



**Missoula City-County Health Department**

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

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## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Last Update: March 11, 2020 – 12 pm

### General Message

The situation with COVID-19 is rapidly evolving, and we ask that everyone remain calm.

- Currently, there are **no cases in Missoula County**.
- **Missoula City-County Health Department is monitoring** the situation and is ready to assist if there is a case in Missoula County.
- There is **no need to take drastic measures, such as stockpiling medical supplies or food**. These actions could unnecessarily burden critical infrastructure within our community.
- **Currently, the risk of getting COVID-19 in Missoula County is low**, but the health department will update you as the situation evolves, more information becomes available.
- **There is no need to cancel public events, stay home from school or work, or avoid normal activities.**

### Epidemiology

- There are more than 1,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in 36 US states. **There are no cases in Montana.**
- There are over 121,000 cases globally with over 4,300 deaths, predominately in our vulnerable populations.
- The disease is usually mild, but disproportionately affects the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions.

### Symptoms and Spread

- The virus is likely spread by close contact with people who are infected with the virus or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if someone touches a surface contaminated with the virus and then touches their nose, mouth, or eyes.
- Symptoms can be mild to severe and show 2-14 days after exposure. **Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.**

### Travel

- **We ask that those who have recently returned from one of the countries with sustained or widespread illness such as Italy, South Korea, Iran, China, or Japan, to contact the health department at 406-258-3896.**
- **If you have travel plans, visit the CDC's website for guidance. Travel recommendations will continue to evolve.** We encourage people not to travel to areas at increased risk. Recognize that advisories may change during your trip to include your destination or layover locations. When making travel decisions, you not only need to think about the risk of getting COVID-19, but also how your return travel and daily activities may be affected once you get home.

## Prevention

- **While there is no vaccine to prevent the disease, you can decrease your risk by doing the same things you do to prevent the common cold and flu.** These include the following:
  - Avoid close contact with people who are ill.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces with disinfectants that say that they are effective against CoV-2 or SARS-like viruses, or use bleach in water at 1/3 cup household bleach per gallon or 4 tsp to a quart.
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- **CDC DOES NOT recommend using face masks to prevent the disease unless directed to do so by a medical professional, or to prevent spreading the disease when seeking medical care.**
- **You can protect others from getting sick by doing the following:**
  - Stay home if you are ill, except to get medical care. Please call your provider before visiting and let them know you may have COVID-19.
  - Separate yourself as much as possible from other people in your home to prevent spreading the illness to them.
  - Wear a face mask if you have symptoms of COVID-19 while going to seek medical care.
  - Wash your hands frequently, especially after using the bathroom, and after coughing, sneezing, or using a tissue.
- **If you think that you have COVID-19, call your medical provider. Do not call or come to the health department as we do not test or provide treatment.**

## MCCHD Preparedness

- The health department initiated Incident Command to ensure an organized and connected approach within our department and with our state and local partners.
- The health department is and will continue to coordinate with state and local partners regularly and follow updates from the CDC.
- The Missoula City-County Health Department, along with the state health department, has been preparing for COVID-19. The health department not only has a response plan, but they have completed emergency exercises to test it.
- The health department regularly communicates with clinics, schools, hospitals, partners, and other agencies to ensure not only a uniform response, but that our response is timely and responsible.

## For additional information:

- Hotline: 258-INFO.
- Website: <http://missoula.co/cvirus>
- DPHHS: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/>
- Refer Media to 406-258-3341.