

# COVID-19 Prevention & Preparedness Resources

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## Introduction

The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak is an ongoing, rapidly developing situation. AHLA encourages its members to monitor publicly available information and to always follow federal, state and local health organization guidance.

This information is intended to assist AHLA members with top line guidance when dealing with viral infections. The information provided is obtained from publicly available sources, including federal agencies and governmental entities, member companies, other leading trade associations and consultants. This information may vary and will be updated depending upon current situations. As there is yet much to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other aspects of COVID-19, please be advised that AHLA gives no assurances as to the accuracy or completeness of the information provided.

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 (also referred to as “novel coronavirus”) is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the [coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans](#) and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

## Symptoms of COVID-19

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases according to the [CDC](#).

The following symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure**.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

According to the [WHO](#), the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

## How does COVID-19 Spread?

This virus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China according to [CDC](#). The first infections were linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now spreading from person-to-person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so.

This virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, particularly:

- between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community ("community spread") in some affected [geographic areas](#).

## Treatment of COVID-19

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

See [Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals](#) for information on persons under investigation.

## Who is at Risk?

Outbreaks of novel virus infections among people are always of public health concern. The risk from these outbreaks depends on characteristics of the virus, including how well it spreads between people, the severity of resulting illness, and the medical or other measures available to control the impact of the virus (for example, vaccine or treatment medications). The fact that this disease has caused illness, including illness resulting in death, and sustained person-to-person spread is concerning. These factors meet two of the criteria of a pandemic. As community spread is detected in more and more countries, the world moves closer toward meeting the third criteria, worldwide spread of the new virus.

Reported community spread of COVID-19 in parts of the United States raises the level of concern about the immediate threat for COVID-19 for those communities. The potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 is very high, to the United States and globally.

At this time, however, most people in the United States will have little immediate risk of exposure to this virus. This virus is NOT currently spreading widely in the United States. However, it is important to note that current global circumstances suggest it is likely that this virus will cause a pandemic. This is a rapidly evolving situation and the risk assessment will be updated as needed.

Current risk assessment:

- For most of the American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.
- People in communities where ongoing community spread with the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated, though still relatively low risk of exposure.

- Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Travelers returning from affected [international locations](#) where community spread is occurring also are at elevated risk of exposure.

CDC has developed [guidance to help in the risk assessment and management](#) of people with potential exposures to COVID-19.

## How to Prevent COVID-19

Stay informed. Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available. Visit [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov) and [www.WHO.int](http://www.WHO.int) for the latest information.

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the [WHO website](#) and through your national and local public health authority. Many countries around the world have seen cases of COVID-19 and several have seen outbreaks. Authorities in China and some other countries have succeeded in slowing or stopping their outbreaks. However, the situation is unpredictable so check regularly for the latest news.

You can reduce your chances of being infected or spreading COVID-19 by taking some simple precautions:

- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with a hand rub with at least 60% alcohol or wash them with soap and water. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
- Maintain at least 3 feet distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.  
Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
- Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Why?

Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

- Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority. Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.
- Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider or your national and local public health authority on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.
- Keep up to date on the latest COVID-19 hotspots (cities or local areas where COVID-19 is spreading widely).

## Employee Safety

This information is based on what is currently known about this new strain of COVID-19. It will be updated upon receiving new information. Updated copies of this booklet will be made available online to AHLA members at [www.ahla.com/covid19](http://www.ahla.com/covid19).

### Sanitation and Hygiene

If a hotel is located in an area where COVID-19 has been reported, the frequency of cleaning public surfaces in the hotel should be significantly increased. These include entrance/exit door handles, elevator buttons, public phones, computer keyboards, faucets, countertops, exercise equipment, and other commonly used surfaces. They should be decontaminated with soap and water or another approved sanitizer. Employees should be provided with surface sanitizers such as alcohol-based surface wipes that should be used to wipe workstation surfaces at the beginning of each shift.

Handwashing can help prevent illness. It involves five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry) you can take to reduce the spread of illness so you can stay healthy. Regular handwashing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. It's quick, it's simple, and it can keep us all from getting sick.

Hand washing should be done:

- **Before, during, and after** preparing food
- **Before** eating food
- **Before and after** caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- **Before and after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** using the toilet
- **After** [changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet](#)
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage

Employees should be reminded to not touch their own eyes, nose, and mouth until after they have washed their hands. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used to sanitize hands but should not be used as a substitute for hand washing.

To help encourage and promote good hygiene practices in the hospitality workplace,



hand sanitizing products (bulk dispenser or individual packets) should be located within the break rooms and employee cafeteria settings. In addition, housekeeping service carts should be stocked with hand sanitizing products to place into rooms to encourage guests to use them. Employees should also practice good sneezing/coughing etiquette.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

According to [CDC](#), employers should select appropriate PPE and provide it to healthcare professionals (HCP) in accordance with [OSHA's PPE standards \(29 CFR 1910 Subpart I\)](#). HCP must receive training on and demonstrate an understanding of when to use PPE; what PPE is necessary; [how to properly don, use, and doff icon](#) PPE in a manner to prevent self-contamination; how to properly dispose of or disinfect and maintain PPE; and the limitations of PPE. Any reusable PPE must be properly cleaned, decontaminated, and maintained after and between uses. Facilities should have policies and procedures describing a recommended sequence for safely donning and doffing PPE:

- **Gloves**
  - Perform hand hygiene, then put on clean, non-sterile gloves upon entry into the patient room or care area. Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated.
  - Remove and discard gloves when leaving the patient room or care area, and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- **Gowns**
  - Put on a clean isolation gown upon entry into the patient room or area. Change the gown if it becomes soiled. Remove and discard the gown in a dedicated container for waste or linen before leaving the patient room or care area. Disposable gowns should be discarded after use. Cloth gowns should be laundered after each use.
- **Respiratory Protection**
  - Use respiratory protection (i.e., a respirator) that is at least as protective as a fit-tested NIOSH-certified disposable N95 filtering facepiece respirator before entry into the patient room or care area. See appendix for respirator definition.

- Disposable respirators should be removed and discarded after exiting the patient's room or care area and closing the door. Perform hand hygiene after discarding the respirator.
- If reusable respirators (e.g., powered air purifying respirator/PAPR) are used, they must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions prior to re-use.
- Respirator use must be in the context of a complete respiratory protection program in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Respiratory Protection standard ([29 CFR 1910.134](#)). Staff should be medically cleared and fit-tested if using respirators with tight-fitting facepieces (e.g., a NIOSH-certified disposable N95) and trained in the proper use of respirators, safe removal and disposal, and medical contraindications to respirator use.

