FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GUILFORD COUNTY CONFIRMS FIRST CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) DEATH

GUILFORD COUNTY – Guilford County Division of Public Health (GCDPH) reports that a resident has died of COVID-19. The individual who was 78 years old, died on Tuesday, March 31, 2020 from complications associated with the virus. The patient had additional underlying medical conditions. To protect the family's privacy, no further information about this case will be released.

"We extend our deepest condolences to the family and their loved ones," said Guilford County Interim Health Director, Dr. Iulia Vann. "This death is a tragic occurrence in our efforts to combat COVID-19. It underscores the urgent need for us to take extra steps to protect residents who are particularly vulnerable to developing more serious illness, including elderly persons and those with underlying health conditions. The Public Health Department is taking necessary, carefully considered steps to slow down the spread of the disease and to protect those at greatest risk. We are facing a historic public health challenge and know this is a very difficult time. Our top priority continues to be protecting the health of our community. I urge every resident to strictly follow Guilford County's Stay at Home Proclamation Order as this is an important piece in the fight to slow community spread."

In addition to handwashing and other basic steps the public at large can take to prevent illness, GCDPH recommends additional measures to prevent exposure among vulnerable individuals, including those 65 years of age or older, those who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility, those with underlying health conditions particularly if not well-controlled (such as diabetes, asthma, chronic lung disease, serious heart conditions, liver and kidney disease and severe obesity) or those with weakened immune systems.

GCDPH recommends that vulnerable individuals:
- Stay home. Arrange for someone to deliver groceries and other items you need. Ensure you have at least a two-week supply of medications on hand.
- Travel only when necessary for essential services.
- When staying home, try to limit visitors as much as possible. Ask potential visitors if they are experiencing symptoms. Visitors who have fever, cough, or sore throat should not visit. Encourage phone calls and video chats instead.
- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating or before touching your face.
- Cover your sneeze or cough.
- If you need to leave the house, minimize contact with other people and with common surfaces.
- Stay at least six feet away from others. Avoid touching shared surfaces like door handles or counters. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer after touching any shared surfaces or objects.

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For more information, please visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and NCDHHS' website at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus.

For questions, please call the COVID-19 phone line toll-free at 866-462-3821. This helpline is staffed by the North Carolina Poison Control 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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