condition or are an older adult, take precautions now. Consider limiting any visitors to your home. Consider asking others to assist you in getting the things you need, such as groceries or medications so that you do not have to go out where there are groups of people.

- Do not gather in groups. Find new ways to conduct your daily business. Make use of technology and use phones, FaceTime, Skype and other ways to communicate
- Stay home if you have cold or flu-like symptoms and avoid close contact with people who are sick. Try to separate other people in your household from any members that are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or into your sleeve, and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom or before eating. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your face – especially your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect your home to remove germs: practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- If you have symptoms of a respiratory disease (these include fever, coughing, muscle aches, sore throat, and headache), you should stay home for at least 10 days, and for 3 days with no fever and improvement of respiratory symptoms—whichever is longer. (Your fever should be gone for 3 days without using fever-reducing medicine.)
- Please seek healthcare for any other conditions you may have.
Allina Hospital and Mayo Clinic Health System in Owatonna are open and ready to help.

The most reliable and up to date information on coronavirus can be found at The Centers for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov and Minnesota Department of Health www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus websites. There is also an MDH hotline number at: (651)201-3920. Local questions can be answered by Steele County Public Health at: (507) 444-7650.