



Kentucky River District Health Department

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PRESS RELEASE **3/06/2020**

Scott Lockard, the Director of the KY River District Health Department would like to release the following statement concerning the ongoing Coronavirus outbreak.

It has now been confirmed that KY has its first positive case of COVID 19. A resident of Harrison County is being treated at the UK Medical Center in Lexington. We hope this patient has a speedy recovery. The important thing for the residents of KY River District to know is that their local health department is working closely with the state Department for Public Health and the CDC in Atlanta to protect the health of our residents.

Communications with local healthcare facilities, elected leaders, school officials and emergency management personnel are ongoing. Several meetings are occurring throughout the district to ensure that entities have the information and support they need.

Governor Beshear has declared a State of Emergency for our state so that we will be able to more easily access the resources we need to address this outbreak. The Commissioner for the Department for Public Health, Dr. Steven Stack, is communicating daily with the local health departments and the medical community across the state to provide the most current information and recommendations to deal with this outbreak. The key thing is to not let panic or fear rule our actions. There is no need to wear surgical masks outdoors or to fear being in public. Use common sense and heed the following recommendations:

- ♦ Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ♦ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Afterwards, throw the tissue away and wash your hands. If you do not have a tissue cough or sneeze into your sleeve or elbow.
- ♦ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- ♦ Stay home from work, school, church, running errands and any social events when you are ill.
- ♦ Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
- ♦ Avoid close contact with sick people if possible.
- ♦ Avoid visiting elderly or immunocompromised people such as in nursing homes during an outbreak.

- ♦ If you become ill make your healthcare provider aware of your symptoms when you call for your appointment. Do not go to the Emergency Room unless it is a true emergency and you would have gone if there was no fear of Coronavirus.

Should the outbreak worsen other measures may be implemented to try to prevent the spread of the virus. The current situation does not warrant canceling mass gatherings or events but that may be a consideration in the future. The situation will continue to be monitored and recommendations from the CDC will be followed.

We should remember that although this virus is a serious threat to health, we should already be taking all of the outlined precautions to prevent the spread of the flu. The CDC estimates that over 14,000 people have died in the United States from the seasonal influenza during the 2019-2020 flu season.

The state has set up a website that is updated daily with the latest information as this situation evolves. The link is <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/Pages/covid19.aspx>

The CDC also has a website that is full of information and guidance for agencies and individuals on how to prepare for the Coronavirus.

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

Please stay informed with the latest, factual information from one of the two websites above. The Kentucky River District Health Department will also be sharing information via our Facebook page (Kentucky River District Health Department) and Twitter (@KRDHD).