



Barry County, Missouri

Health Department and Office of Emergency Management

Joint Press Release – 06.24.2020 1200 hrs.



COVID-19 positive case identified at local restaurant

The Barry County Health Department is reporting that two persons employed at Lai Lai Asian Buffet and Dining in Monett have tested positive for COVID-19. Both cases are a result of community spread and the individuals are under an isolation order. Close contacts are being contacted and as appropriate ordered to quarantine. All of those identified cases will be monitored daily by the Barry County Health Department.

Roger Brock, Administrator of the Barry County Health Department, commented, “the owners of the restaurant are working closely with the Health Department to take all practical measures to ensure the safest possible environment for our citizens. Lai Lai’s owner, out of an abundance of caution and a deep concern for staff, customers, and community has volunteered to close the business until July 6.” Additionally, they will complete an extensive deep cleaning of the restaurant, screen staff for symptoms of COVID-19 before each shift, require face coverings for all employees, and conduct frequent cleaning of all high touch surfaces.

Administrator Brock noted that COVID-19 is not food borne and diners are at no risk of contracting COVID-19 from their meal. There is a low-risk of contracting COVID-19 from employees who did not have a face covering. Customers do not need to self-quarantine unless symptoms develop. Anyone who develops symptoms should call their primary care provider or the Barry County Health Department at 417-847-2114.

Community-wide COVID-19 testing is available free on June 29 in Cassville, register online at <https://health.mo.gov/communitytest> or by calling 877-435-8411.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath or at least two of the following, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell." Symptoms may begin two days to two weeks after exposure.

“It is our personal responsibility to continue physical distancing, wear cloth face coverings, avoid large groups, and wash hands and surfaces frequently, to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in Barry County,” reminded Barry County Office of Emergency Management Director David Compton. On the closing of Lai Lai’s Buffet, Compton said, “it is extremely commendable; the owners are demonstrating an exceptional personal commitment to their community in making a decision to temporarily close.”

State of Missouri and Barry County Phase 2 Reopening began June 16 and remains in effect until June 30, 2020. Those rules include recommendations to maintain physical distancing, required source control masking in certain circumstances, and enhanced hygiene practices. Persons at a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 including those greater 65 years of age, who are immunocompromised or have chronic medical conditions should limit travel and wear a cloth face covering in public. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html>)

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