



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## Health Department Mass Gathering Recommendations for COVID-19

(Mason City) – There is currently no known community spread of COVID-19 in Iowa at this time. However, with continued limited testing capabilities to identify cases and recent increased spring break travel, CG Public Health is trying to delay the spread of COVID-19. The goal is to increase social distancing to slow the spread of illness to prevent a huge spike in the number of people getting sick all at once.

“Iowa has not identified community spread of COVID-19 at this time, however we are encouraging people to follow social distancing guidelines,” said Brian Hanft, Director of CG Public Health. “We are urging business, schools, childcare centers and event organizers to adopt our preemptive approach as a united community to reduce the spread of illness.”

CG Public Health is recommending the following:

- Businesses disinfect workspaces, common areas, surfaces and objects frequently using approved cleaning products, encourage employees to stay home when ill/symptomatic, implement flexible staff attendance and sick leave policy as well as practice social distancing.
- Event organizers consider postponing large events (e.g. – mass gatherings include public events, church services, sporting events, concerts, weddings, conferences, etc.)
- Older adults and those with chronic health conditions stay away from others who are sick, limit close contact with others in general, avoid crowds and wash hands often.

“The most important thing to remember is practicing basic public health infection control measures. Wash your hands, stay home when you’re sick, and cover your cough with your upper arm,” states Karen Crimmings, the Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Manager.

The situation related to COVID-19 is changing rapidly. North Iowans should closely monitor our website and social media (@CGPublicHealth) for updated guidance if or when community spread of disease is identified.

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