

Instructions for Self-Isolation for Iowans Returning from Countries Affected by COVID-19

Issued: 03/06/2020

The Iowa Department of Public Health has recommended that Iowans returning from countries affected by COVID-19 voluntarily self-isolate for 14 days following their return. COVID-19 affected areas are countries for which Level 3 and Level 2 Travel Health Notices have been issued by CDC. To identify which countries have travel notices, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>. (Public health authorities in accordance with the President's Task Force on Coronavirus are mandatorily monitoring travelers from China and Iran).

What does self-isolation mean?

- Iowans voluntarily self-isolating for 14 days after returning from a country affected by COVID-19 are asked to:
 - Stay home the majority of the time. This means do not go to school, public areas or attend large gatherings.
 - Depending on your work location and situation, you may be able to go to work. If you are able to work in a space without others within 6 feet and not join congregate settings like lunch and conference rooms, you can work with your employer and consult with local public health as needed to consider what the most appropriate approach would be.
 - Do not use public transportation, ride sharing or taxis.
 - Postpone any travel. If travel is absolutely necessary, it is important that if you become ill while traveling that you inform healthcare and local public health personnel about your recent travel.
 - Wash your hands often and practice good hygiene.
 - As long as you feel healthy, you may leave the home (in a private vehicle) for a limited time to take care of routine and necessary activities such as grocery shopping or visiting the pharmacy. Try to avoid busy times of the day.
 - Postpone all non-essential medical appointments until you have completed your 14 days of self-isolation. If you have an essential medical appointment during this time, please work with your healthcare and local public health professionals as needed to help coordinate the visit.

What should I be watching for during self-isolation?

- Take your temperature twice a day. Watch for a fever.
- Watch for cough or difficulty breathing.

What about the people I live with?

- Family members or other persons who reside in your home may remain in your home, but you should stay in a specific room away for others in your home and use a separate bathroom (if available).
- As long as you remain healthy, the other persons in your home can go about their daily activities as normal (there is no restriction on their movement).
- You should not have direct contact with any animals (i.e., dogs, cats, pigs, cattle, sheep and goats) out of an abundance of caution. Arrange for your pets to be cared for and housed outside of your home, if possible.
- If you live alone, or if every member of your household is placed under voluntary home confinement, you should arrange by telephone or electronic means (e.g., email or text message) for relatives, neighbors or friends to assist with any needs you may have during the period of voluntary confinement. These persons must not have direct contact with you. If you need assistance in providing for your daily needs, you may call your county public health department at or the Iowa Department of Public Health at (800) 362-2736.

What should I do if I develop a fever, cough or have difficulty breathing?

- Contact Mercy Health Line at 641-428-7777 and tell them about your recent travel to a COVID-19 affected area. If you require medical assistance, these professionals will help you develop a plan to safely get to a healthcare provider. DO NOT use public transportation, ride sharing or taxis.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze and wash your hands often.

If you need emergency medical attention any time during the monitoring period, call 911 and let them know you have been self-monitoring for novel coronavirus (COVID-19).