

## **ODH Opens Coronavirus Call Center**

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) opened a call center to answer questions regarding coronavirus, ODH Director Amy Acton announced Friday.

The call center will be open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and can be reached at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634), according to a news release from the department.

Call center staff includes licensed nurses and infectious disease experts. They will be available to answer questions and provide accurate information about COVID-19, the risk to the public and the state's response.

There are still no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio. In an additional announcement on Friday, ODH said there are now only two persons under investigation (PUI), down from three. Eight individuals have tested negative for the new virus, which has been spreading across the globe and in the U.S.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions -- such as heart, lung or kidney disease -- seem to be at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness. Early data suggest older people are twice as likely to have serious COVID-19 illness, the CDC said.

There are approximately 2.8 million Ohioans over age 60, ODH said in a news release urging long-term care facilities to follow CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Exercising good hand-washing, cough etiquette, and other preventive measures can significantly reduce the risk of contracting any respiratory illness. COVID-19 symptoms -- which generally appear two to 14 days after exposure -- include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Most people who become sick do not require hospitalization, but older adults, people with chronic health conditions and people with compromised immune systems are more likely to require more advanced care."