



Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office

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MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Announces a Positive Test for COVID-19 of a Wellpath Nurse

The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office contracts with Wellpath, LLC to provide healthcare services to our residents at both our main Detention Center Central as well as our Juvenile Detention Center (formerly known as Detention Center North). On Sunday, March 22, one of Wellpath's nurses reported to work at the Juvenile Detention Center and passed through the standard screening which includes a temperature read as well as questions regarding potential symptoms and exposures related to COVID-19. This nurse had been on personal leave and she had not worked in the facility since March 3rd. Her temperature was less than 100.4 degrees, she indicated no symptoms or exposures, and the nurse entered the facility to begin work. However, less than 20 minutes later, the nurse reported differently and was sent home to self-quarantine. She was tested for COVID-19 the following day and has not been back to work since.

Late yesterday, MCSO learned that this nurse has tested positive for COVID-19.

Both the Mecklenburg County Health Department and MCSO have investigated whether this nurse may have exposed anyone else while at the Juvenile Detention Center on March 22nd. Thankfully, she had not yet seen any patients and had briefly been in the presence of one other staff person – another Wellpath nurse. In an abundance of caution, that second Wellpath nurse – though she has shown no symptoms – has been quarantined and tested for COVID-19.

Since the onset of the pandemic, Wellpath has isolated nine persons with related symptoms and/or potential exposure to COVID-19. All of those cases were persons being arrested and coming into the Arrest Processing Center at Detention Center Central (none at the Juvenile Detention Center), all have been tested for the virus, and of the seven test results returned to date, all have been negative. No other MCSO staff or contractors have tested positive for COVID-19 and there are still no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our detention population.

Sheriff McFadden is relieved that the potential exposure at the Juvenile Detention Center appears to have been extremely limited. The Sheriff is concerned for the nurse who is infected and prays for her speedy and full recovery. He also remains hopeful for news of the continued good health – and the soon return to work – of the second Wellpath Nurse who is currently quarantined.

MCSO continues to follow the CDC guidelines and is doing its best to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the detention centers.