For Immediate Release  
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Contact:  
Dr. James Gaskell, Medical Director, 740-447-5903 jgaskell@athenspublichealth.org  
Ruth Dudding, 740-447-5912, rdudding@athenspublichealth.org

The Athens City-County Health Department is closely monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Athens City-County Health Department has been preparing for public health emergencies, such as pandemics, since 2001. The health department has preparedness plans and policies in place that have been used for H1N1 and Influenza, for example. The health department Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and leadership staff are communicating bi-weekly with the Ohio Department of Health.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as of March 2, 2020, there are 86 cases of COVID-19 in the United States. Currently, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio. Testing for the virus continues to be completed at the CDC; limited testing is available at the state level.

Protection from COVID-19 is similar to steps one would take to protect themselves from the influenza virus. The health department encourages everyone to wash their hands at least twice a day with soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds. In addition to hand washing, practicing social distancing, a space of about 6 feet, and those who are sick should stay at home. Before considering travel, review travel restrictions explained on the CDC website.

The Athens City-County Health Department will continue to update the public on COVID-19 activity in Ohio and in Athens County as information becomes available. For more information about COVID-19, visit the Athens City-County Health Department website or Facebook page.

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