

Information for Illinois K-12 Schools Regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus

What is 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

2019 Novel Coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV, is a new respiratory virus identified in December 2019 as the cause of an outbreak in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. People who get sick with 2019-nCoV develop mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Illness can begin 2 to 14 days after an exposure. Although this virus likely emerged from an animal source, it can also spread from person-to-person. Spread from one person to another is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Typically, with most respiratory viruses, people are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic.

The latest national situation summary updates, including the number of cases identified in the United States, are available on CDC's web page [2019 Novel Coronavirus, Wuhan, China](#). State situation updates can be found at DPH.ILLINOIS.GOV.

What is the health risk from 2019-nCoV in Illinois?

Currently, the health risk to the general public from 2019-nCoV remains low, both in the U.S. and in Illinois. The goal of the ongoing U.S. public health response is to detect new cases quickly and prevent community spread of 2019-nCoV. The coming days and weeks are likely to bring more confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV in the U.S. and globally, but strong public health measures now may blunt the impact of the virus.

What special precautions do schools in Illinois need to take?

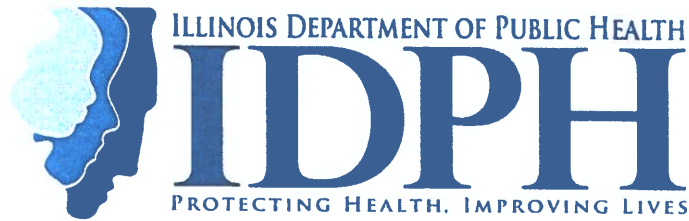
Due to recent acceleration of 2019-nCoV transmission across China and in accordance with current federal guidance, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recommends the following:

- **Any student returning from mainland China on February 3, 2020 and onward should not attend school for 14 days after the return date.**
- Absences for this purpose should be excused.
- Family members of these students should not attend work if they also traveled to mainland China.

This interim guidance is effective as of February 3, 2020, and does not apply retrospectively to students who have been in China during the previous 14 days and are already in the U.S., or those being managed as part of a contact investigation.

Students who returned from mainland China prior to February 3, 2020 can remain in school. If a student who returned from mainland China before February 3, 2020 develops respiratory symptoms including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, **report immediately** to your Local Health Department. **Please keep in mind there are other respiratory**

*This has been adapted from the Chicago Department of Public Health.
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viruses like influenza currently circulating in Illinois. Call ahead before taking the student to a doctor's office or emergency department to prevent any potential spread.

The situation is rapidly changing, and we are monitoring it closely. Guidance will be updated as needed.

What are the latest public health measures?

As airport screening procedures have changed, starting February 3, 2020, IDPH began receiving information on incoming travelers from all of China who may be at risk, and when appropriate instructing them to stay home from school and work, and monitoring them remotely. IDPH will be in communication with school administration about individual situations as needed.

If we have a student who has been ill at school and is now a person under investigation (PUI), what do we tell parents?

In general, continue to follow your usual procedures for notification of parents/guardians whose students are ill at school. IDPH will follow up with schools who need more specific guidance.

Should we be concerned about classroom pets or other animals and 2019-nCoV?

CDC recommends that people traveling to China avoid animals both live and dead, but there is no reason to think that any animals or pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this new coronavirus.

One of our students is an exchange student from China. Can they return home?

IDPH recommends students **avoid travel to China**. The latest travel updates are available on CDC's web page [Traveler's Health](#).

How can schools prevent infections with 2019-nCoV and other respiratory diseases?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. As with any respiratory virus, students and school personnel can protect themselves and others by taking every day common sense actions:

- 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 with at least 60% alcohol.
- 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.



IDPH **does NOT** recommend:

- the use of masks or gloves
- cancelling mass gatherings
- cancelling classes

Are any special cleaning procedures needed?

At this time, no special sanitizing processes beyond routine cleaning are necessary or recommended to slow the spread of respiratory illness. Schools should follow standard processes for routine cleaning and disinfecting with an EPA-registered product. General infection control guidance is available at www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol.

What should school-based health centers do to prevent the spread of 2019-nCov?

If a student calls ahead with travel to China within the last 14 days and concerning symptoms, collect detailed history over the phone prior to deciding the location for triage. School-based health centers (SBHCs) should contact their Local Health Department immediately.

For more information, please visit DPH.ILLINOIS.GOV or www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

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.



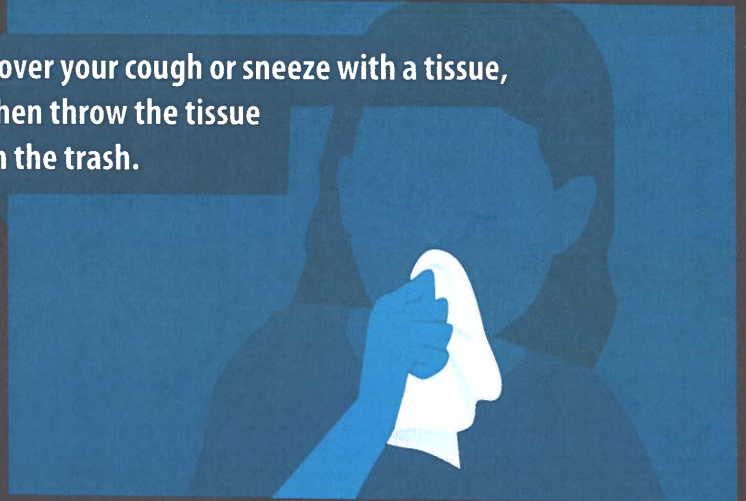
STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



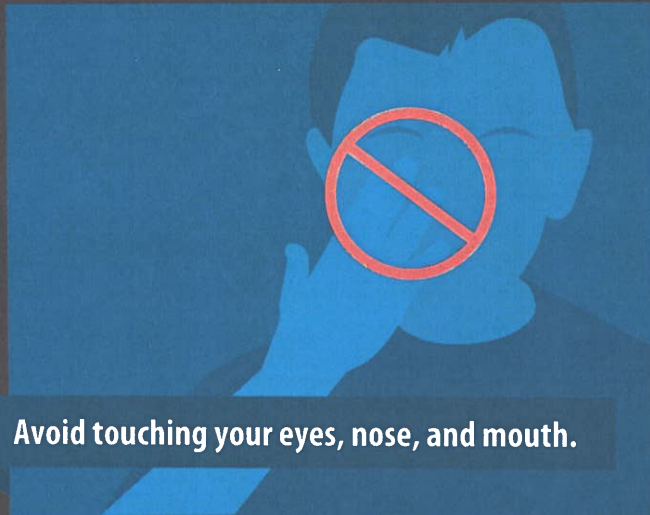
Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

