|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | *News Release* |
| 109 Governor Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219 ● **www.vdh.virginia.gov** |

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 17, 2020**

**Media Contact:** Robert Parker, public information officer, Western Region, robert.parker@vdh.virginia.gov or Breanne Forbes Hubbard, population health manager, Mount Rogers Health District, breanne.forbes-hubbard@vdh.virginia.gov

**MOUNT ROGERS HEALTH DISTRICT CONFIRMS FIRST CASE OF COVID-19 IN BLAND COUNTY**

(MARION, Virginia) – The Virginia Department of Health’s Mount Rogers Health District announced the first case of COVID-19 in Bland County. Close contacts have been informed and provided guidance by the Mount Rogers Health District.

“We now have COVID-19 cases throughout our entire district and our entire region,” said Karen Shelton, M.D., director of the Mount Rogers Health District. “There are no zero-risk environments, but we encourage our community to reduce the risk by strategies like physical distancing, wearing a mask, hand washing, and staying home when sick.”

“We all have a responsibility and duty to take this seriously and do everything we can to protect ourselves and those around us,” said Dr. Shelton. “While many people experience mild to moderate symptoms, almost all deaths in our district have been from vulnerable older adults. Please follow public health recommendations to protect these individuals.”

Testing is available at six local health departments three days a week by appointment. Visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites/> to find the closest health department. Testing is being provided at the Bland Medical Clinic by appointment - please call 276-688-4331. Testing is also available through some local health systems and health providers.

For more information, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus) and [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

# # #