- **Eye Protection**

- Put on eye protection (e.g., goggles, a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face) upon entry to the patient room or care area. Remove eye protection before leaving the patient room or care area. Reusable eye protection (e.g., goggles) must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions prior to re-use. Disposable eye protection should be discarded after use.

### **Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to COVID-19:**

This interim guidance is based on what is currently known [about the coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will update this interim guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available.

CDC is working across the Department of Health and Human Services and across the U.S. government in the public health response to COVID-19. Much is unknown about how the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads. Current knowledge is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in humans and many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people, such as with MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV. The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person in China and some limited person-to-person transmission has been reported in

countries outside China, including the United States. However, respiratory illnesses like seasonal influenza, are currently widespread in many US communities.

The following interim guidance may help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, in non-healthcare settings. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of COVID-19.

To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, use only the guidance described below to determine risk of COVID-19. Do not make determinations of risk based on race or country of origin and be sure to maintain confidentiality of people with confirmed COVID-19. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features of COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing. Updates are available on CDC's web page at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/covid19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/covid19).

### **Recommended strategies for employers to use now:**

- **Actively encourage sick employees to stay home:**
  - Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
  - Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
  - Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
  - Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.
  - Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

- **Separate sick employees:**
  - CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately. Sick employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available).
- **Emphasize staying home when sick, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees:**
  - Place posters that encourage [staying home when sick](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), and [hand hygiene](#) at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
  - Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.
  - Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol, or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
  - Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
  - Visit the [coughing and sneezing etiquette](#) and [clean hands webpage](#) for more information.
- **Perform routine cleaning:**
  - Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
  - No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time.
  - Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use.
- **Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps:**

- Check the [CDC's Traveler's Health Notices](#) for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which you will travel. Specific travel information for travelers going to and returning from China, and information for aircrew, can be found at on the [CDC website](#).
- Advise employees to check themselves for symptoms of [acute respiratory illness](#) before starting travel and notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice if needed.
- If outside the United States, sick employees should follow your company's policy for obtaining medical care or contact a healthcare provider or overseas medical assistance company to assist them with finding an appropriate healthcare provider in that country. A U.S. consular officer can help locate healthcare services. However, U.S. embassies, consulates, and military facilities do not have the legal authority, capability, and resources to evacuate or give medicines, vaccines, or medical care to private U.S. citizens overseas.
- **Additional Measures in Response to Currently Occurring Sporadic Importations of the COVID-19:**
  - Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
  - If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.

## Planning Considerations

All employers need to consider how best to decrease the spread of acute respiratory illness and lower the impact of COVID-19 in their workplace in the event of an outbreak in the US. They should identify and communicate their objectives, which may include one or more of the following: (a) reducing transmission among staff, (b) protecting people who are at higher risk for adverse health complications, (c) maintaining business

operations, and (d) minimizing adverse effects on other entities in their supply chains. Some of the key considerations when making decisions on appropriate responses are:

- Disease severity (i.e., number of people who are sick, hospitalization and death rates) in the community where the business is located;
- Impact of disease on employees that are vulnerable and may be at higher risk for COVID-19 adverse health complications. Inform employees that some people may be at higher risk for severe illness, such as older adults and those with chronic medical conditions.
- Prepare for possible increased numbers of employee absences due to illness in employees and their family members, dismissals of early childhood programs and K-12 schools due to high levels of absenteeism or illness.
  - Employers should plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism at the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.
  - Cross-train personnel to perform essential functions so that the workplace is able to operate even if key staff members are absent.
  - Assess your essential functions and the reliance that others and the community have on your services or products. Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).
- Employers with more than one business location are encouraged to provide local managers with the authority to take appropriate actions outlined in their business infectious disease outbreak response plan based on the condition in each locality.
- Coordination with [state external icon](#) and [local external icon](#) health officials is strongly encouraged for all businesses so that timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses in each location where their operations reside. Since the intensity of an outbreak may differ according to geographic location, local health officials will be issuing guidance specific to their communities.

### **Important Considerations for Creating an Infections Disease Outbreak Response Plan**

All employers should be ready to implement strategies to protect their workforce from COVID-19 while ensuring continuity of operations. During a COVID-19 outbreak, all sick employees should stay home and away from the workplace, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene should be encouraged, and routine cleaning of commonly touched surfaces should be performed regularly.

Employers should:

- Ensure the plan is flexible and involve your employees in developing and reviewing your plan.
- Conduct a focused discussion or exercise using your plan, to find out ahead of time whether the plan has gaps or problems that need to be corrected.
- Share your plan with employees and explain what human resources policies, workplace and leave flexibilities, and pay and benefits will be available to them.

Share best practices with other businesses in your communities (especially those in your supply chain), chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.

### **Recommendations for an Infectious Disease Outbreak Response Plan:**

- Identify possible work-related exposure and health risks to your employees. OSHA has more information on how to [protect workers from potential exposures external icon](#) to COVID-19.
- Review human resources policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws (for more information on employer responsibilities, visit the [Department of Labor’s external icon](#) and the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s external icon](#) websites).
- Explore whether you can establish policies and practices, such as flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts), to increase the physical distance among employees and between employees and others if state and local health authorities recommend the use of social distancing strategies. For employees who are able to telework, supervisors should encourage employees to telework instead of coming into the workplace until symptoms are completely resolved. Ensure that you have the information technology and infrastructure needed to support multiple employees who may be able to work from home.
- Identify essential business functions, essential jobs or roles, and critical elements within your supply chains (e.g., raw materials, suppliers, subcontractor services/products, and logistics) required to maintain business operations. Plan for how your business will operate if there is increasing absenteeism or these supply chains are interrupted.
- Set up authorities, triggers, and procedures for activating and terminating the company’s infectious disease outbreak response plan, altering business operations (e.g., possibly changing or closing operations in affected areas), and transferring business knowledge to key employees. Work closely with your local health officials to identify these triggers.

- Plan to minimize exposure between employees and also between employees and the public, if public health officials call for social distancing.
- Establish a process to communicate information to employees and business partners on your infectious disease outbreak response plans and latest COVID-19 information. Anticipate employee fear, anxiety, rumors, and misinformation, and plan communications accordingly.
- In some communities, early childhood programs and K-12 schools may be dismissed, particularly if COVID-19 worsens. Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children if dismissed from school. Businesses and other employers should prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies for these employees.
- Local conditions will influence the decisions that public health officials make regarding community-level strategies; employers should take the time now to learn about plans in place in each community where they have a business.
- If there is evidence of a COVID-19 outbreak in the US, consider canceling non-essential business travel to additional countries per [travel guidance](#) on the CDC website
- Engage [state](#) and [local](#) health departments to confirm channels of communication and methods for dissemination of local outbreak information.

