NET✦HEALTH
NORTHEAST TEXAS PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coronavirus update and available East Texas Resources for COVID-19 Education

Tyler, Texas (March 17, 2020)

NET Health has received confirmation of the fifth COVID-19 case in Smith County. This individual had direct exposure to a known confirmed case in Smith County.

NET Health will update the website **MyNETHealth.org/coronavirus** daily with new information by 2:00 p.m. each day. Access to the most up to date information on COVID-19 in East Texas, including the total number of confirmed cases in East Texas that are reported to NET Health's Disease Surveillance Division, will also be listed at **MyNETHealth.org/coronavirus**.

A news release updating the public will be sent daily by 2:00 p.m.

"With a variety of misinformation circulating through social media and other informational sources, the goal of our NET Health website is to provide the public with easily accessible and factual information," said Terrence Ates, Public Information Officer for NET Health.

MyNETHealth.org/coronavirus also provides a link to the overall number of statewide confirmed COVID-19 cases provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

Our Disease Surveillance Division works with the Public Health Lab of East Texas and with private laboratories across East Texas that are receiving and analyzing all COVID-19 samples from local hospitals and community clinics in our region. This testing criteria that is performed at local hospitals and community clinics is the protocol established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

211 of East Texas now operates a toll-free number that is staffed by medical professionals and call specialists who can help make the decision whether you should get tested for COVID-19 at your closest medical facility. Individuals who feel they may have been exposed to COVID-19 are asked to call 2 – 1 – 1 and select "Option 6".

Residents are being encouraged to follow NET Health's website at MyNETHealth.org, and our social media outlets (@MyNETHealth) on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

Everyone is reminded to take the same measures that are recommended to prevent the spread of the flu and other respiratory viruses. Everyone in East Texas should remember to:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Practice social distancing - Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay home if you believe you have symptoms.

- Cover your cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow or into a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects using a cleaning items that contain bleach.

- Follow recommendations from your local health district officials.

- If you believe you have COVID-19 symptoms, please be sure to call the location before going to your doctor or emergency department to prevent any potential spread.

About the Northeast Texas Public Health District (NET Health)

NET Health serves a vital function through our Departments of Immunizations, Tuberculosis Control, Laboratory Services, Vital Statistics, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Disease Surveillance, Environmental Health, WIC, and Community Outreach.

Visit us at **MyNETHealth.org**. **"Like" us on Facebook** and **"Follow" us on Instagram**.