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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS FIRST CASE OF
NOVEL CORONAVIRUS IN PEAPACK-GLADSTONE**

Peapack-Gladstone, NJ (March 20, 2020) – The Bernards Township Health Department, in conjunction with NJ Department of Health (NJDOH) has confirmed its first case of COVID-19 in Peapack-Gladstone. To date, 23 cases of COVID-19 are confirmed in Somerset County 743 cases have been identified in New Jersey.

Currently, there is no vaccination for COVID-19. The Bernards Township Health Department is encouraging all residents to take precautions and practice social distancing to protect themselves and others from respiratory illness:

- Avoid crowds and large gatherings always maintain at least a 6-foot distance.
- Stay home if you are sick. Limit close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The Health Department is doing epidemiological interviews to determine any individuals with close contact of a lab confirmed case of COVID-19. The Health Department will contact these elevated-risk individuals directly to advise them about additional precautions they should take to prevent spread of the virus. Please do not call 911 with questions about this case.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and it's easy for rumors and misinformation to be spread in the community. The Bernards Township Health Department is working closely with local officials, the **Peapack-Gladstone** Office of Emergency Management and the NJDOH to provide residents with the most up to date and accurate information.

Based upon New Jersey Department of Health guidance, individuals with **no symptoms** are not recommended to be tested. Individuals with **mild symptoms** should stay home if they are sick and follow the guidance of their healthcare provider. If you are experiencing **severe symptoms** or have had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 call your healthcare provider and ask about testing.

New Jersey has activated NJ 211 to help handle questions about COVID-19. NJ 211 is New Jersey's statewide, comprehensive information and referral service operated by United Ways of New Jersey. Residents can also text NJCOVID to 898-211 to receive text information and stay informed. To receive live text assistance, residents can text their zip code to 898-211.

For more information on COVID-19, visit:

Bernards Township Health Department website: www.bernardshealth.org

The New Jersey Department of Health website: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>

The Bernards Township Health Department is the contractual health agency serving Bernards Township, Bernardsville Borough, Chester Borough, Long Hill Township, Mendham Borough, and Peapack and Gladstone Borough. For more information, visit: <http://www.bernardshealth.org>.

Kind Regards,

Kingsley Hill
Emergency Management Coordinator
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