## Workplace Safety Issues Q&A

Source: [Fisher Phillips](#)

### What if an employee appears sick?

If any employee presents themselves at work with a fever or difficulty in breathing, this indicates that they should seek medical evaluation. While these symptoms are not always associated with influenza and the likelihood of an employee having the COVID-19 coronavirus is extremely low, it pays to err on the side of caution. Retrain your supervisors on the importance of not overreacting to situations in the workplace potentially related to COVID-19 in order to prevent panic among the workforce.

### Can we ask an employee to stay home or leave work if they exhibit symptoms of the COVID-19 coronavirus or the flu?

Yes, you are permitted to ask them to seek medical attention and get tested for COVID-19, and under most circumstances you can ask them to leave work.

### An employee of ours has tested positive for COVID-19. What should we do?



You should send home all employees who worked closely with that employee for a 14-day period of time to ensure the infection does not spread. Before the employee departs, ask them to identify all individuals who worked in close proximity (three to six feet) with them in the previous 14 days to ensure you have a full list of those who should be sent home. When sending the employees home, do not identify by name the infected employee or you could risk a violation of confidentiality laws. You may also want to consider asking a cleaning company to undertake a deep cleaning of your affected workspaces.

**One of our employees has a suspected but unconfirmed case of COVID-19. What should we do?**

Take the same precautions as noted above. Treat the situation as if the suspected case is a confirmed case for purposes of sending home potentially infected employees. Communicate with your affected workers to let them know that the employee has not tested positive for the virus but has been exhibiting symptoms that lead you to believe a positive diagnosis is possible.

**One of our employees self-reported that they came into contact with someone who had a presumptive positive case of COVID-19. What should we do?**

Take the same precautions as noted above. Treat the situation as if the suspected case is a confirmed case for purposes of sending home potentially infected employees. Communicate with your affected workers to let them know that the employee is asymptomatic for the virus but you are acting out of an abundance of caution.

**What steps can we take now to minimize risk of transmission?**

Repeatedly, creatively, and aggressively encourage employees and others to take the same steps they should be taking to avoid the seasonal flu, which is already one of the worst flus in the last 10 years. For the annual influenza, SARS, avian flu, swine flu, and the COVID-19 virus, the best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure. Perhaps the most important message employers can give to employees is to stay home if sick. In addition, instruct your workers to take the same actions they would to avoid the flu. For example:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Ensure that employees have ample facilities to wash their hands, including tepid water and soap, and that third-party cleaning/custodial schedules are accelerated.
- Teleconference in lieu of meeting in person if available.
- Educate your employees about COVID-19, its symptoms, and the potential health concerns associated with any travel at this time.
- Have a single point of contact for employees for all concerns that arise relating to health and safety.
- Wear personal protective equipment, such as gloves and goggles, if touching or working bloodborne pathogens.
- Follow updates from the CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding additional precautions.

You may reference the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic](#) for additional information on preparing for an outbreak.

### **Can an employee refuse to come to work because of fear of infection?**

Employees are only entitled to refuse to work if they believe they are in imminent danger. Section 13(a) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) defines "imminent danger" to include "any conditions or practices in any place of employment which are such that a danger exists which can reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm immediately or before the imminence of such danger can be eliminated through the enforcement procedures otherwise provided by this Act." OSHA discusses imminent danger as where there is "threat of death or serious physical harm," or "a reasonable expectation that toxic substances or other health hazards are present, and exposure to them will shorten life or cause substantial reduction in physical or mental efficiency."

The threat must be immediate or imminent, which means that an employee must believe that death or serious physical harm could occur within a short time, for example, before OSHA could investigate the problem. Requiring travel to China or to work with patients in a medical setting without personal protective equipment at this time may rise to this threshold. Most work conditions in the United States, however, do not meet the elements required for an employee to refuse to work. Once again, this guidance is general, and employers must determine when this unusual state exists in your workplace before determining whether it is permissible for employees to refuse to work.

In addition, Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) extends broad-based statutory protection to those employees (in union and non-union settings

alike) to engage in “protected concerted activity for mutual aid or protection.” Such activity has been defined to include circumstances in which two or more employees act together to improve their employment terms and conditions, although it has been extended to individual action expressly undertaken on behalf of co-workers.

On its own website, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) offers a number of examples, including, “talking with one or more employees about working conditions,” “participating in a concerted refusal to work in unsafe conditions,” and “joining with co-workers to talk to the media about problems in your workplace.” Employees are generally protected against discipline or discharge for engaging in such activity.

### **Can employers in the United States refuse an employee’s request to wear a medical mask or respirator?**

[Yes](#), under most circumstances. Under the OSHA respiratory protection standard, 29 C.F.R. 1910.134, which covers the use of most safety masks in the workplace, a respirator must be provided to employees only “when such equipment is necessary to protect the health of such employees.” Likewise, OSHA rules provide guidance on when a respirator is not required: “an employer may provide respirators at the request of employees or permit employees to use their own respirators, if the employer determines that such respirator use will not in itself create a hazard” (29 C.F.R. 1910.134(c)(2)). In almost all work situations, however, there is no currently recognized health or safety hazard – even when employees work near other people and thus there is no need for a mask or respirator.

The WHO has stated that people only need to wear face masks if they are treating someone who is infected with the COVID-19 coronavirus. The WHO has also said that wearing masks may create a false sense of security among the general public. Doctors agree that the best defense against the COVID-19 coronavirus and influenza is simply washing your hands. Thus, the consensus is that there are more appropriate measures of defense than wearing a surgical mask or respirator.

### **Can an employee refuse to work without a mask?**

OSHA has addressed the common question of whether an employee can simply refuse to work in unsafe conditions. The safety agency provides the following guidance, which wouldn’t require the use of a mask or respirator in most situations. An employee’s right to refuse to do a task is protected if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Where possible, you have asked the employer to eliminate the danger, and the employer failed to do so;
2. You refused to work in "good faith." This means that you must genuinely believe that an imminent danger exists;
3. A reasonable person would agree that there is a real danger of death or serious injury; and
4. There isn't enough time, due to the urgency of the hazard, to get it corrected through regular enforcement channels, such as requesting an OSHA inspection.

