



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Seneca Nation Announces
Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

ALLEGANY TERRITORY, SALAMANCA, N.Y. – The Seneca Nation announced that a non-Seneca employee of the Seneca Nation Health System has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

The individual is a resident of Erie County who had limited patient contact at the Health System and last reported to work on Thursday, March 12. The employee showed no symptoms at that time, but began to feel ill later that evening. The individual has not returned to Seneca territory since that time. No other workers at the Health System have shown any symptoms to date.

“Last night, we were notified that an employee of our Health System has been diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19,” said Seneca Nation President Rickey Armstrong, Sr. “That individual showed excellent judgment in remaining away from the Health System and away from Seneca territory upon feeling ill, and our thoughts are with them. We will work cooperatively with Erie County health officials to provide any information we can, in order to assist all necessary response and notification measures.”

As of today, the Nation has closed the Allegany Health Center, the Cattaraugus Health Center, and the Cattaraugus Wellness Center, and will conduct deep cleaning procedures at each facility. Workers entering the buildings will continue to be temperature screened, as all visitors have been

for the past several days. The Nation will seek guidance of health officials pertaining to the re-opening of the Health System facilities. Individuals in need of services should call their primary care provider.

In keeping with the Nation's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, which the Nation has implemented over the past several days, President Armstrong has officially issued a State of Emergency on Seneca Nation Territories. The order will allow the Nation to access additional federal funding sources to aid in its response efforts.

"Protecting the health and welfare of our people, especially our elders and our vulnerable populations, remains our highest priority," President Armstrong said. "A task force of professionals from across Seneca Nation government continues working tirelessly to implement wide-ranging prevention and response efforts on our territories. Together, we will continue to aggressively monitor the situation on our territories and within our surrounding communities to take every responsible precaution to safeguard the Seneca people."

In addition to the measures announced today, President Armstrong has previously instituted travel restrictions for all Nation officials and employees, issued work-from-home and stand-by leave orders for Nation employees, adjusted the delivery of many on-territory services, canceled public activities, closed Nation facilities, and restricted outside visitation to the Nation's territories.

"I have said before that this unprecedented situation requires an unprecedented response, and that's what we are seeing," President Armstrong added. "The Seneca people can rest assured that every thoughtful decision is being made with our community in mind. We will get through this together."