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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Huron County Public Health (HCPH) and Local Partners Urge Residents to Keep Calm and Connected

NORWALK, OH - Due to the Public Health Emergency of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) that is impacting the nation, local agencies and elected officials have been working together to implement a variety of emergency strategies put in place by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, to increase social distancing and slow the spread of this disease. We understand that these actions will have and continue to have a tremendous impact on all members of our community.

During this time, however, we want to encourage our residents to keep calm and stay connected with reliable and trustworthy information. There is no better time than during an emergency for communities to pull together and address our own individual duties to our county, state, and country. It is our duty to stay civil and treat our fellow residents with equity and empathy. We must allow all populations including senior citizens, people with access and functional needs, and other vulnerable populations within Huron County equal access to daily necessities. During this time, grocery stores, pharmacies and other essential services are **not being ordered to close**. HCPH and local partners want to re-emphasize that there is **no need** to hoard daily necessities including sanitizer, hand soap, thermometers, toilet paper, and medications. These actions and behaviors are unacceptable and irresponsible and are creating a large obstacle for our county's vulnerable populations and those in need of daily necessities. **We urge our residents to stop this behavior immediately.**

HCPH and community partners are continuously working to combine all resources and efforts in order to keep Huron County healthy, safe, and with minimal disruption. HCPH is working with Huron County Chamber of Commerce, Norwalk Economic Development Council, Huron County Economic Development, Huron County Commissioners and local businesses to provide resources for residents listing what food establishments and other facilities will continue to stay open during this precautionary period. These resources will be available to the public as they are released and will be shared on www.huroncountycovid.com.



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HCPH and partners acknowledge that crises like the global novel coronavirus pandemic can increase stress, anxiety, and depression. Huron County Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) will be offering a support line to manage community mental health concerns (anxiety, fear, depression, etc.) related to COVID-19. The support line phone number is 567-560-3600. The support line will begin Friday, March 20th at 4:00 p.m. and will operate 7 days a week from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Here are a few tips from the CDC and local mental health experts on how you can stay healthy mentally and physically:

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19. Make sure the coverage and information you do consume are credible and based on facts, not on rumors or speculation. Also, limit exposure to social media if not used to communicate and connect with loved ones.
- Take care of your body. If your gym or normal exercise facility is closed, get outside or do an at-home workout. It's easy to throw healthy routines out the window during emergency situations, so make sure to eat healthily, drink lots of water, wash your hands and sleep well.
- Connect with others. If you meet in small groups be cautious of your interactions and follow public health guidelines, but keep in contact with friends, family, and neighbors electronically or in-person if they are not sick. Call and FaceTime people over text and email to maintain as much human connection as possible.
- Maintain a positive sense of hope and positive thinking.
- Focus on aspects of your life you can control and don't dwell on negative, hypothetical situations.

Huron County Public Health (HCPH), Huron County Elected Officials, Huron County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Huron County first responders, Huron County Mental Health and Addiction Services, local area hospitals, and many other local partners are working closely with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to protect the public's health.

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