

---

# Parish of St. James

---

P. O. Box 106  
Convent, Louisiana 70723

---



Phone: (225) 562-2260  
FAX: (225) 562-2279  
TDD: (225) 562-8500

---

**Peter A. Dufresne**  
Parish President

March 23, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JOINT STATEMENT – RELEASED BY ST. JAMES PARISH HOSPITAL AND ST. JAMES PARISH OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

As of March 23, 2020, at noon, the Louisiana Department of Health has confirmed 8 positive COVID-19 cases and 1 COVID-19 related death in St. James Parish. COVID-19 patients are being treated in multiple parishes. Patients being treated at St. James Parish Hospital are in isolation. Those discharged home have been educated how to effectively quarantine. More information about best practices when you are in a household that has been affected by COVID-19 can be found on the hospital's website [sjph.org/coronavirus-information](http://sjph.org/coronavirus-information).

“Recent cases have indicated that St. James Parish now has an active community spread,” said Mary Ellen Pratt, St. James Parish Hospital CEO.

“The CDC considers a virus community spread if people have been affected in a certain area and some are unsure how or where they contracted the disease.”

As reported by the CDC, COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person contact through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person—typically 6 feet or closer to another person—coughs or sneezes.

“The spread of COVID-19 in our parish is not unexpected. We have been preparing for this moment and encouraging our residents to practice social distancing,” said Pete Dufresne, St. James Parish President.

“Our message is the same, but the urgency of that message is not. We now know that this highly infectious disease is spreading here. Please heed this warning and that of our Governor to stay home with your immediate family only.”

“Make no mistake, our actions today will impact our future.”

For the latest hospital communications related to COVID-19 visit [sjph.org/coronavirus-information](http://sjph.org/coronavirus-information) or visit the St. James Parish Hospital Facebook Page. For parish wide COVID-19 communications, visit the St. James Parish Government Facebook Page.



*Pete A. Dufresne*

*Mary Ellen Pratt*  
  
LARGE ENOUGH TO SERVE, SMALL ENOUGH TO CARE.

