COVID-19: An Overview of Best Practices and Resources

How do you protect yourself and your district against the coronavirus?

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This purpose of presentation is to provide information and context to assist districts in their preparation for the COVID-19 outbreak; the purpose is not to provide legal advice.

The SDA and CSD Pool always encourage districts to work with their own legal counsel and human resource professionals. They best understand your district's unique needs and concerns.

Risk Management for Public Health

▶ What to know about COVID-19

▶ Basics to Prevention

▶ What to do if you get sick

▶ Seeking Medical Care

What you need to know about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

▶ Viral infection with symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath

▶ Spreads primarily through respiratory droplets in close contact (within 6 feet)

▶ May be possible to contract by touching an object or surface

Resources

▶ *"What you need to know about COVID-19," U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf

▶ *Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about COVID-19, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

▶ *COVID-19 Fact Sheet, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE):* https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qGMNFeLjfrAfHJ7hzCaD8vPUCXJJgJlT/view

Basics of Prevention

- **KEEP CALM**: There are many ways to limit exposures and transmission at work and at home.

- **WASH YOUR HANDS**, following CDC handwashing protocols (below). If not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.

- **DON'T TOUCH** your face, eyes, and mouth.

- **COVER COUGHS & SNEEZES**: Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, throw away the tissue, wash your hands.

- **GET THE FLU VACCINE** if you have not yet had one.

- **CLEAN ALL "HIGH TOUCH" SURFACES** : disinfect counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets…

Resources

- *Proper Handwashing, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

- *CDC Handwashing Resources, including posters:* https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html

- *Prevention and Treatment, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html

If you or someone you know is sick or thinks they have been exposed

- **KEEP CALM**: Just because you are sick, does not mean you have COVID-19. You may have the flu or seasonal cold.

- **STAY HOME**, except to get medical care.

- **APPLY SUPPORTIVE CARE**: fever reducers, liquids, rest to relieve symptoms.

Resources

- *COVID-19 Symptoms, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html

- *What to do if you are sick with COVID-19, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html

If you are sick

▶ **SEPARATE YOURSELF** from other people in your home.

▶ **COVER COUGHS & SNEEZES, WEAR A MASK**: Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, throw away the tissue, wash your hands. For prevention, masks are not as effective as other good hygiene measures. But, if you are sick, a mask can help reduce respiratory droplets.

▶ **WASH HANDS OFTEN.**

▶ **CLEAN ALL "HIGH TOUCH" SURFACES EVERYDAY**: disinfect counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets…

Resources

▶ *COVID-19 Symptoms, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html

▶ *What to do if you are sick with COVID-19, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html

▶ *COVID-19 Home Care Guidance, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-home-care.html

Seeking Medical Care

- **CONTACT:** If you have symptoms and a recent travel history to affected geographic areas, you should contact a health care provider.

- **CALL AHEAD** before you go to a clinic. Health care providers are working hard to limit transmissions in clinics.

- **REPORTING:** according to the CDC, your healthcare professional should work with CDPHE and the CDC to determine if you should be tested.

Resources

- *COVID-19 Symptoms, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html

- *What to do if you are sick with COVID-19, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html

Risk Management Strategies as an Employer

- Promoting Public Health as an Employer
- Stigma of COVID-19
- HIPAA/FMLA

Promoting Public Health
as an Employer

▶ **HEALTHY HABITS** and **CLEAN WORKSPACES:** Develop work place policies around hygiene and healthy habits. Post handwashing information. Provide soap/hand sanitizer. Sanitize surfaces.

▶ **STAY HOME:** The CDC is recommending to "actively" encourage employees to go home and stay home if they are sick.

▶ **DON'T RETURN TO WORK:** Just because you're feeling better, think critically about your return to work. The CDC recommends that individuals wait at least 24 hours after they're free of fever or other symptoms.

▶ **TRAVEL:** Proactively address employee travel by tracking and following CDC guidance. Some employers are canceling non-essential travel or meetings.

Resources

▶ *COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses and Employers, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html

▶ *What to do if you are sick with COVID-19, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html

Stigma

"To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, use only the guidance described below to determine risk of COVID-19. Do not make determinations of risk based on race or country of origin, and be sure to maintain confidentiality of people with confirmed COVID-19. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features of COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing."

▶ Take complaints regarding discrimination or harassment seriously and respond promptly.

Resources

▶ *COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses and Employers, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html

▶ *Stigma Related to COVID-19, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html

HIPAA/FMLA

▶ Treat information about an employee's illness as a confidential medial record.

▶ Be aware of and follow federal and state laws related to employment or leave, including the Family Medical Leave Act.

▶ Consult with your HR Colleagues, attorneys, and use CSD Pool HR benefits if you have questions about HIPAA, FMLA, ADA, COVID-19 stigma issues, leave policies, or other employment issues.

Resources

▶ *COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses and Employers, CDC:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html

▶ *See also CSD Pool Resources. HR Helpline and Consulting are a Member benefit.*

Leading the Response

"You can help protect the health of your employees and the public by taking the following proactive steps…"

#1: Leadership

- ▶ You have the power to set your employees and the public at ease.

