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As part of Washington State public health system's response to novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), Northeast Tri County Health District (NETCHD) has been monitoring returning travelers for the illness. In one instance, a returning traveler met the screening criteria for testing. In coordination with healthcare and infection control staff, appropriate safeguards were implemented, samples were taken, and submitted to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The testing results were negative for COVID-19.

To date in Washington State, a total of 28 individuals have been tested for the virus with 1 person testing positive in January. There are currently 438 individuals in the state who are under public health monitoring. The immediate health risk to the general public remains low throughout the state and there is coordination with partners at the local, state, tribal, and federal level on efforts to protect public health and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Locally, NETCHD has been working with first responders and the medical community to emphasize the importance of early identification and care of individuals who meet the screening criteria for evaluation of COVID-19, which includes travel history to affected areas and onset of symptoms that include fever and lower respiratory system illness.

As with any viral respiratory illness, such as all coronavirus and the flu, there are steps people can take to reduce their risk of becoming ill and spreading the virus. These include:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid touching your mouth and eyes
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Stay away from people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick

The Washington State Department of Health has established a call center to address questions from the public about novel coronavirus. The public may call 1-800-525-0127 and press #. Additional information and resources may be found at www.netchd.org and www.doh.wa.gov/coronavirus.

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 Administration Phone: 509-684-2262, Fax: 509-684-1002
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Ferry County - 147 N. Clark, PO Box 584, Republic, WA 99166
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