NOTE: Dr. Bob England, Pima County Health Department Director, will be available for on-camera and phone interviews between 4 and 4:45 p.m. at the Abrams Public Health Center, 3950 S. Country Club Road. Please contact Caitlin Jensen at 520-339-8631 to arrange an interview.

Public Health Agencies Announce Presumptive COVID-19 Case in Pima County

The Case is a Pima County Resident who Recently Returned from an Affected Area

TUCSON — The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and the Pima County Health Department (PCHD) announced today that a Pima County resident has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the disease caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus. The confirmed case is in a person who recently returned from travel in an area with community spread of the virus.

The patient is a resident of unincorporated Pima County. This individual is not severely ill, is currently recovering at home in isolation, and has been fully cooperative with public health monitoring. ADHS and PCHD are currently investigating any close contacts that may have been exposed while the person was infectious. Any individuals who have been identified as having been exposed will be contacted directly. These individuals will be monitored for fever and respiratory symptoms in collaboration with PCHD and medical providers.

"This does not change Pima County's approach as discussed in the press conference earlier today. We have been preparing for this for several weeks. We are not recommending closing schools or cancelling events," said Dr. Bob England, Director of the Pima County Health Department. "We know that most people who have gotten COVID-19 have mild symptoms and we ask that you stay home if you are sick. Those most at risk for developing severe complications from COVID-19 are older adults and those with existing chronic health conditions."

COVID-19 spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Symptoms are thought to appear within 2 to 14 days after exposure and consist of fever, cough, runny nose, or difficulty breathing. Those considered at highest risk for contracting the virus are individuals with travel to an area where the virus is spreading, or individuals in close contact with a person who is diagnosed as having COVID-19. Public health officials are working with anybody who may have been exposed.

Public health officials are advising residents that flu and other respiratory diseases are circulating in the community, and are recommending everyone get a flu shot and follow basic prevention guidelines.

The best ways to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, are to:

- 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.
- 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 immediately throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you have recently traveled to an area where COVID-19 is circulating, and have developed fever with cough or shortness of breath within 14 days of your travel, or have had contact with someone who is suspected to have 2019 novel coronavirus, please stay home. Most people with COVID-19 develop mild symptoms. If you have mild symptoms, please do not seek medical care, but do stay home and practice social distancing from others in the household where possible. If you do have shortness of breath or more severe symptoms, please call your health care provider to get instructions before arriving.

For the latest information about COVID-19, visit www.pima.gov/COVID19.

# # #