- ▶ Having a good plan in place will promote public safety – and gives people confidence in their local government.

- ▶ Empowering employees to take responsibility for their health, their families' health, and the community's health will help avoid transmission.

- ▶ If your colleagues in the surrounding know your district is proactive and engaged, they will be more likely to work with you in partnership.

#2: Communication

▶ Who is your point person on monitoring updates from CDPHE and the CDC?

▶ How is your district communicating with employees? Phone tree? Text? Email? Make sure everyone knows the protocol!

▶ How is your district communicating with your colleagues? Reach your hand out to your partners and make sure you keep each other in the loop?

▶ How will your district communicate with the public? Posting? Social Media? Websites? Who's responsible for public communications?

#3: Update your Emergency Plan

"All employers should be ready to implement strategies to protect their workforce from COVID-19 while ensuring continuity of operations." CDC

▶ Does your current emergency plan include disease epidemics? This is a good time for an update!

▶ Is there new technology that may be helpful?

▶ Does your plan include coordination with other local government colleagues and stakeholders?

Resources

　　▶ *COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses and Employers, CDC:*
　　　https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html

#4: Business Needs

Work with team to understand how to meet your district's business needs if your offices or facilities close down:

▶ Do you have essential staff? Have you cross-trained employees to cover essential staff functions?

▶ Will your facilities need on-site staffing in order to operate public services or infrastructure?

▶ Have you coordinated with other state or local partners on impacts?

#5: Technology Needs

▶ Do you have remote access to your payroll or other necessary payment or banking systems?

▶ Do you have remote access to your shared drives?

▶ Do you know if tele-work for your employees is possible, as a practical matter? (Home internet access, computer equipment…)

#6: Employment

Work with your HR colleagues and attorney about your district's ability to provide flexible arrangements for employees:

- ▶ Have you reviewed your policies? Do you have flexibility with your leave policies? Considering drafting special policies that are clear and apply to all of your employees.

- ▶ Handle COVID-19 sickness "separations" with professionalism, confidentiality, and solicit as few details as are necessary.

- ▶ Do you have flex work schedules or telecommuting policies already? Use those to create special policies for COVID-19 sicknesses and/or office closures – and communicate with employees.

- ▶ Have you addressed your employees' care of family members or school closures?

Resource List

- CSD Pool Resources

- Printable Posters

- Resources for Emergency Responders

- CDPHE Contact Information

CSD Pool Resources

▶ If you have HR questions, you can talk to a dedicated legal expert through the CSD Pool's partner, HR Helpline. Additionally, the CSD Pool provides up to 10 hours of free HR consultation to all Pool members through our Partner, CPS HR Consulting. To connect with these services, go to: https://csdpool.org/services/hr

▶ Any funds spent on your emergency preparedness plan may eligible for up to a 50% reimbursement under the Safety and Loss Prevention Grant, application information at: https://csdpool.org/services/grants/safetygrant

▶ CSD Pool, "Coronavirus Prevention and Response Tips": https://news.csdpool.org/2020/03/03/coronavirus-prevention-and-response-tips/

▶ CSD Pool, "Responding to Pandemic": https://news.csdpool.org/2018/07/10/responding-to-pandemic/

▶ SmartNotice - Instant Communications from wherever and whenever to your entire staff, all at the push of a button. Through email, text, or voice, make sure your employees know about the upcoming fire drill, inclement weather in the area, or the possibility of a snow day. Tell your entire staff, even those at home or in the field, about emergencies or updates quickly and easily. https://csdpool.org/services/communications/smartnotice

Printable Posters

- CDPHE Fact Sheets in English, Spanish, Chinese – link to PDFs at: https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/2019-novel-coronavirus

- "What to do if you are sick with COVID-19," CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf

- CDC Handwashing Resources, including posters: https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html

- STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK, CDC poster: https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/stay-home-youre-sick-employers-item4.pdf

- DON'T SPREAD GERMS AT WORK, CDC poster: https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/stay-home-youre-sick-employers-item4.pdf

Resources for
Emergency Responders

▶ The CDC has special direction for emergency responders, including additional safety equipment like gloves, respirators, disposable gowns/coveralls, and eye protection.

▶ Further PSAFs or EMS/911 call centers should follow CDC guidelines regarding querying callers on COVID-19 symptoms.

Resources

   ▶ What Law Enforcement Personnel Need to Know about COVID-19, CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-law-enforcement.html

   ▶ Guidance for EMS Systems and 911 PSAPs for COVID-19, CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html

   ▶ *"EMS Infectious Disease Playbook," Colorado Hospital Association:* https://cha.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Copy-of-aspr-tracie-transport-playbook-508.pdf

CDPHE Contact Information

For local public health agencies and healthcare providers only:

▶ From Monday thru Friday, 8:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m., please call 303-692-2700.

▶ For after-hours, holidays, and weekends, please call 303-370-9395.

For general questions about 2019-nCoV:

▶ Call CO-HELP at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911

▶ You can also email COHELP@RMPDC.org for answers in English and Spanish

Questions?