Given the consensus that face masks are only necessary when treating someone who is infected with the COVID-19 coronavirus or influenza, masks are likely not necessary to protect the health of most employees. Therefore, most employers do not have to provide, or allow employees to wear, a surgical mask or respirator to protect against the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus or influenza. The use of the word "may" in OSHA's respiratory protection standard makes it clear that when a respirator is not necessary to protect the health of an employee, it is within the discretion of the employer to allow employees to use a respirator. Accordingly, you are well within the applicable OSHA standard to deny an employee's request to wear a surgical mask or a respirator in almost all situations.

Absent a legally recognized disability, unique physical condition, or an occupation where employees work directly with those impacted by a condition such as the COVID-19 coronavirus or flu, you are generally not required to allow workers to wear masks at work.

### **What steps should we take if we use chemicals to combat the COVID-19 coronavirus?**

Be mindful of the specific requirements of OSHA's Hazard Communication standard if new chemicals, or temporary employees, are introduced into work areas to combat the COVID-19 coronavirus. You are required to provide employees with effective information and training on hazardous chemicals in their work area at the time of their initial assignment, and whenever a new chemical hazard the employees have not previously been trained about is introduced into their work area. A comprehensive hazard communication program should include contain labeling and other forms of warning, safety data sheets, and employee training. Now is also a good time to retrain employees under OSHA's bloodborne pathogens standard, including revisiting and communicating the elements of your exposure control plan.

### **What should healthcare employers do to protect workers from exposure to the COVID-19 coronavirus?**

Healthcare personnel caring for patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19 should adhere to CDC recommendations for infection control and prevention (ICP):

- Assess and triage these patients with acute respiratory symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19 to minimize chances of exposure, including placing a facemask on the patient and isolating them in an Airborne Infection Isolation Room (AIIR), if available;
- Use Standard Precautions, Contact Precautions, and Airborne Precautions and eye protection when caring for patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19;
- Perform hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand rub before and after all patient contact, contact with potentially infectious material, and before putting on and upon removal of PPE, including gloves. Use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled;
- Practice how to properly don, use, and doff personal protective equipment (PPE) in a manner to prevent self-contamination; and
- Perform aerosol-generating procedures in an AIIR, including collection of diagnostic respiratory specimens, while following appropriate IPC practices, including use of appropriate PPE.

In addition, healthcare employers must comply with any state-specific requirements to protect healthcare workers from exposure. For instance, healthcare facilities in California are required to follow recommendations under CAL/OSHA's Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (ATD) Standard, Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations Section 5199. Because COVID-19 meets the criteria for a novel aerosol transmissible pathogen under the ATD Standard, California healthcare employers must provide a powered air purifying respirator with a HEPA filter(s), or a respirator providing equivalent or greater protection, to employees who perform high hazard procedures on COVID-19 persons under investigation or confirmed cases.

### Issues For Workforces That Travel Q&A

Source: [Fisher Phillips](#)

#### What current travel restrictions are in place?

In light of the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak in China, President Trump issued a [Presidential Proclamation](#) limiting the entry of foreign nationals who were physically present in China during the 14-day period before their attempted entry into the United States. And while the U.S. had already instituted a travel ban related to Iran for political reasons, [the administration announced](#) that the ban is being expanded to include any foreign national who has visited Iran within the last 14 days due to the outbreak that has taken place in that country.

## **Does the Chinese travel restriction apply to those visiting Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau?**

No. It only applies to those who were present in the People's Republic of China, and specifically exempts Hong Kong and Macau. In addition, the U.S. immigration law and various other regulations treat Taiwan (a.k.a. Republic of China) separately from the People's Republic of China. Therefore, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan are all exempt from these travel restrictions.

## **Who is exempt from the travel restrictions?**

The order provides a long list of exempt immigration statuses. For example, people traveling on crew member visas, or diplomatic or International Organization visas are exempt. It also exempts Lawful Permanent Residents (green card holders), spouses and children (unmarried under 21) of U.S. citizens and green card holders, and parents and siblings of unmarried under 21-year-old U.S. citizens and green card holders.

The proclamation also includes a provision that permits entry of any foreign national whose entry would not pose a significant risk of spreading the virus, as determined by the CDC. This provision would appear to allow anyone to otherwise seek entry. However, in reality, U.S. Customs and Border Protection may simply utilize the travel restriction rules to deny entry instead of deferring to the CDC's conclusion.

## **Are there conditions for the return of those who are exempt from the travel restrictions?**

Yes, any U.S. citizen returning to the United States who has been in Hubei province, China in the previous 14 days may be subject to up to 14 days of quarantine. Any U.S. citizen returning to the United States who has been in the rest of mainland China within the previous 14 days may undergo a health screening and possible self-quarantine.

## **Can employees returning from China fly into any airport?**

[No](#). The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has directed "all operators of aircraft to ensure that all flights carrying persons who have recently traveled from, or were otherwise present within, the People's Republic of China" only land at one of the following airports:

1. John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), New York
2. Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD), Illinois
3. San Francisco International Airport (SFO), California

4. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), Washington
5. Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL), Hawaii
6. Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), California
7. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL), Georgia
8. Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD), Virginia
9. Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR), New Jersey
10. Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), Texas
11. Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW), Michigan

According to DHS, these are airports “where enhanced public health services and protocols are being implemented.”

### **Can we prohibit an employee from traveling to a non-restricted area on their personal time?**

You generally cannot prohibit otherwise legal activity, such as travel abroad by an employee. While a federal court of appeals recently held that it is not necessarily a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to terminate an employee who refuses to cancel personal travel to an area of the world with a high risk of exposure to a deadly disease, you still could risk legal exposure, reduced employee morale, and negative publicity if you do so. This includes pregnant employees or those with medical conditions. However, you should educate your employees before they engage in travel to risky environments to try and work out a solution, and you can – and should – monitor those employees returning from such travel for signs of illness.

### **What should I do if an employee has recently traveled to an affected area or otherwise may have been exposed to the COVID-19 coronavirus?**

The ADA places restrictions on the inquiries that an employer can make into an employee’s medical status. The ADA prohibits employers from making disability-related inquiries and requiring medical examinations, unless (1) the employer can show that the inquiry or exam is job-related and consistent with business necessity, or (2) where the employer has a reasonable belief that the employee poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot otherwise be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.

[According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#), whether a particular outbreak rises to the level of a “direct threat” depends on the severity of the illness. The EEOC instructs employers that the assessment by the CDC or public health authorities provides the objective evidence needed for a disability-related inquiry or medical examination. To date, the CDC has not classified the COVID-19 coronavirus as a pandemic.

