



Los Angeles County
Office of Education
Serving Students • Supporting Communities
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SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMS BULLETIN

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HAPPENINGS

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE- A summary of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Telebriefing on January 23, 2020 regarding Coronavirus and schools. For general information about the Novel Coronavirus (a new virus) that causes respiratory illness, see the Coronavirus FAQ on the Public Health website.

The LAC Public Health website has general information about Coronavirus, including FAQ handouts. The website also has a school toolkit that provides a zip drive with FAQs, and printable posters. <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

Update as of January 26, 2020: Novel coronavirus infections have been confirmed in Los Angeles County (1 case) and Orange County (1 case). Despite this case in Los Angeles, there is no immediate threat to the general public, no special precautions are required, and people should not be excluded from activities based on their race, country of origin, or recent travel if they do not have symptoms of respiratory illness. Los Angeles residents, students, workers, and visitors should continue to engage in their regular activities and practice good public health hygiene as this is the height of flu season across the County. The risk from the novel coronavirus to spread in Los Angeles County residents is deemed to be low at this time. See below for January 26, 2020 Press Release from Public Health.

Information for schools:

- Students should not be excluded from school or any activities based on their race, country of origin, or recent travel (including travel to Wuhan City, China).
- Students with travel to Wuhan City, China should only be excluded if they have symptoms of respiratory illness (see below).
- Students and staff should not wear masks to protect themselves. Masks are not an effective method of general prevention. LA County Public Health does not recommend the use of masks for general prevention. Handwashing provides better protection from infectious diseases.
- Schools can play an important role to educate students, parents, and staff by providing factual information on coronavirus. See FAQ handouts – available in English, Chinese, and Spanish.

Guidelines for Schools:

STEP 1: Place visible poster requesting students with a fever and recent international travel to immediately notify health office staff. Printable posters are available on the LAC Public Health website.

- For any general illness, emphasize handwashing and staying home if sick. Students should stay home until fever free for 24 hours.

STEP 2: Does the student have:

1. Fever (T >100.4° F or >38°C)
2. Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND
3. Travel to Wuhan City, China

IF NO and student does not meet all three (3) criteria then STOP here and follow general health office guidelines for when to send a student home based upon symptoms.

IF YES and student meets all three (3) criteria, then immediately isolate the student:

- Place surgical mask on student
- Isolate student in another room with door closed

STEP 3: Health office staff attending to the student should use standard precautions – mask, gloves and handwashing.

STEP 4:

1. Notify school nurse
2. School nurse or designee to contact parent to verify travel to Wuhan City region and inform parent public health department will be contacted immediately
3. School nurse to immediately call LAC Public Health – Acute Communicable Disease Control for next steps:
 - ACDC (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7941 or for after hours (213) 974-1234
 - Public Health will advise how to transport student to the hospital
 - Parent may be advised to pick up student and transport to the hospital

Reminders:

- Student health information, including infectious disease, is confidential and not to be shared with other students or staff as per FERPA (not HIPAA)
- Confidential health information, including infectious disease, can be shared with Public Health as per Health and Safety Code laws.
- Do not send out disease notification letters to students, parents, or staff unless directed by LAC Public Health.
- Flu is still circulating and this season has seen a lot of flu more prevalent among children, so schools may be experiencing high levels of illness. It's not too late to be immunized to protect yourself and your family from flu. Resources for flu information are available at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/HealthEdFlu.htm> This includes posters for schools to encourage keeping sick children home.

PUBLIC HEALTH CONFIRMS FIRST CASE OF 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) has confirmed the first case of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Los Angeles County. The infected person presented themselves for care once they noticed that they were not feeling well and is currently receiving medical treatment. There is no immediate threat to the general public, no special precautions are required, and people should not be excluded from activities based on their race, country of origin, or recent travel if they do not have symptoms of respiratory illness. Los Angeles residents, students, workers, and visitors should continue to engage in their regular activities and practice good public health hygiene as this is the height of flu season across the County. Public Health is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal, state and local agencies to monitor this novel coronavirus that has emerged from Wuhan, China over the past few weeks. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.

Additional information about the case:

- This person is a returning traveler from Wuhan City, China.
- The person has been confirmed to have this new strain of coronavirus (2019-nCoV) by the CDC.
- The person is currently receiving appropriate care at a local hospital. In order to protect patient privacy/confidentiality, Public Health is not releasing the location.
- Public Health officials are working to identify persons who may have had close personal contact with this individual, including any friends, family members or health care professionals, to monitor them for signs and symptoms of illness and to take measures to prevent spread of the virus.

This is the only cases of 2019 novel coronavirus in LA County. There are currently 4 cases in the United States.

Public Health issued multiple health advisories beginning in early January informing local healthcare providers in LA County of the current situation. Public Health will continue to provide updates and work with local healthcare providers as the situation evolves.

“LA County is well prepared to manage cases and suspected cases of novel coronavirus. We are working closely with our federal, state and local partners to provide healthcare providers and the public with accurate information about actions we are taking to reduce the spread of novel coronavirus and to care for those who are ill. As with other respiratory illnesses, there are steps that everyone can take to reduce the risk of getting sick from circulating viruses, including coronavirus. This includes remaining home when ill, washing hands with soap and water frequently, and getting vaccinated against flu,” said Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd, Director of Public Health. “Because novel coronavirus is new, we are learning more each day about transmission patterns and incubation periods. We will keep everyone informed as more information becomes available. The risk of transmission of coronavirus in LA County remains low,” she added.

“Public Health, in collaboration with local healthcare, state, and federal agencies, including the California Department of Public Health and CDC, proactively trains for these scenarios and has protocols in place to protect both local communities and

healthcare workers,” said Muntu Davis, MD, MPH, Health Officer, Los Angeles County. “We have a strong public health and health care system committed to protecting our communities.”

Health care professionals are reminded to use appropriate infection control practices at all times. Public Health will continue to provide updated information about the diagnosis and management of cases of novel coronavirus to health care providers and all hospitals in the County and relevant partners to both identify and contain any future cases.

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