

Dear Colleagues,

March 5, 2020

We understand that the Novel Coronavirus, now known as COVID-19, is causing some anxiety in our community, state and the world. Please know that the Dubuque County Health Department is working closely with the Iowa Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) to ensure the health and safety of our staff.

#### **WHAT IS KNOWN**

- The virus causing COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified, and causes a respiratory illness ranging from a mild cold-like illness to severe respiratory disease.
- Similar to influenza, the people who are most likely to have severe disease and complications from COVID-19 are believed to be the very old, very young and those with other chronic or underlying medical conditions.
- There is no vaccine or treatment currently available for COVID-19, so prevention is very important.
- Currently, there are NO confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Iowa. The Dubuque County Health Department is working closely with IDPH to prepare for when and if COVID-19 cases may happen.

#### **HOW THE VIRUS SPREADS**

- COVID-19 is believed to spread primarily the same way the common cold or flu spreads—through respiratory droplets that are produced when someone coughs or sneezes.
- People who are most at risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 are those who have been in close contact (within about 6 feet) with someone who has the disease.
- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).

#### **WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW**

- Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick, and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
- Employees who become ill after arrival to work should go home immediately.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow and inside of arm.

It is vital to have accurate information on the COVID-19. Two credible sources to find up-to-date information on COVID-19 are the IDPH Site and CDC.

<https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>

Facebook at @IowaDepartmentofPublicHealth

Twitter at @IAPublicHealth.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me.

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