**We have an employee who has recently traveled overseas to a country that is not on any restricted list, but we're worried about the risk of transmission. Should we institute a "soft" quarantine?**

There is likely no greater risk of this employee being infected with the COVID-19 coronavirus than any of your other employees. Follow the same preventive steps and guidance contained within this FAQ to put your organization in the best position.

**Can employees refuse to travel as part of their job duties?**

Employees who object on behalf of others or act in groups could be covered by the NLRA's protection of concerted protected activity. You will want to proceed with caution and consult with your attorney before taking any steps in this regard. Moreover, under the federal OSH Act, employees can only refuse to work when a realistic threat is present.

Therefore, if employees refuse your instruction to travel for business to any other country for fear of catching the COVID-19 coronavirus, try to work out an amicable resolution. For example, the employer and the employee can check and discuss the [CDC](#) (avoid Nonessential travel), State Department ([Do Not Travel to China](#)), and DHS Travel Advisories, which provide guidance on China Travel.

The CDC is also advising that some individuals may be more at risk of infection than others in the general population. Thus, follow the CDC direction on pregnant employees or on related reproductive issues, and do not make decisions without medical support. Moreover, actions by other countries, especially in Asia, may cause employee concerns, and absolute warnings and restrictions like those on China may not exist.



## Decontamination

### First Steps

These steps should be in any hotelier's plan for COVID-19.

- Follow the instructions provided by your [local health department](#)
- Stock enough cleaning products for the size of your operation
- Provide your employees with the proper Personal Protection Equipment, such as disposable gloves
- Provide hand sanitizer products and tissues in the employee and public areas
- Monitor your employee's health, and emphasize cough etiquette

In the event that one of your guests or employees shows sign of COVID-19 infection, you will also need a plan for cleaning and handling guest and public rooms, restaurants, and other areas in the hotel.

Hotel management should help ensure that all employees involved in the cleaning of a potentially infected room or area follow superior sanitation precautions and any best practices established for their housekeeping task. A review of the exposures and procedures to be taken should precede any actions, with additional training for any part-time or transferred employees.

The following are suggested basic procedures that should be reviewed as part of the response plan for hotel employees. A hotel should evaluate their own specific operation and circumstances to add to their own unique plan, where needed.

If a guest is admitted to the hospital and the guest's items remain in the room, the hotel can follow these procedures for handling abandoned property. The room should be cleaned after these procedures are followed, and the items handled appropriately for possible BIOHAZARD contamination. Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as disposable gloves should be worn by the employee while performing this task.

### Linen handling

Linens and bedding should not be sorted in the guest rooms. Before handling, employees should check the bedding and linens for sharp objects, blood, or bodily fluids before handling. The linen should be handled with protective gloves and placed into red plastic BIOHAZARD bags. If the linen is to be washed at the hotel, only trained employees should handle the contaminated laundry. Linen should be transferred

directly from the plastic bag into the washing machine without contact. The BIOHAZARD bag should not be reused, but discarded as hazardous waste. Linens and bedding should be washed with an approved disinfectant. Any material that cannot be cleaned should be disposed of as hazardous waste.

### **Sharp objects**

Employees should not touch or handle contaminated items, such as sharp objects left by the guest. Small medical items like hypodermic needles and syringes should be picked up with tongs and placed into a puncture-resistant plastic or metal container. These objects should never be placed in the trash, or in any container that isn't puncture-resistant. Waste should be collected and double-bagged for transport to a sealable container that can be locked with not in use.

### **Cleaning and disinfection of surfaces**

A bleach and water solution can be used to decontaminate most of the surfaces and equipment found in the hotel. This is a safe method for decontamination because it doesn't expose the employees to harsh chemicals and the components are readily available and inexpensive. EPA-approved disinfectant products should be used as an alternative for sensitive surfaces such as carpeting where the use of bleach could damage the material.

Additional attention should be given to surfaces that have been directly touched by the guest, such as light switches, doorknobs, toilets, television remote control, hand basins, telephones, desk surfaces, alarm clock, table surfaces, dresser or counter tops, etc.

If equipment used to clean the room becomes contaminated, labels should be attached to inform other employees or service people of the potential hazard. The label should state BIOHAZARD and be written in high-visibility orange or red. The equipment should be disinfected according to the manufacturer's instructions. The appropriate PPE should be worn and used by staff while cleaning and decontaminating equipment.

## Specific Touchpoints

Source: [Ecolab](#)

These areas in a hotel should receive heightened sanitizing attention during this period. There will be other commonly touched surfaces in your hotel requiring attention, so make sure you add them to this list.

### GUEST ROOMS

- Door handles
- Desk, table, chairs and lamps
- Dresser drawer handle
- Light switches and thermostats
- Drapery pull handles
- Mini-bar, menu and room collateral
- Telephone and keypad, remote control keypad and alarm clock
- Television
- Safety latch and peephole
- Trash receptacle touch points
- Iron handle, hangers, and luggage rack
- Faucet and toilet handles

### PUBLIC RESTROOMS

- Door handles
- Sink faucets and toilet handles
- Towel dispenser handle
- Soap dispenser push plates
- Baby changing station
- Trash receptacle touch points

### LOBBY AREA AND FOOD SERVICE DINING ROOM

- Door handles, push plates, thresholds and hand railings
- Telephone and keypad
- Tables and chairs
- Coffee and beverage stations
- Vending and ice machines
- Public information kiosk
- Trash receptacle touch points
- High chairs

## KITCHEN AND BACK OF HOUSE

- Door handles and push plates
- Handles of all the equipment doors and operation push pads
- Handles of the dispensers (beverage, etc.)
- Ice scoops
- Walk-in and other refrigerator handles
- Walk-in refrigerator and freezer plastic curtains
- Freezer handles
- 3-compartment sink and mop sink
- Handwashing sink handles
- Soap dispenser push plates at handwash sink
- Towel dispenser handle at handwash sink
- Trash receptacle touch points
- Cleaning tools
- Buckets
- Telephone keypad and handset
- Manager's computer

## Food and COVID-19

Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food. Before preparing or eating food it is important to always wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds for general food safety. Throughout the day wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, or going to the bathroom.

In general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from food products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient, refrigerated, or frozen temperatures.

## Communications with Guests and Employees

As information is almost as useful as disinfectant in a COVID-19 environment, communication with guests, employees, the general public, public health officials, and management is vital and must not be overlooked in any plan.

