



## Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency

*Healthy People, Healthy Communities*

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# Press Release

*Not for op-ed*

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update for Mendocino County

In light of recent news regarding local transmission (“community spread”) of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Northern California, Mendocino County Public Health is taking steps to prepare for the possibility of cases in our community in the near future.

While **there are ZERO known cases of COVID-19 in Mendocino County at this time, and the risk of infection in our County remains low**, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) are recommending that our Nation and State prepare for a possible pandemic of COVID-19.

The term “pandemic” describes a disease that is affecting many places and populations around the world at the same time. **Pandemic does not necessarily mean a disease that is extremely deadly or untreatable.** The coronavirus in its usual form causes the common cold. COVID-19 can cause an illness that is like a severe flu, while most people experience mild or no illness. **In general, children have not become seriously ill with this new coronavirus infection.**

**In order to protect ourselves from COVID-19 infection, it is important to follow all of the same recommendations that are related to prevention of the spread of influenza and other preparedness response:**

- **Stay home from work and/or school if you or your children become sick with a flu-like illness (fever and respiratory symptoms)**
- Make sure you have a supply of your routine medicine, a thermometer so you can know if you develop a fever, and have extra nonperishable food at home
- Make plans now to have the support necessary if you need to stay home due to illness; reach out to family, friends, and neighbors to offer and receive support
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water after being in public
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands

**If you should need medical care for a respiratory illness, call ahead to your health care facility and talk by phone with your health care provider if possible.**

**For general health related questions or other concerns during business hours, please call Mendocino County's Call Center at (707) 234-6052.**

Since early January 2020, Mendocino County has been part of a coordinated Public Health response involving the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Mendocino County Public Health has led this local effort in response to the rapidly evolving multinational outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.

**While there are currently no cases in Mendocino County**, (a 'case' is defined as a person who has tested positive by the CDC for COVID-19) this new coronavirus has now been detected in 75 countries and territories, including 43 cases in the United States (US) and at least 40 cases in California, (24 of which cases were people who caught the virus on the Diamond Princess cruise ship or caught the virus in Wuhan, China.) 1 person has tested presumptive positive for the coronavirus in Sonoma County. The patient had recently returned from a cruise ship that departed from San Francisco to Mexico, and is currently in stable condition and under isolation. There have been 2 deaths from COVID-19 in the US, both being in persons over the age of 50 with underlying health conditions. All of the known COVID-19 cases in the US are in isolation until they no longer have any sign of the infection on follow-up tests. COVID-19 tests are currently controlled by the CDC and have just become available to some Public Health labs in California. It is expected that the COVID-19 test will become more readily available in the coming weeks.

As of March 2, 2020, California has had at least five cases suspected to have been contracted due to community spread. Community spread is defined as the transmission of the virus without known contact with an individual with the virus, and without known connection with travel to or from a location where the virus is known to be rapidly spreading (China, Iran, Italy and South Korea).

Mendocino County's Public Health system has been actively preparing in coordination with Federal and State partners and the local health care system for community spread of novel coronavirus COVID-19. Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency will continue to update the community as new information becomes available.

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