



2019 Novel Coronavirus Talking Points for Local Health Districts

February 3, 2020

As part of our strategy to slow the spread of 2019 novel coronavirus, we continue to share talking points with key stakeholders. We encourage you to use these as a template and share with your key stakeholders.

Current Situation

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH), the Butler County General Health District, and Miami University announced Sunday that test results for the 2019 novel coronavirus for students at Miami University in Butler County are negative. **There are no confirmed cases or other persons under investigation in Ohio.**

There are currently 11 confirmed cases of 2019 novel coronavirus in the U.S. There are two cases of person-to-person spread in the country, one in Illinois and one in California. Both of these cases are between spouses and involve close personal contact.

Also Sunday, new federal travel restrictions for persons traveling from China went into effect. The travel restrictions are expected to help contain the spread of 2019 novel coronavirus:

- As of 5 p.m. on Sunday, February 2, citizens returning to the U.S. who have been in Hubei Province, China, in the previous two weeks are subject to screening and up to 14 days of mandatory quarantine.
- U.S. citizens returning to the United States who have been to other parts of mainland China within the previous two weeks are subject to screening and up to 14 days of self-monitored, self-quarantine.
- Foreign citizens who have been to China in the previous two weeks are being denied entry to the U.S. Immediate family members of U.S. citizens and permanent residents are exempt.

People returning under the new federal guidelines outlined above are being routed to 11 airports where they will be screened before returning to local communities. They will only be allowed to return home if they are asymptomatic.

Additional guidance related to travelers

In Ohio, we have many people who travel for business, students and faculty who are traveling for education, and families who are visiting relatives. The U.S. is still considered low risk for the spread of the virus. We have not had community spread in the U.S. to date. Travel history is key.

People who returned before 5 p.m. on Sunday, February 2, are encouraged to self-monitor with no restriction of movement.

We are encouraging anyone who returns from mainland China to practice social distancing and minimize contact with others for the 14 days after they leave China. Social distancing and minimizing contact means maintaining a 6-foot distance from others, staying home from work, school, other community functions, and public places like libraries, grocery stores, or restaurants. They also should self-monitor, and if they have symptoms, should call their health care provider before going to the office and detail symptoms and travel history.

For Employers

Travelers from anywhere in China including Hubei Province, who arrived in Ohio in the 14 days prior to February 2, 2020, are advised to self-monitor for fever and respiratory illness. If symptoms develop, they should avoid contact with others and call their health care provider to tell them about their symptoms and recent travel.

We ask employers to be flexible in allowing employees who fit these criteria to work from home or take time off. We know from previous infectious disease cases that this type of approach works and can dramatically reduce the spread of disease.

Continued infection prevention

To help prevent infection with 2019-nCoV, take the precautions you normally would during cold and flu season:

- Frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a health care professional) and avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The CDC does not routinely recommend the use of face masks by the public to prevent respiratory illness and is not recommending their use for the prevention of 2019-nCoV.

Health care providers who are in contact with confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV are at highest risk for infection and are encouraged to follow precautions and use personal protective equipment as described on the infection control section of the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/infection-control.html>

Battling Stigma

Please continue to show care and compassion to all neighbors whether they be sick or not, recent travelers or not. Be sure to quell actions that could perpetuate a stigma attached to 2019-nCoV.

Public Health

In the words of Butler County Commissioner, Jennifer Bailer, “Every day public health works behind the scenes to ensure you don’t get sick by, for example, eating poorly prepared food, or by a contaminated body art needle, or from a broken septic system, or in this case, from a novel emerging virus.”

We continue to work closely with our colleagues throughout the state 24/7 to share the most up-to-date information and guidance. These partners include the Governor Mike DeWine’s office, the Ohio Department of Health, local health departments, providers, colleges and universities, K-12 education, and community partners. The Ohio Department of Health website is being updated continuously.

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