- Assign one person in the hotel as the primary contact to handle all guest and/or corporate calls. Everyone in the hotel staff should know to forward all inquiries to this person.
- Do not release details of any affected guest.
- Ensure that all employees are aware of the health concerns behind COVID-19. Give the staff regular updates about the hotel and local situation. If there is an affected guest, keep the hotel employees informed about the situation and answer any rumors with facts.
- Obtain any current fact sheets or bulletins from your [local health department](#). Consider requesting that the local health department visit the hotel and conduct a briefing for employees, followed by an open question-and-answer session.
- Be prepared to support any afflicted guest with family calls and information. Remember, good customer service in this kind of crisis situation is extremely important.
- A toll-free or dedicated emergency hotline (in appropriate languages) should be set up to keep employees informed about business operations during a local COVID-19 outbreak. Employees should be encouraged to use the hotline or contact their manager or supervisor for updates and information.
- Stay connected to information resources. Learn about your state's pandemic plans. Become familiar with the many information resources available including [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov) and [www.WHO.int](http://www.WHO.int).

### Sample Guest Letter

This is a sample letter that hotels can use to communicate with guests in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in their local areas. This letter should be modified based on the events occurring in a specific area during the time of the outbreak.

Dear Valued Guest,

Welcome to [Hotel Name]. It is a pleasure to have you stay with us.

Guest safety is our top priority at [Hotel Name]. Because of the recent media reports concerning the local outbreak of COVID-19, our hotel has immediately implemented a number of increased health and safety measures.

We strive to maintain high standards of food and environmental hygiene at our hotel. In addition to the high cleanliness standards already in place to combat the spread of COVID-19, we have taken additional precautionary measures:

[Include all those that apply]

- Increased hand washing and sanitation efforts by staff members
- Providing more soap and hand-cleanser products for use by guests and employees
- Frequent sanitizing of publicly used surfaces in the hotel, such as countertops and doorknobs
- Rooms are thoroughly sanitized by staff after each guest has checked out
- Hotel employees who are exhibiting symptoms are sent home for rest and recovery
- Increased contact with local health authorities and are following their instructions about public health areas and how to contain infections

We are committed to complying with the stringent health standards recommended by local health authorities during this public health situation.

Should you have any questions or require more information during your stay with us, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Thank you for choosing to stay with us.

Warmest Regards,  
[Name]  
General Manager, Hotel

## **Sample Employee Communication**

### **COVID-19 (Coronavirus)**

As you may have heard from news reports, COVID-19 has been reported in our area. Based on the information we have gathered from local health authorities, there is no cause for undue concern at this time. The public health and medical authorities have been working with hospitals to protect the public from illness.

The local public health authorities are also relying upon you to help protect the traveling public. The most important tool you have to protect our guests is information. I urge each

of you to become familiar with the facts about COVID-19 and what are its symptoms. Not all flu-like ailments are COVID-19, since the symptoms resemble the same as ordinary seasonal flu.

According to the [WHO](#), the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

### **How to minimize your chances for contracting the disease**

While there is no guarantee that doing the following will prevent you from getting COVID-19, these simple precautions will significantly reduce your chances of catching it.

- Above all: Use good hygiene! Simple hand washing will go a long way to removing the virus from your own personal environment.
- Avoid direct and/or close contact with ill persons.
- Proper disposal of used tissues or other articles that have come in contact with your nose, throat, mouth, or eyes. These are the areas that allow the flu into your body.
- Room attendants should continue to use gloves to change used guest towels and empty trash cans
- Room attendants should continue to sanitize doorknobs, TV remote controls, sink basin knobs, light switches, and countertops with the proper disinfectant
- Used towels and bed linen should be removed and washed each day
- Avoid rooms where you hear sneezing or coughing and allow an hour after the guest leaves before entering the room

If an issue or concern should arise at our hotel, employees should follow these steps to help protect the well-being of the affected guest, employees, patrons of the hotel—and themselves.

- Notify your supervisor or the general manager of any concerns.
- Follow the procedures given to you from your supervisor or management.
- Do not release the details of any potentially affected guest or employee.
- Be prepared to support the guest or employee with family calls and information.

- Follow all company procedures for reporting possible incidents about infected guests or employees.

Thank you for your kind cooperation with these procedures and requests.

[Name of General Manager]

## **Sample Employee Communication if Other Employees/ Guests Have Contracted COVID-19**

### **COVID-19 (Coronavirus)**

As you may have heard from news reports, COVID-19 has been reported in our area. Based on the information we have gathered from local health authorities, there is no cause for undue concern at this time. The public health and medical authorities have been working with hospitals to protect the public from illness.

In our own facility, there has been a reported case of COVID-19. We are reporting this to our employees so that they may monitor themselves for symptoms and take appropriate precautions.

The most important tool you have to protect yourself, your family, the other hotel employees, and our guests is information. I urge each of you to become familiar with the facts about COVID-19 and what are its symptoms. Not all flu-like ailments are COVID-19, since the symptoms can resemble the same as ordinary seasonal flu.

According to the [WHO](#), the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

### **How to minimize your chances for contracting the disease**



While there is no guarantee that doing the following will prevent you from getting COVID-19, these simple precautions will significantly reduce your chances of catching it.

- Above all: Use good hygiene! Simple hand washing will go a long way to removing the virus from your own personal environment.
- Avoid direct and/or close contact with ill persons.
- Proper disposal of used tissues or other articles that have come in contact with your nose, throat, mouth, or eyes. These are the areas that allow the flu into your body.
- Room attendants should continue to use gloves to change used guest towels and empty trash cans
- Room attendants should continue to sanitize doorknobs, TV remote controls, sink basin knobs, light switches, and countertops with the proper disinfectant
- Used towels and bed linen should be removed and washed each day
- Avoid rooms where you hear sneezing or coughing and allow an hour after the guest leaves before entering the room

Thank you for your kind cooperation with these procedures and requests.

[Name of General Manager]

## COVID-19 Resources

### General Q&A

**Based on information provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO)**

#### **Is this COVID-19 (Coronavirus) virus contagious?**

CDC has determined that COVID-19 is contagious and is spreading from human to human.

#### **What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in people?**

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

The following symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure**.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

#### **How does COVID-19 spread?**

This virus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The first infections were linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now spreading from person-to-person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community ("community spread") in [some affected geographic areas](#). Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

Learn what is known about the [spread of newly emerged coronaviruses](#).

#### **How can someone with COVID-19 infect someone else?**

The virus that causes COVID-19 is [spreading from person-to-person](#). Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

How long someone is actively sick can vary so the decision on when to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with doctors, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials and involves considering specifics of each situation including disease severity, illness signs and symptoms, and results of laboratory testing for that patient.

Current [CDC guidance for when it is OK to release someone from isolation](#) is made on a case by case basis and includes meeting all of the following requirements:

- The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The patient is no longer showing symptoms, including cough.
- The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Someone who has been released from isolation is not considered to pose a risk of infection to others.

### **What should I do to keep from getting COVID-19?**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for [health workers](#) and [people who are taking care of someone in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

For information about handwashing, see [CDC's Handwashing](#) website

For information specific to healthcare, see [CDC's Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings](#)

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have [specific guidance for travelers](#).

### **Are there medicines to treat COVID-19?**

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

See [Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals](#) for information on persons under investigation.

### **How long can an infected person spread COVID-19 to others?**

How long someone is actively sick can vary so the decision on when to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with doctors, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials and involves considering specifics of each situation including disease severity, illness signs and symptoms, and results of laboratory testing for that patient.

### **What surfaces are most likely to be sources of contamination?**

Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. Droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air. Germs can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches their own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.

### **How long can viruses live outside the body?**

Some viruses and bacteria can live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables,

doorknobs, and desks. Frequent hand washing will help you reduce the chance of getting contamination from these common surfaces.

### **What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for [health workers](#) and [people who are taking care of someone in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

For information about handwashing, see [CDC's Handwashing](#) website

For information specific to healthcare, see [CDC's Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings](#)

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have [specific guidance for travelers](#).

### **What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?**

If you are sick, limit your contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to work or school if ill. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

### **What is the best technique for washing my hands to avoid getting COVID-19?**

CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water whenever possible because handwashing reduces the amounts of all types of germs and chemicals on hands. But if soap and water are not available, using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can help you avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. The guidance for effective handwashing and use of hand sanitizer in community settings was developed based on data from a number of studies.

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

Follow these five steps every time.

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

### **What should I do if I get sick?**

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

### **How serious is COVID-19 infection?**

Both MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV have been known to cause severe illness in people. The complete clinical picture with regard to COVID-19 is not fully understood.

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild to severe, including illness resulting in death. While information so far suggests that most COVID-19 illness is mild, [a report](#) out of China suggests serious illness occurs in 16% of cases. Older people and people with certain underlying health conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example, seem to be at greater risk of serious illness.

Learn more about the [symptoms associated with COVID-19](#).

There are ongoing investigations to learn more. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.

## Helpful Links

The more your employees and you know about COVID-19 and actions to prevent its spread, the better your property will be prepared.

## First Resources

[www.ahla.com/covid19](http://www.ahla.com/covid19) - AHLA's COVID-19 information Website. This page contains news updates, links to government information resources, industry-specific information, equipment resources, and more.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> - The Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) COVID-19 Website, listing current outbreaks, numbers of those infected, and prevention information.

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus> - The World Health Organization's (WHO) COVID-19 Website, including a detailed Q&A.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-facts-infographic> - Johns Hopkins Medicine's Website with global updates.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-disease-2019-vs-the-flu> - Johns Hopkins Medicine's Website on the Coronavirus vs. the Flu

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/2019-novel-coronavirus-myth-versus-fact> - Johns Hopkins Website on Coronavirus Myths & Facts

## Employer Guidance

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html> - The CDC's guidance for employers and businesses.

<https://www.fisherphillips.com/resources-alerts-comprehensive-faqs-for-employers-on-the-covid> - Fisher Phillips has assembled a cross-disciplinary taskforce of attorneys across the country to address the many employment-related issues facing employers in the wake of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

<https://www.ecolab.com/pages/coronavirus> - AHLA Gold Partner [Ecolab](#)'s hospitality-specific guidelines for cleaning and prevention.





## GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS TO PLAN & RESPOND TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

The following guidance may help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including the Coronavirus, in non-healthcare settings. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of the Coronavirus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This guidance is based on what is currently known about the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

All employers should be ready to implement strategies to protect their workforce from the Coronavirus while ensuring continuity of operations. As with all illnesses, sick employees should stay home and away from the workplace, use cough and sneeze etiquette, frequently clean hands with soap and water, and routinely clean commonly touched surfaces.

### What steps can be taken in advance of employees getting sick?

#### Explore flex working options

- Determine policies and practices, such as telecommuting and flexible work hours.
- Supervisors should educate employees that if they become sick they should telework instead of coming into the workplace until symptoms are completely resolved.

#### Develop an employee communications plan

- Establish a process to communicate the latest Coronavirus information to employees and business partners (ex. CDC Coronavirus Workplace Tips For Employees).
- Anticipate employee fear, anxiety, rumors, and misinformation, and plan communications accordingly.

#### Decide how to handle an increase in absenteeism

Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children if dismissed from school.

#### Coordinate with state and local health officials

- Coordination with state and local health officials is strongly encouraged for all businesses to ensure timely and accurate information to guide appropriate responses in each location where their operations reside.
- Outbreak intensity may differ according to geographic location. Local health officials will be issuing guidance specific to their communities.
- Employers should take the time to research plans in place in each community where they have a business by contacting their local public health department.

#### Make a business continuity plan

Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, consider digital meetings, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).

For tips on preventing the spread of the Coronavirus at work, visit: [AHLA.com/covid19](https://www.ahla.com/covid19) and [CDC.org](https://www.cdc.gov)

### Symptoms

Symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, and may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

### Transmission

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus or by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

### Preventative Measures

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Teleconference in lieu of meeting in person if available.
- Educate your employees about COVID-19, its symptoms, and the potential health concerns associated with any travel at this time.
- Follow updates from the CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding additional precautions.

## What should employers do if employees become sick?

- **Ensure flexible sick leave policies:** Consistent with public health guidance, permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member, and that employees are aware of these policies. Actively encourage sick employees to notify their supervisor and stay home.
- **Local decision making:** Employers with more than one business location are encouraged to provide local managers with the authority to take appropriate actions based on the conditions in each locality.
- **Employee travel:** Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand to notify their supervisor and call a healthcare provider for advice if needed.
- **Separate sick employees:** CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and sent home immediately.
- **Social distancing:** Plan to minimize exposure between healthy employees and also between those employees and the public, if public health officials call for social distancing.
- **Workplace hygiene:** Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.

## Are there additional measures in affect in response to the Coronavirus?

- **CDC's Traveler's Health Notices:** Check the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which you plan to travel.
- **Outside the United States:** Sick employees should follow your company's policy for obtaining medical care or contact a healthcare provider or overseas medical assistance company to assist them with finding an appropriate healthcare provider in that country. A U.S. consular officer can help locate healthcare services. However, U.S. embassies, consulates, and military facilities do not have the legal authority, capability, and resources to evacuate or give medicines, vaccines, or medical care to private U.S. citizens overseas. Travel restrictions may be enacted by other countries which may limit the ability of employees to return home if they become sick while on travel status.
- **Health confidentiality:** If an employee is confirmed to have the Coronavirus infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to the Coronavirus in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed Coronavirus should refer to CDC guidance for how to conduct a risk assessment of their potential exposure.





