

COVID-19 Talking Points for LPH

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There is an expanding global outbreak of respiratory illness called COVID-19 caused by a novel (new) coronavirus. Community spread is being detected in a growing number of countries, including parts of the U.S.

There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Iowa.

- IDPH provides updates on persons being monitored, tested and test results every Monday, Wednesday and Friday on the department's COVID-19 webpage: <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>.
 - Remember there are seven different coronaviruses, and four of these are common. You may be diagnosed with a "coronavirus" if you have cold-like symptoms; this is not the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) that is in the headlines.

Public health efforts are focused on both containing the spread of the virus and mitigating its potential impact.

- We are working closely with the Iowa Department of Public Health and the CDC, as well as local public and private partners to prepare for the potential introduction and spread of COVID-19 in our county.
- Currently, individual risk of COVID-19 is dependent upon exposure.
 - This includes travelers returning from affected international locations where community spread is occurring. These locations are updated by the CDC and may be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

Everyone can do their part to help respond to this emerging public health threat.

- Every-day prevention methods are very important:
 - **Wash your hands frequently.**
 - **Stay home if you are ill.**
 - **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.**
- Perform routine cleaning.
 - Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, countertops) with the cleaners typically used. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.
- Individuals and communities should prepare for COVID-19.
 - We are working with schools and businesses to make plans for potential absences due to illness.
 - We recommend consideration of flexible schedules and tele-working or learning options.
 - We recommend flexible sick leave policies to care for individuals and their families.
 - We do not recommend the requirement of a doctor's note for sick leave.
 - Individuals should make a plan with their families.
 - This is similar to plans for other events, like severe storms, that could interrupt normal activities.
 - Individuals should consider plans if schools or businesses needed to close to modify their schedules.

- The Iowa Dept. of Public Health has many targeted recommendations for schools, businesses, long-term care facilities and more at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>.

If you have recently been to an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone sick with COVID-19 in the last 14 days, you may face some limitations on your movement and activity. Please follow public health instructions during this time.

- The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) has requested Iowans returning from a country where novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading to voluntarily self-isolate for 14 days following their return. Areas in this travel notice currently include:
 - Italy
 - Japan
 - South Korea
- Public health authorities, in accordance with the President's Task Force on Coronavirus are mandatorily monitoring travelers from:
 - Mainland China
 - Iran
- Your cooperation is integral to the ongoing public health response to try to slow spread of this virus.
- If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, contact your healthcare provider, and tell them about your symptoms and your travel or exposure to a COVID-19 patient BEFORE you go to the clinic or office.
 - Symptoms of COVID-19:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath