



DPH Information Regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

With recent cases of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) reported in several countries including the U.S., Delaware health officials are increasing monitoring efforts to identify potential cases. The Division of Public Health (DPH) has posted information on its website <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph> and is issuing this statement to provide details about its activities related to the outbreak.

While the available information suggests a low immediate health risk for the general public, we consider any new infectious disease a serious concern and we are taking precautions. It is important to recognize that the current investigation and response are dynamic, and new information about the disease may impact the approach to this disease. DPH will keep you updated as the situation evolves.

Here is what you need to know about 2019-nCoV for your college or university:

Currently the risk to the general public is considered low. Risk is based on exposure. As you know we are in the heart of flu and respiratory disease season, and most of the population is at greater risk of contracting influenza. However, many higher education settings have an elevated risk compared to K-12 schools due to their international student populations and increased opportunities for international travel. DPH is not recommending exclusion from work/school of asymptomatic persons arriving from China, however colleges and universities should review their own policies and procedures to determine the need for exclusion.

Those with recent travel to any area of China or contact with someone who has recent travel and is ill, have an increased risk for becoming ill. At this time, there are a small number of individual cases in the U.S. To minimize the risk of spread, Delaware health officials are working with health care providers to promptly identify and evaluate any suspected cases.

Symptoms of 2019-nCoV are most similar to lower respiratory infections with many patients exhibiting fever, cough, and shortness of breath. There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection. While in some cases illnesses can be severe and require hospitalization, many individuals infected with 2019-nCoV recover by resting, drinking plenty of liquids and taking pain, and fever-reducing medications.

For student health services staff: Students should be encouraged to call before coming in and indicate they are concerned about being infected with coronavirus due to their recent travel history to China, or their contact with someone who has recently returned from travel to China. If students are being referred elsewhere (hospital, urgent care, primary office etc) they should be advised to call ahead to that facility so that the site can prepare to limit transmission. Any administration or health care staff with



questions can call the DPH Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology 24/7 at **1-888-295-5156**.

Students arriving for evaluation should be asked to wear a surgical mask as soon as they are identified and be evaluated in a private room (three walls and a door) with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available. Health care personnel entering the room should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions, and use eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield). See the [CDC's checklist](#) for more specific information. **Immediately notify DPH at 1-888-295-5156.** There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection. People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive care to help relieve symptoms.

When a new disease is circulating, it's natural for people to ask what they can do to protect themselves and their families. The best guidance at this point is to advise patients to take the same precautions recommended for avoiding colds and flu:

- staff and students should stay home, or in their dorm rooms when they are sick with any respiratory disease, and avoid contact with well people such as roommates;
- cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, or cough or sneeze into their inner elbow;
- practice good hand washing with soap and water as often as possible, and if soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers;
- encourage flu vaccination among both staff and students;
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in classrooms and dorm rooms.

Faculty or students who have concerns about their personal exposure risks should contact their personal health care provider. DPH is holding frequent internal calls to ensure a constant flow of communication, and we are developing materials such as flyers to help the public understand what this virus is, and what they can do to protect themselves. Feel free to post the [attached flyer](#) around your school so that everyone learns more about this virus and how they can prevent the spread of germs and infection overall.