# Share Facts About COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

## FACT 1

Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get COVID-19 than any other American. Help stop fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19.

## FACT 2

The risk of getting COVID-19 in the U.S. is currently low.

Some people who live in or have recently traveled to places where many people have gotten sick with COVID-19 may be monitored by health officials to protect their health and the health of other people in the community.

## FACT 3

Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.



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## FACT 4

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

## FACT 5

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)



# What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

## How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



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For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)



## What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

**If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.**

### Stay home except to get medical care

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

### Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

**People:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

**Animals:** Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) for more information.

### Call ahead before visiting your doctor

If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

### Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

### Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

### Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

### Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

### Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

### Monitor your symptoms

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). **Before** seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department. Persons who are placed under active monitoring or facilitated self-monitoring should follow instructions provided by their local health department or occupational health professionals, as appropriate.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

### Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.



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For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)







## SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

**Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.**

**Symptoms\* can include**

**FEVER**



**COUGH**



**\*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.**

**Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.**

**SHORTNESS OF BREATH**



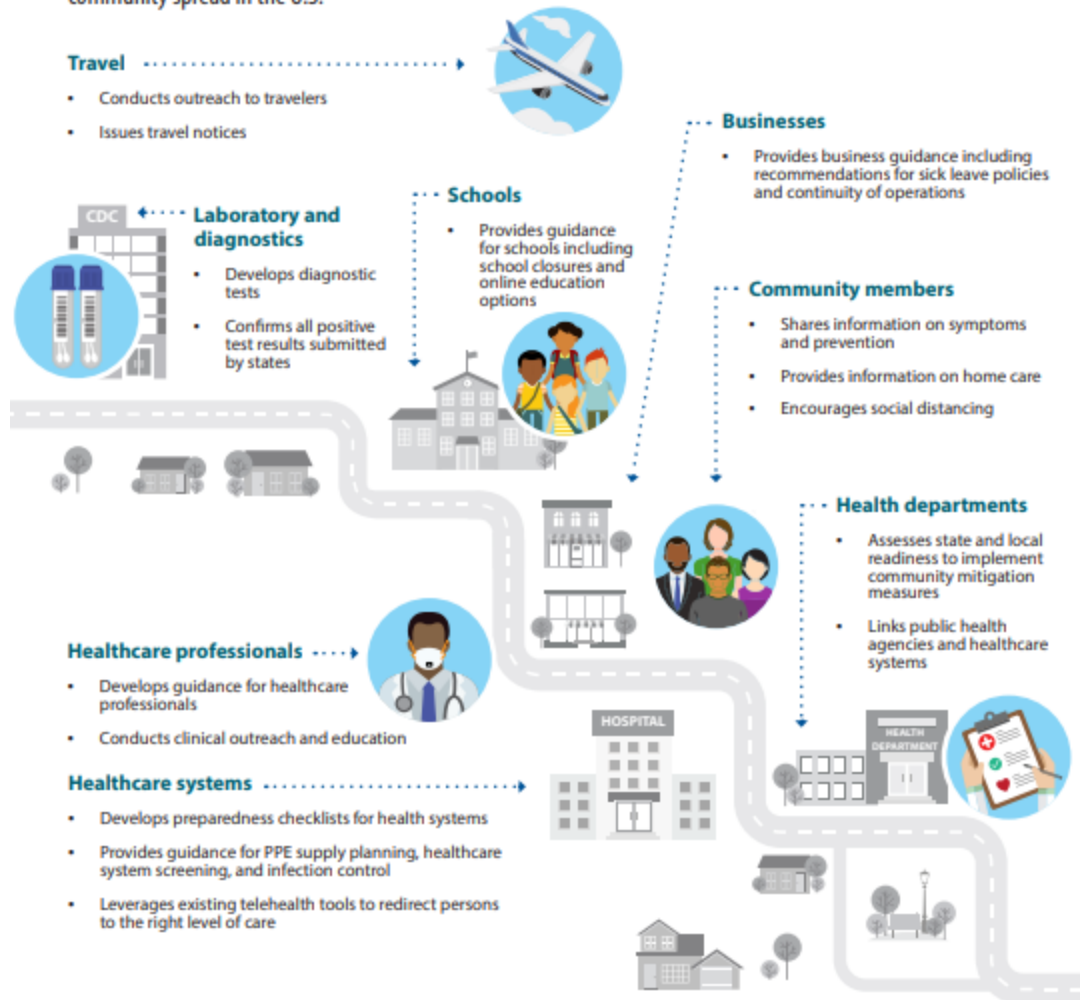
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For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms)



## CDC Protects and Prepares Communities

CDC is aggressively responding to the global outbreak of COVID-19 and preparing for the potential of community spread in the U.S.

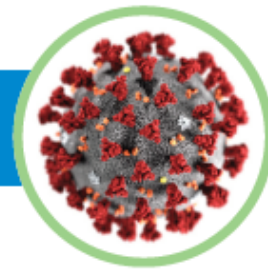


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For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)



# 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)



## What is COVID-19?

Public health officials have identified a new coronavirus disease, COVID-19. The World Health Organization has declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

## Symptoms of COVID-19:

Respiratory symptoms

Fever

Cough

Shortness of breath

Trouble breathing



## How does it spread?

Human coronaviruses may spread from an infected person to others through:

- **The air** by coughing and sneezing
- **Close personal contact**, such as touching or shaking hands
- **Touching an object or surface with the virus on it**, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands

Person-to-person transmission is occurring to some extent with COVID-19.

## TAKE ACTION

Public health recommendations focus on standard infection control practices, training and compliance.

### PERSONAL HYGIENE



**Wash hands frequently** with soap and water. When soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



**Minimize close contact** with people who have symptoms of respiratory illness.



**Ensure proper use** of personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE



**Clean and disinfect** surfaces and high-touch objects with approved disinfectants.

## GET SUPPORT

Ecolab can help address public health concerns by providing proper infection control solutions, training and compliance expertise.

- For more information, visit [ecolab.com/coronavirus](https://ecolab.com/coronavirus).
- **Contact your Ecolab service representative** to discuss best practices and set up time to refresh staff on proper infection prevention protocols.

Coronavirus image source: <https://bit.ly/cdc.gov>  
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