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PRESS RELEASE

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Cherokee County launches COVID-19 webpage, implements protocols related to public services

Cherokee County, Ga. - The Cherokee County government and Cherokee Emergency Management Agency are working closely with the Department of Public Health, as well as all local public safety agencies, to monitor and prepare for a potential outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). In addition, the county has implemented more stringent cleaning and developed a webpage to share up-to-date information specifically about COVID-19 and its effects on Cherokee County.

“The Cherokee Emergency Management Agency is in daily contact with federal, state, local and partner agencies to gain the latest information and guidance available for COVID-19,” said Emergency Management Agency Director Craig Millsap. “We urge our citizens to be vigilant and take the threat presented from the Coronavirus seriously. Please take the appropriate actions to protect yourselves in the same way you would from other potentially infectious diseases. We urge our citizens to be planning and making preparations now to aid us in preventing the spread here in Cherokee County.”

According to the Georgia Department of Health, there are three confirmed COVID-19 cases in Cherokee. One patient is being quarantined at Hard Labor State Park, the state’s dedicated quarantine area for those who cannot be isolated at home. The other two patients have been medically evaluated, released and are now quarantined.

County officials have adopted extra safety precautions relating to public services. Cherokee Board of Commissioners Chairman Harry Johnston said the county is as prepared as possible, and officials are working daily to stay abreast of the latest information.

“It is important to us to keep Cherokee a safe place to live, work and play. We need the public’s cooperation, so we ask that you follow the guidance of public health officials,” Johnston said. “This situation is ever-changing, and we are committed to staying on top of any local developments, to act on them effectively and responsibly, and to keep you informed to the extent allowed by law.”

The Cherokee County Senior Center will close effective Saturday, March 14, until Monday, March 30. All Senior Center activities and outings during this time have been suspended. Services such as Meals on Wheels and Homemaker Care will continue during this time. For additional information about specific Senior Services, the public is encouraged to contact the Senior Center directly at 770-345-2675.

Community Services Director Bryan Reynolds said Cherokee Area Transportation System (CATS) Demand Response and Fixed Route services will continue as scheduled at this time. Service to the Cherokee County Senior Center and Empower Cherokee will be suspended from March 16 until March 30. CATS is taking extra precautions to limit the spread of germs. "CATS drivers are taking extra steps to frequently clean touched surfaces on the buses," Reynolds said. "The county will provide information from our partners at the Georgia Department of Public Health and CDC to riders about the virus and how to protect themselves."

Effective Saturday, March 14, all scheduled Cherokee Recreation & Parks (CRPA) activities are suspended until Monday, March 30. This includes all CRPA scheduled programs, including but not limited to, Recreation Center programs, rentals, and open-gym; Cherokee County Aquatic Center programs, rentals, and walk-ins; CRPA adult and youth athletic leagues; youth athletic association facility and field use; and tournament rentals. For additional information about specific recreation and parks activities, the public is encouraged to contact CRPA directly at 770-924-7768 or visit our web site at www.playcherokee.org.

All county officials are urging people to be mindful about hygiene and follow good handwashing practices. Those who feel ill should not leave home, but instead should call their healthcare provider for guidance.

"I encourage everyone to take common-sense precautions. Get your information from reliable sources and take extra precautions if you have any underlying medical condition, or you are one of our senior citizens, either could make you more vulnerable to infectious disease," said Chief Marshal Ron Hunton. "Moreover, we will provide any information we legally can when it becomes available."

The county will continue to work with our community partners to monitor and update plans as needed. In the meantime, citizens should continue to exercise necessary precautions while going about their lives: wash your hands, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. To get regular updates on the latest developments, please visit our website www.cherokeega.com to access the new webpage and follow us on social media utilizing the custom hashtag #CherokeeCOVID19.

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