

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 17, 2020

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**Williams County statement on COVID-19**

**Williston, N.D., (March 17, 2020)** – Williams County is actively monitoring the ongoing global situation with COVID-19. At this time, there are no reported cases located within Williams County, however we encourage citizens to follow the information and guidance currently being provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the North Dakota Department of Health, and the Upper Missouri District Health Unit for prevention and preparation. Within our capacity as county government and emergency management, we will support the Department of Health and the Health Unit with any preparation or response activities as needed and when called upon.

Williams County buildings remain open to the public at this time, and staff are reporting to work as scheduled. However the March 17<sup>th</sup> Williams County Park Board meeting has been postponed until April 7<sup>th</sup> and the March 19<sup>th</sup> Williams County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting will have a teleconference attendance option.

Effective Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, the NDSU Extension, which includes Williams County 4-H, has suspended all face-to-face events until April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Effective Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm, the Williams County Correctional Center has suspended all volunteer activity and programming until further notice and onsite visitation has been closed. Any call to the Sheriff's Office that is determined to be a non-emergency will be handled via phone or email. In the event that face-to-face contact between a Deputy and the public is required, they may ask the individual(s) additional questions about their travel history and/or any respiratory symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat) they may be experiencing. More information and updates from the Sheriff's Office can be found in this press release: <http://bit.ly/3a0swKl>.

As always, all of our public areas and office spaces receive thorough, routine cleanings for health and safety. Our Facilities staff is being extra vigilant in high traffic areas.

Employees experiencing respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills or fatigue are asked not to report to work. Citizens experiencing similar symptoms are asked not to visit our public buildings.

Several Williams County services are provided online or by phone and the public is encouraged to utilize these services. If it is not critical that they visit the public buildings, then we ask that they refrain from doing so and instead attend to business online.

- Contact staff and departments by phone (<https://www.williamsnd.com/Directory>)
- To pay property taxes, visit <https://www.williamsnd.com/Property/>
- To complete an Absentee ballot application, visit (<https://vip.sos.nd.gov/absentee/Default.aspx>)
- Remote inmate visitation using HomeWAV (<https://www.homewav.com/>) is encouraged

Future changes to the status of Williams County operations or buildings will be communicated to the media, on [williamsnd.com](https://www.williamsnd.com) (<https://www.williamsnd.com/Department/Communications/COVID-19>), and posted to the Williams County Facebook page.

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**Communications Department**