

## First confirmed COVID-19 case in McKinley County

Written by gallupsun  
Friday, 20 March 2020 16:32

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Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services has been hard at work preparing for COVID-19 in McKinley County. While there are currently no cases at RMCHCS, Health Officials have confirmed the first community acquired COVID-19 case in McKinley County, a 30-year-old male.

“We strongly encourage everyone to follow CDC guidelines on COVID-19 to help limit the spread of the virus. Please stay at home and only go out when absolutely necessary. Physical distancing is more important than ever,” said Chief Medical Officer Dr. Valory Wangler.

RMCHCS said it's taking important measures to ensure the safety of the patients and staff. All patients, visitors and employees must go through a simple screening process before entering any of the facilities. Screenings are taking place at Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital's emergency entrance and at the main entrances to all other RMCHCS facilities.

All other entrances are closed. Those who do not pass the initial screening will receive further screening and testing at the mobile health unit parked in front of the main hospital entrance, for further screening and/or testing.

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RMCHCS' WellSpring Recovery Center is currently on lock-down. RMCHCS has notified families of this and are arranging for clients to connect with their families via phone as appropriate.

The RMCHCS Board of Trustees held a special meeting to discuss additional precautions to minimize the possibility of the coronavirus entering its facilities. The Board passed a motion to reduce elective hospital admissions by cutting non-essential and non-life threatening procedures that can safely be postponed for two months. The attending providers will determine on a case-by-case basis, which procedures can wait and which ones cannot.

The Board also gave administrative staff permission to deploy all avenues for mitigating the financial negative effect resulting from this decision. This may include applying for FEMA, state or county funds, or cost reductions.

If you have had a fever in the past 14 days or have a cough and difficulty breathing, call RMCHCS COVID-19 Hotline at (505) 236-1074 before coming to the hospital. Drive-up coronavirus testing is available at the main entrance of Rehoboth Christian Hospital for those who qualify.

CDC guidelines: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/perpare/prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/perpare/prevention.html)

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