



TIPPECANOE COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 6, 2020

The Tippecanoe County Health Department is announcing that we have one confirmed case of the Corona virus in Indiana. Because of this confirmation the Tippecanoe County Health Department is declaring a Public Health Emergency at this time. This individual is under investigation to determine the source of transmission.

Due to this confirmed case we are providing recommendations to the community to protect persons at higher-risk of serious illness due to this virus. We ask for the public's help in sharing these recommendations, staying calm, and following prior recommendations issued by the Indiana Department of Health and the CDC.

The Tippecanoe County Health Department is working closely with the Indiana State Department of Health and our community partners to continue to stay in front of this.

It is imperative to remember that for 80% of us this virus will be mild. While many in our community may get sick, the vast majority of us will recover.

The Tippecanoe County Health Department is issuing the following new guidance in order to protect our citizens who are at a higher risk of becoming ill if contracting the Corona virus:

~ MORE ~

Tip:

Who is at higher risk?

Information about risk factors for the Corona virus continues to evolve, but the best evidence currently available makes clear that risk of severe illness begins to increase at age 50 for those who contract the virus, and increases with age (i.e., an 80-year-old person is at greater risk than a 70-year-old person). The highest risk group are persons age 80 and over.

Persons with underlying medical problems are also likely to be at higher risk, including persons with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, or chronic lung diseases like COPD, as well as those who are immunocompromised.

What should I do if I am at higher risk?

The Tippecanoe County Health Department is recommending that persons at higher risk avoid mass gatherings where large numbers of people are within arm's length of one another. This would **not** include typical office environments, grocery stores, or shopping centers, where it is unusual for large numbers of people to be within arm's length of one another.

I run an organization that primarily serves seniors or medically compromised individuals (e.g. nursing homes). What should I do?

We are recommending that organizations that primarily serve seniors or medically vulnerable individuals please follow these recommendations:

- cancel mass gatherings (e.g., a large bingo gathering, movie screening, etc.);
- ensure they you are attentive in following recommendations regarding cleaning of high touch surfaces, including counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables;
- take all necessary measures to ensure all employees, visitors, and persons served who are experiencing any symptoms of illness stay home and avoid contact with others; and

- enhance screening of visitors, staff, and residents for symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., fever, cough, difficulty breathing).

Please remember this is an evolving situation; therefore, these recommendations may change and we ask that our citizens and businesses continue watching for new guidance and following that guidance as it is released.

For those of you in our community who are not at higher risk we ask that you continue to practice the following measures:

- 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.
- 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 and clean your hands.
- 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 Corona virus.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms 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 healthcare facility).

Recommendations for Schools:

- Schools should plan for absenteeism and explore options for learning at home and enhance cleaning of surfaces. Additional guidance is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>

Recommendations for Organizers and Staff Responsible for Planning Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events:

Tip:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>

Recommendations for Businesses:

- Businesses should plan for ways to enhance surface cleaning, address absenteeism and, whenever possible, replace in-person meetings with video or telephone conferences and increase teleworking options. Additional guidance is available at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides current travel notices for international travel to affected countries. Visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

If you are returning from domestic/international travel, the recommendations are:

- If you have symptoms, stay home, contact your healthcare provider, and provide your travel history.
- If you have traveled to countries experiencing coronavirus outbreak and have no symptoms, you may choose to stay home out of an abundance of caution, but it is not currently mandatory. If you develop symptoms, call your healthcare provider and tell them your symptoms and recent travel history.

How you can help:

1. **Do not go to the emergency room unless essential.** Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs. If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, contact your primary care doctor first.
2. Stay home when sick
3. Practice excellent personal hygiene habits, including handwashing, coughing into tissue or elbow, avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth.
4. Stay away from people who are ill, especially if you are 60 and older or have underlying health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or a weakened immune system.
5. Stay informed. Information is changing frequently.

Stay up-to-date on the latest information by checking credible sources of information, including the ISDH website at in.gov/isdh and the CDC website at cdc.gov/COVID19. More information will be shared about additional recommendations as the situation changes.

As the CDC continues to state the immediate risk remains low for Americans, the TCHD in conjunction with our public health, public safety, hospitals and Purdue University partners continue to work the problem as it evolves.