

WESTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT

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March 5, 2020

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Dear Western Families and Community Members,

We are reaching out to you because you have likely been hearing concerning reports in the news regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). As a school district we are not experts on this topic, so we are closely following the guidance of agencies such as the Jackson County Health Department (JCHD), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

According to the advice we are receiving from the experts, the best ways to prevent the spread of Coronavirus are the same as preventing the cold and flu. They include:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick. (Students should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.)

The CDC does NOT recommend the use of facemasks for the general public.

As always, the safety, health and well-being of our students, staff and community continue to be priorities. We will closely monitor the development of the Coronavirus and will work together with local, state, and federal health and government officials in the days and weeks ahead.

As a district, we are taking the following precautionary measures:

- Monday, March 9 is a scheduled day off for students. Therefore, our custodial staff will be performing a deep clean of all buildings.
- Moving forward, our custodial staff will be cleaning hard surfaces on a more frequent basis.
- For the next several weeks, we will increase staff to assist in additional cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- Classrooms will be provided with disinfectant spray and toweling for staff who wish to spot clean between scheduled cleaning times.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided in classrooms and high traffic areas.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of buses will be performed on a regular basis.

While there are no reported cases of Coronavirus in Michigan at this time, we are hopeful these precautionary measures will aid in limiting the spread of germs in general. We realize that we cannot stop the transmission of all germs, but we are working to minimize the risk of exposure.

Attached, you will find fact sheets from JCHD, MDHHS, and the CDC with additional information. If you would like to learn more about Coronavirus, please visit www.michigan.gov/coronavirus or www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

If you have additional concerns, please contact the Western Administration office at (517) 841-8171.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Smajda".

Michael Smajda
Superintendent



Jackson County Health Department 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)



What is Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals, including camels, cats and bats. It is rare for animal coronaviruses to infect people and then spread between people as with MERS and SARS. Coronavirus causes mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illnesses, like the common cold.

What is Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a coronavirus identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China. 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has resulted in more than a thousand confirmed cases in China, including cases outside Wuhan City. Additional cases have been identified in a growing number of other international locations, including the United States. So far, deaths have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health conditions. The outbreak situation is evolving, stay up to date with CDC's website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

How is Coronavirus spread?

Health experts are still learning the details about how this new novel 2019 coronavirus spreads. Coronaviruses are 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
- in rare cases, contact with feces

What are the symptoms of Novel Coronavirus (2019 nCoV)?

Symptoms of novel coronavirus (2019 nCoV) may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus.

Symptoms of Coronavirus include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty Breathing

Who is at risk for Novel Coronavirus:

Travelers to and from certain areas of the world may be at increased risk. If you are traveling overseas (to China but also to other places) follow the CDC's guidance:

www.cdc.gov/travel.

How is Coronavirus Treated?

There are no medications specifically approved for coronavirus. Most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. However, some cases develop pneumonia and require medical care or hospitalization. Currently, there are no vaccines available to prevent novel coronavirus infections.

Protect Yourself against Coronavirus?

Steps you can take to prevent the spread of flu and the common cold will also help prevent coronavirus:

- wash hands often with soap and water, If not available, use 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 and avoid close contact with others
- cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing

Jackson County Health Department
1715 Lansing Ave.
Jackson, MI 49202
(517) 788-4420

www.mijackson.org

Source: www.cdc.gov

CDC Public Information

English 1-888-246-2675

Espanol 1-888-246-2857

TTY 1-888-874-2646



2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is working closely with healthcare providers, local public health departments, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to actively monitor any potential cases of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Michigan. MDHHS will update information as it becomes available at: michigan.gov/coronavirus.

What is 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

2019 Novel Coronavirus is a virus strain that has only spread in people since December 2019. Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new virus and it has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia.

How does 2019 Novel Coronavirus spread?

Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses 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.
- in rare cases, contact with feces.

What are the symptoms of 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

People who have been diagnosed with 2019 Novel Coronavirus have reported symptoms that may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus:



Fever



Cough



Difficulty Breathing

Who is at risk for 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

Currently the risk to the general public is low. At this time, there are a small number of individual cases in the United States. To minimize the risk of spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to promptly identify and evaluate any suspected cases.

Travelers to and from certain areas of the world may be at increased risk. See [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel) for the latest travel guidance from the CDC.

How can I protect myself from getting 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

If you are traveling overseas (to China but also to other places) follow the CDC's guidance: [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel).

Right now, there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public. Steps you can take to prevent spread of flu and the common cold will also help prevent 2019 Novel Coronavirus:



Wash your hands often with soap and water. If not available, use hand sanitizer.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing.



Avoid contact with people who are sick.



Stay home if you are sick, and contact your healthcare provider.

How is 2019 Novel Coronavirus treated?

There are no medications specifically approved for coronavirus. People infected with 2019 Novel Coronavirus should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

2019 Novel Coronavirus Information Updates:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services: [michigan.gov/coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus)

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.

