

**GOVERNOR**  
**ASA HUTCHINSON**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 11, 2020

**Governor Hutchinson Confirms State’s First  
Presumptive Positive COVID-19 Case**

*Signs Executive Order to Provide Increased Support for State Response*

**LITTLE ROCK** – Governor Asa Hutchinson today confirmed the first presumptive positive case of coronavirus, known as COVID-19, in Arkansas.

The case has been tested positive by the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for confirmation. The individual is currently in isolation in a hospital in Pine Bluff. This is an out-of-state travel-related case, and there is no indication that COVID-19 is spreading in Arkansas communities at this time.

Today, Governor Hutchinson also signed an executive order to declare a public health emergency to facilitate coordination and provide increased support to state agencies that are involved in response to the virus. You can find the executive order, EO 20-03, [HERE](#).

“For months, Arkansas has been well prepared to respond to COVID-19. More than two months ago, the Arkansas Department of Health, under the leadership of Dr. Nathaniel Smith, designated more than 70 of its employees to work exclusively on COVID-19. The team has worked tirelessly to coordinate our state’s response to a potential COVID-19 outbreak. Today, I also asked each of my Cabinet secretaries to prepare a continuity of operation plan in the event of an outbreak of the virus. I have also been in frequent communication with Vice President Mike Pence, the CDC, the Department of Health and Human Services, and numerous other governors for updates and information.

“The State is taking measures to respond to the confirmed case appropriately and swiftly so that information and resources are available for Arkansans. We are taking every measure to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus in Arkansas, but the best way to protect yourself from contracting any virus is by practicing healthy habits, washing your hands frequently and thoroughly, and staying close to home if you are not feeling well.”

**Governor’s Media Contact:** Press Shop ([press@governor.arkansas.gov](mailto:press@governor.arkansas.gov) or 501.683.3642)

If you have questions or concerns about COVID-19, you can contact the **Arkansas Department of Health** at 800.803.7847 or visit <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/>.

