

Press Release
Coles County Health Department
March 14, 2020

Over the past several days aggressive measures have been initiated by the Governor and Illinois Department of Public Health to minimize the expansion of the COVID-19 virus. At the forefront is an effort of exposure prevention. Although currently there are no confirmed cases of the virus in Coles County, it is prudent on our part to implement social distancing to prevent further infections of this virus in our local communities.

As the COVID-19 virus has developed, Coles County Health Department has been working closely with Illinois Department Public Health and local officials to continue to monitor and share current information. The person-to-person spread of COVID-19 appears to be mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that the virus can spread from touching a surface that has the virus. Signs and symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Existing data suggests older adults and people with underlying health conditions or compromised immune systems are in greater risk.

If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.

The Coles County Health Dept suggests all citizens take steps to protect yourself. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Wash hands with soap and warm water and friction for at least 20 seconds. If you are sick stay home and away from other people. Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces you touch.

Coles County Health Department will continue to closely work with community partners to monitor and review the situation. As these are rapidly changing circumstances, the Illinois Dept of Public Health and Center for Disease Control are updating guidelines routinely. Your local health department will continue to monitor those updates and share strategies to prevent further outbreaks.

For information about how you, your school, workplace, and community can prepare, please read the [Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Communities](http://dph.illinois.gov) located at <http://dph.illinois.gov> and the [Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities](https://www.cdc.gov) at <https://www.cdc.gov> . For general questions about COVID-19, call the hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov.