

# RC/PIO News & Notes 3-13-2020



FROM Eric Jens, GA DPH Risk Communicator  
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## News and Notes

COVID-19 continues to dominate discussions and actions through the state and beyond. We'll have a recap of some of those recent response efforts and a couple other topics of note in this week's edition.

## 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)



There is one death and 42 cases of COVID-19 in Georgia and are identified by county on this map which updates each day at midnight:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/georgia-department-public-health-covid-19-daily-status-report>

Joint Information Center activities continue to ramp up. We held a conference call Monday joined by most of our members which now number 147. We will schedule another conference call soon as timely information is a priority. It has been a challenge to keep up with the demand for many of us this week, but improvement efforts continue. It's encouraging to see more information being posted in the Web EOC virtual JIC. DPH districts are entering in their local activities in the situation report section. An education session is being held at this moment hosted by DPH District 8-1 Subject Matter Experts. Additional efforts continue including DPH Emergency Preparedness staff volunteers answering the 1-866-PUB-HLTH line to answer questions from medical providers and quite commonly from the public. This includes almost 500 calls received yesterday. The State Operation Center at GEMA is also active from 8:00 to 5:00 for Emergency Support Function-15 response. The best sources of information continue to be CDC and DPH websites, with many health districts and partner agencies strengthening those messages:

[CDC](#)

[Georgia](#)

In the U.S. there are 1,215 cases and 36 deaths in 42 states and the District of Columbia. Globally there are more than 135,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19, resulting in 3,337 deaths according to Johns Hopkins.

The virus is impacting everyone, and with that in mind the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities has some valuable information about how to help manage stress during situations such as this:

[DBHDD](#)

## COVID-19 Impacts

The Final Four PIO group held a meeting yesterday. It was held at about the same time as the NCAA announced the cancelation of all tournament games this year due to COVID-19. The group is making plans to meet quarterly to stay in touch for whatever the next major events ends up being. There will be no state DPH folks at the annual Emergency Manager's Association of Georgia conference next month. I've been at the last eight EMAG conferences and always found it to be one of the better opportunities for meeting with DPH and EMA professionals. To recap other cancelations/postponements: the Medical Counter Measures full scale exercise will not be held in two weeks, but will happen later this year. The DPH social media workshop that would have been yesterday is likely canceled this year. The statewide risk communicators meeting that would have been Wednesday is postponed and possibly canceled, although I would like to try to reschedule this one as it seems to have added importance this year. There is a statewide PIO/Risk Communicators conference call for state and district DPH today at noon.

## Animal Control Conference

Thanks to Venessa Sims with the State Department of Agriculture for sending us pictures of the Animal Control Conference held one week ago featuring Dr. Robert Geller from the Georgia Poison Control Center. It is one of many busy places at this time of COVID-19 response.



## Next Week Preview

More COVID-19.

### About "News & Notes"

"News & Notes" is a weekly communication aimed at risk communicators and public information officers within Georgia's 18 public health districts. The goal of the communication is to increase preparedness through the exchange of information about significant events, training and other planned activities. Some information herein may be considered FYUO or For Your Use Only. Please be judicious when forwarding. For questions, comments or to submit information for inclusion, contact Eric Jens at [Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov](mailto:Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov)