



Iron County Care and Share is Informed and Prepared
Organization will continue with service to the community - food pantry and emergency shelter

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CEDAR CITY, Utah, March 13, 2020 – Iron County Care and Share is staying informed about COVID-19 (also known as the Coronavirus) and how it is impacting our programs, services, and community. The organization has no knowledge of exposure, nor program participants that are ill or presenting symptoms and ask for your help in squashing stigma.

The agency is sharing the following available sources for current news and protective measures:

- Utah Coronavirus Information line 1-800-456-7707
- Utah.gov website: coronavirus.utah.gov

During this time stay informed. Know the facts, don't panic, and don't spread rumors. The following was taken from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website (*CDC, March 19, 2020, cdc.gov/coronavirus*)

Public health emergencies, such as the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), are stressful times for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can lead to social *stigma (1)* toward people, places, or things. For example, stigma and discrimination can occur when people associate a disease, such as COVID-19, with a population or nationality, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is specifically at risk for the disease. Stigma can also occur after a person has been released from COVID-19 quarantine even though they are not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others.

Stigma hurts everyone by creating fear or anger towards other people. Stigmatized groups may be subjected to Social avoidance or rejection, Denials of healthcare, education, housing or employment, and/or Physical violence.

Stigma affects the emotional or *mental health (2)* of stigmatized groups and the communities they live in. Stopping stigma is important to making communities and community members *resilient (3)*. Everyone can help stop stigma related to COVID-19 by knowing the facts and sharing them with others in your community.

Iron County Care and Share is a local, private non-profit dedicated to providing compassionate assistance and resources to individuals and families in need, offering them opportunities to increase their stability and self-sufficiency. Founded in 1984 by local community leaders seeking to address the issues of hunger and poverty among residents in southern Utah, Iron County Care and Share restores hope and dignity to families experiencing a housing or hunger related crisis. Iron County Care and Share today owns and operates the largest food pantry in the Iron County region, distributing over 800,000 lbs. of food each year to more than 1,700 food insecure households. Its 40 bed emergency shelter provides

safe shelter and warm meals for homeless men, women and children; more than 550 individuals sought shelter with Care and Share in 2019.

Key Terms:

1. Stigma occurs when people associate a risk with a specific people, place, or thing – like a minority population group – and there is no evidence that the risk is greater in that group than in the general population. Stigmatization is especially common in disease outbreaks.
(https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/cerccorner/article_123016.asp)
2. Resilience is the ability to withstand and recover from stress.
(<https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2017/08/predicting-community-resilience-and-recovery-after-a-disaster/>)
3. Mental health is defined by the World Health Organization as a state of well being in which a person realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-responseexternal> icon).

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