

Dear Colleague,

We understand that the Novel Coronavirus, now known as COVID-19, is causing much anxiety in our community, state and the world. [Name of business] is working closely with [XXX] County Public Health and 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. However, experts predict there will eventually be community spread. [Name of business] is working closely with IDPH and [XXX] County Public Health to prepare for when/if this happens.

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).
 - Speak with your supervisor about possible tele-work or flex schedule options.
- 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/inside of arm.
- If you become ill while traveling for work, notify your supervisor and call a healthcare provider for advice, if needed.

Please contact your supervisor should you have additional questions. Find up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Iowa at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus> and follow IDPH on Facebook at @IowaDepartmentofPublicHealth and Twitter at @IAPublicHealth.